



28 April 2017

Will Hodgman, Premier

Guy Barnett, Minister for Resources

## **Strong support for West Coast's mining future**

The Tasmanian Liberal Government has been the strongest supporter of the Mt Lyell copper mine and West Coast jobs and today's \$9.5 million investment is a huge step towards re-starting the mine in Queenstown.

The Government's \$9.5 million investment will enable Copper Mines of Tasmania to undertake a range of projects essential for the re-start of operations at the mine and could potentially bring forward a restart by more than six months.

“These projects will commence almost immediately and create more than 50-60 new jobs at the mine in the construction phase, and importantly will move us closer to the re-start of mining operations, which in the longer term would be expected to create up to 300 jobs,” Premier Hodgman said.

“The Government has worked closely with CMT throughout the period of the mine's closure to facilitate the re-start of the mine at the earliest possible stage.

“Supporting mining in Tasmania and delivering jobs in the North-West and West Coast of Tasmania is extremely important to the Liberal Government and today's announcement is in addition to the \$25 million financial assistance package announced in late 2015 to facilitate the reopening of the mine.

“We will continue to work closely with CMT and the mining industry to bring about the re-opening of the mine,” Premier Hodgman said.

Resources Minister Guy Barnett said that CMT's recent announcement that it is reviewing restart plans on the back of improved metal prices means that now is

the perfect time for the Government to take decisive action to help bring about the restart.

The \$9.5 million Government investment will support four key projects at the mine, each of which is essential to the restart of the mine:

- Decline refurbishment and preparation (tunnel that is used to bring ore to the surface) - \$4.5 million
- North Lyell Tunnel rehabilitation. Repair of the tunnel is required to manage water flows into the mine, which is important both operationally and for improved environmental outcomes - \$1.5 million
- West Queen water supply pipeline. Replacing a 100-year-old pipeline that supplies water to the site - \$2 million
- Infrastructure associated with the upgrade of the crushing mill - \$1.5 million.

CMT is also investing heavily in the future of the mine, having spent more than \$100 million keeping the mine in care and maintenance and committing \$80-\$100m to future new works to facilitate a potential restart.

“We support the mining industry in Tasmania in the strongest possible terms and we want to see the mine back up and running to create up to 300 direct and 750 indirect jobs for the region,” Minister Barnett said.

“In working towards the restart of the mine, safety is of the highest importance. CMT advises that there is a key focus on safety in its review into restarting operations.

“As part of its review into restarting the mine, CMT are investigating the redevelopment of the processing plant and ore handling circuit with the possibility of employing electric driven trucks to bring ore to the surface. This is an innovative approach which would make the Mt Lyell mine the first fully electrified underground mining operation in Tasmania,” Minister Barnett said.

Restarting the mine would be a great outcome for employment in the region, but also for the environment. An operational mine delivers the best environmental outcome for the state, and allows legacy environmental issues to be better addressed.