

Press Release – For Immediate Release
Whitsunday Regional Council
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‘China First’ Coal Export Deal & The Northern Missing Rail Link Puts The Investment Spotlight on Bowen

On Saturday the 6th of February, 2010, **Billionaire mining magnate Clive Palmer** and the **Queensland Premier Anna Bligh** announced Australia’s largest ever Export Contract, a US\$69 billion 20 year Coal Export deal. (The China First Mine Project)

“This deal, with CPI, is **Australia’s biggest ever export contract**,” Palmer said. The deal will see the Chinese company buy 30 million tonnes of coal per year, worth over \$3 billion US a year, and the mine will be linked to a new coal terminal to be built at **Abbot Point** (25 km’s North of Bowen) by a new 490km standard gauge, heavy haul railway line.

“The contract includes a **US\$8 billion mine construction plan...and will create more than 6000 new local jobs**, as well as thousands more indirect positions”. he added

Premier Bligh chimed in “This will create *tens of thousands of jobs* in construction and in operation of the mine, port and rail over that time” (the next 20 years).

This announcement follows hot on the heels of the announcement in November last year of the approval of the **Northern Missing Rail Link**, which will connect the Northern Goonyella rail system with the Newlands Abbot Point rail line, allowing Northern Bowen Basin Coal mines to **export through the Abbot Point Port**. Speaking about this announcement Premier Bligh said the project *would deliver up to 4000 new jobs* by opening up new export opportunities throughout the region.”

These huge infrastructure announcement have really put the investment spotlight on Bowen, which is just 25kms south of Abbot Point, as it is ideally positioned to benefit from these and other proposed mining projects which all nominate Abbot Point as their preferred export port. And **WHITSUNDAY Mayor Mike Brunner has raised a red flag**, highlighting the infrastructure needs of Bowen as a direct result of these deals, including the urgent need for more housing.

"There will be a massive burden on infrastructure unless the Queensland Government sits down with us and talks about how they will assist us in supporting the community," he said." We need water treatment facilities, sewerage treatment facilities and **housing - in terms of both single accommodation and housing for families**".

Shire councillor Mark Gaudry backed-up the Mayor saying he expected the Abbot Point Coal Terminal has the potential grow to six times its current size in the next 10 years as a direct result of this deal, and other projects in the pipeline” eg **Chalco Alumina Refinery, Energy World LNG Gas export facility and many other under**

study Coal projects like the Alpha coal Mine, which is almost as large as the China First Project and also nominates Abbot Point as it's preferred export Port.

"The Abbot Point coal terminal is currently being upgraded from 25 million tonnes to 50 million tonnes but there is potential to increase to a 150 million tonne terminal in the next 10 years, especially when you consider that Abbot Point is the Closest Deep Water Sea Port To Asia" Cr Gaudry said

If this were to happen Abbot Point would rival and perhaps even surpass Newcastle, which is the largest Coal Export terminal in the world.

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For More Information Contact

Mike Brunker

Mayor

Ph: 07 4761 3600

Mobile: 0419 708 351

Email:mayor@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au

Mark Gaudry

Councillor for Division 6

Mobile: 0418 776 186

Email:mark.gaudry@whitsundayrc.qld.gov.au

David Mollet

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Media Liaison Regarding This Release

0425-773-767