

# Defiant Cripps at Dalby talks

DEFIANT Mines Minister Andrew Cripps remains wedded to seeing through his controversial new mining act after staring down a tense meeting with worried landholders in Dalby last week.

LNP candidate for Condamine Pat Weir urged Mr Cripps to attend the meeting with concerned landholders and community action groups, spearheaded by the Basin Sustainability Alliance, amid rising fears about what the law changes mean for those across the state's mining belts.

Seventy pages of last-minute amendments to the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014 on September 9 remain the primary point of concern, with BSA chairwoman Lyn Nicholson describing the bill as "a step too far".

"I'm not sure that he quite appreciated the difficulties or the difference between things in Queen Street and what it's actually like to be here on the ground as a landholder," she said.

"Landholders have been telling us since the bill came down that they are extremely concerned about the loss of their rights."

BSA member and Dalby-based lawyer Peter Shannon said it was hard to envisage any legislation more comprehensive in the past 30 years.

He said the last-minute changes were deeply concerning and a worry for anyone who cares about democratic processes.

"The last amendment was certainly snuck through and that was an enormous change," he said.

"In effect what they mean is on large state-co-ordinated projects and whatever other projects the coordinator-general decides that he wants jurisdiction over, he is it.

"He is the absolute determiner of all

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environmental authority conditions."

Mr Cripps said the Co-ordinator-General was obliged to consider public submissions to an EIS when determining any environmental conditions to be placed on a project.

"The Co-ordinator-General has always had the role of having the responsibility for determining conditions on an environmental authority for these very large coordinated projects," he said.

Mr Cripps said his solution to address community concerns was more effective communication.

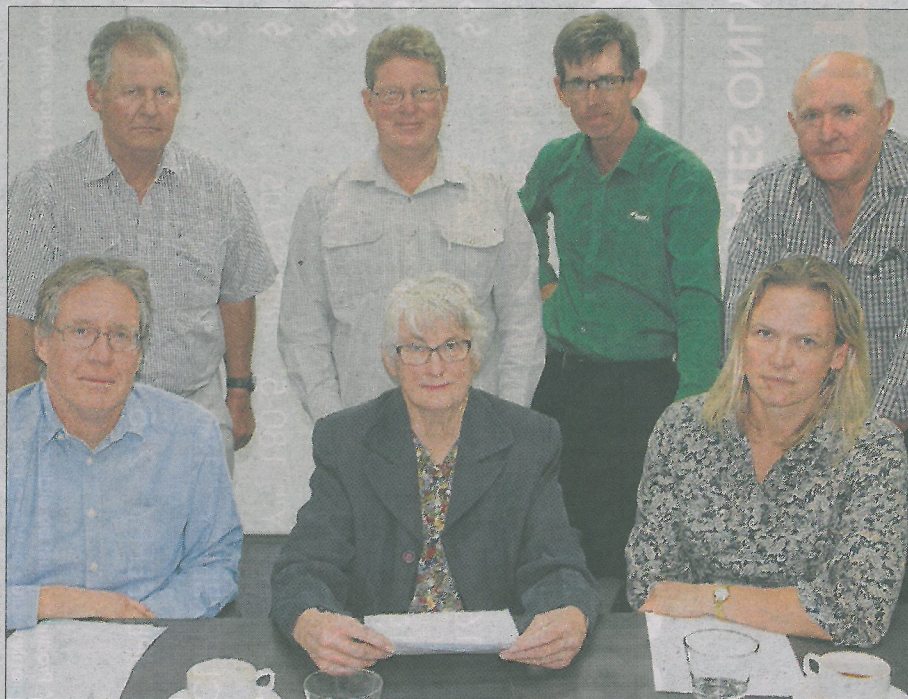
He said the provisions of the bill had been considered carefully before they were introduced and that removing the right to object to small-scale mines was not inhibiting freedom of speech.

"In terms of the opportunities to be notified and object to small-scale mines that only applies in very specific circumstances," he said.

"The project or proposed project needs to be less than 10 hectares in size and the project has to have fewer than 20 employees.

"The risks are small-scale, which is the reason why it only applies to small-scale mines and the right to object is maintained for the landowners, neighbours and local council.

"The assessed risk of that project is such that we believe we can cover off on that risk with an Environmental Authority with the standard conditions."



LEFT: Attendees at a meeting in Dalby last week with Natural Resources and Mines Minister Andrew Cripps. Back: John Erbacher, David Hamilton, Neil Cameron and AgForce Grains president Wayne Newton. Front: Peter Shannon, Lyn Nicholson and Veronica Laffy.

## CONSTITUENTS 'SOLD OUT BY COMMITTEE SHAM', TRAD SAYS

AGRICULTURE, Resources and Environment Committee member and Labor Member for South Brisbane Jackie Trad has described the parliamentary committee process as a sham.

"It was very clear from all of the submissions that more than 90 per cent of people felt that these laws were so extreme and really did take away fundamental rights," she said.

"Every single member of the LNP government sold out their constituents on that day.

"They sold out their rural communities and not one of them spoke in support of their communities and spoke out regarding the concerns of their communities. Not one."

Ms Trad said there was no need to rush the legislation or to sneak in last minute amendments.

When asked by *Queensland Country Life* why so few recommendations were included, Ms Trad said her dissenting report spoke for itself.

"I know that there were some very good

recommendations included in my dissenting report that should have been adopted by the parliamentary committee," she said. "The fact that the minister introduced 70 pages of significant last minute amendments just goes to prove not only are they not interested in listening to Queenslanders they also want to take away their right to have a say."

Barry Broe was appointed Coordinator-General in 2012 and previously worked as head of infrastructure for the Brisbane City Council.

# NT's potential on display at inaugural field days