

DIGGERS AND DEALERS MINING FORUM

Statement by Minister for Mines and Petroleum

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [1.09 pm]: That is a difficult act to follow! I would like to update the house on the Diggers and Dealers Mining Forum that took place in Kalgoorlie last week. It was the largest forum post COVID, with over 2 600 delegates attending the event at the Goldfields Arts Centre. It was my sixth time attending the forum that culminates in a gala dinner to celebrate the fine achievements of the people and companies that make significant contributions to the mining sector here in Western Australia and abroad. In 2022, we saw many records for Western Australia's mining sector, including a record 855 million tonnes of iron ore exports; a record \$17.8 billion in gold sales; nickel sales of \$5.7 billion, which were the highest in 15 years; and spodumene concentrate sales of \$16.3 billion, which were six times higher than in 2021.

Although our resources industry achieved record sales of \$246 billion in 2022, I used my speech at Diggers and Dealers to emphasise the need for industry to respond to the challenges we face creating inclusive workplaces in the sector. The Cook government wants to ensure that each and every worker on our mine sites is provided with a safe, welcoming environment in which to work. Our government is committed to working with mining companies, unions and the entire workforce to drive change and improve workplace cultures to ensure Western Australia's mining sector remains world leading in every facet. To this end, our recent Driving Respect summit, the "Speak up, report it" campaign and the Respect in Mining program are government-led initiatives that encourage industry to engage. The message was delivered to and well received by delegates at Diggers and Dealers.

Congratulations to the organisers of the Diggers and Dealers forum, particularly owners Sharon Giorgetta and Myles Ertzen, and, of course, congratulations to the award winners on the night. Digger of the Year was awarded to Pilbara Minerals Ltd. Dealer of the Year was awarded to Allkem Ltd. Best emerging company was awarded to Patriot Battery Metals. The Ray Finlayson Medal for leadership and academic excellence shown by a student at the WA School of Mines was won by Luca Danovaro Hanza, the media award winner was Brad Thompson from the *Australian Financial Review*, and the prestigious GJ Stokes Memorial Award was presented to Neil Warburton for his life of service to the mining industry.