

PILBARA INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE

Statement by Minister for Energy

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Energy) [9.07 am]: I am pleased to inform the house of a significant milestone in Western Australia's journey to net zero emissions by 2050. At a meeting held on 26 July 2023, the Pilbara Industry Roundtable struck a historic agreement that will support the decarbonisation of industry and the continued economic development of our state. The Pilbara Industry Roundtable includes key resources players and electricity companies with a presence in the region and is chaired by me as the Minister for Energy.

The agreement reached by the round table is important because it represents consensus on several key points. The first is that new common-use electricity infrastructure in the Pilbara will be critical to decarbonising industry. This is significant, given the historical approach to the development of infrastructure in the region. Importantly, the agreement states that any electricity infrastructure development should support rights to self-determination, and empower Aboriginal people to realise opportunities from the clean energy transformation. There was also agreement that the Pilbara electricity regulatory regime should evolve to support the energy transition. As a priority first step, government agencies will work together on land tenure guidance.

I convened the Pilbara Industry Roundtable as a forum to discuss the unique opportunities and challenges of a clean energy transformation in the Pilbara. The round table has met four times in the past year to oversee a work program that includes modelling future electricity demand scenarios, assessing the current regulatory framework and land tenure arrangements and exploring social licence with a focus on the empowerment of First Nations people.

This agreement is a historic accord between government and key industry players in the Pilbara that recognises that to reach our ambitious decarbonisation goals, common-use electrical infrastructure is key. The outcomes of the round table will now inform the next phase of our work to transition to a clean energy economy in the Pilbara.