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MEDIA RELEASE

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Politicians should butt out of assessment process

Deputy Premier Seeney is placing inappropriate pressure on the environmental assessment process by publically flagging his preference for specific projects, according to NQCC Coordinator Wendy Tubman.

In a statement released on Wednesday in relation to proposed rail lines between proposed coal mines and proposed ports, Mr Seeney said "It has become increasingly evident that the corridors best-placed to service the region are the rail corridor approved in the Alpha Coal project joining into the Aurizon network, and the rail corridors being developed in the Carmichael Coal Mine and Rail project and the North Galilee Basin Rail project". The assessment process has not yet been completed.

"The intervention of Mr Seeney is "yet one more bastardisation of the project assessment process", according to Ms Tubman.

"First, we saw the responsibility for major environmental assessments being moved from the Department for the Environment to the Coordinator General, whose role is 'to encourage development and the creation of jobs'.

"Now we see the Deputy Premier putting what seems to be undue pressure on the Coordinator General, a bureaucrat operating within Mr Seeney's Department.

"It is likely that Mr Seeney will claim that his preferences will still be subject to due process of assessment. But I imagine that few voters would fall for such spin.

"It is past time that our state government realised that mining moguls are not the only people who matter, and that the people are less and less convinced that what benefits the mining industry benefits them" she said.

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