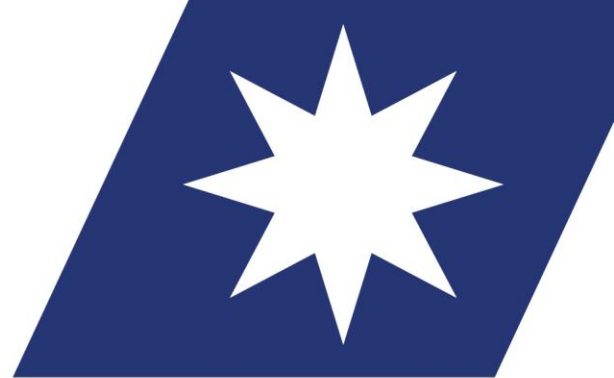


NICK DAMETTO

Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

28/8/2019

CopperString project to unlock new energy markets

A VISIONARY project to connect Queensland's North West power system into the National Electricity Market could help realise a \$640 million bio-energy plant in Ingham.

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto said the CopperString 2.0 project, which would construct a 1100 km 275-kilovolt (kV) overhead high-voltage electricity transmission line from the North West Minerals Province (NWMP) and Mount Isa to the National Electricity Market (NEM) grid south of Townsville, would provide a potential energy market for the North Queensland Bio Energy (NQBE) plant.

"One hurdle for NQBE has been the fluctuating electricity market. For this project to grow legs, one of two things would have to happen- the State Government would need to underwrite the wholesale price of electricity for NQBE or a prior purchasing agreement would need to be established with a large energy user to add stability around the energy export price," he said.

"With CopperString coming online, NQBE would have the opportunity to pitch their wholesale electricity to major players in the North West Minerals Province. The advantage NQBE has over solar and wind renewable projects is that their method of rotational generation would add system strength and dispatchable power to the NEM."

CooperString 2.0 director John O'Brien said the project would help lower power prices for North Queenslanders.

"Integrating the demand from the North West Minerals Province will stimulate the development of the lowest cost new generation and therefore put downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices across the whole of Queensland," he said.

"Currently there is sufficient generation in the Queensland east coast power system which means there is no customer driven demand for new generation. There is more electricity consumed in the North West Minerals Province than the entire east coast system north of Townsville. With the addition of the NWMP load into the east coast system it creates demand for new generation projects and provides an opportunity for new generation investment to be underwritten with long term contracts with the large mining and industrial users in the NWMP."

Mr O'Brien said extending the east coast electricity system "will create opportunities for the development of new energy infrastructure projects, particularly generation".

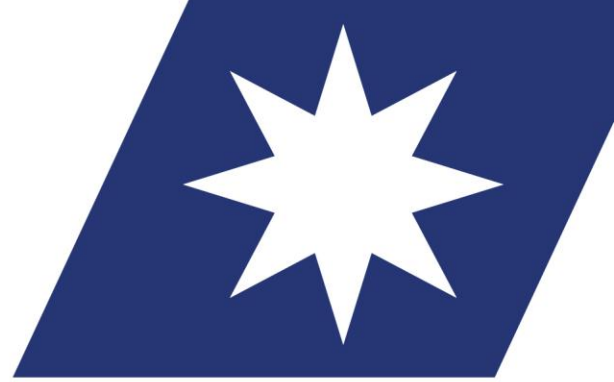
"The connection of the NWMP will change the way electricity flows across the entire Queensland east coast system and this will have a positive impact on the drivers for investment in North Queensland," he said.

"Extending the east coast system will also make it less expensive for a range of different industries to access electricity infrastructure including agriculture projects."

CopperString 2.0 has been declared a "coordinated project" by the Queensland Government's Office of Coordinator-General, with the project now in the process of negotiating commercial agreements with

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major mining companies in the NWMP and going through the steps to receive regulatory approvals from the State Government.

“Both of these activities are progressing very well and we are targeting commencement of construction in late 2020 / early 2021,” Mr O’Brien said.

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Media Enquiries

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