



## Ministerial Submission

MS25-000493

### FOR ACTION - Major Project Facilitation Agency - Major Project Status Approvals

TO: Minister for Industry and Innovation; Minister for Science

CC: Assistant Minister for Science, Technology and the Digital Economy

#### TIMING

A decision by late June on awarding Major Project Status will provide nationally significant projects with regulatory facilitation services.

#### Recommendation

- That you note the role of the Major Project Facilitation Agency in implementing the Future Made in Australia agenda (see Attachment A).

Noted / Please discuss

- That you approve Major Project Status for:

- SunCable Holdings – Australia Asia Power Link Project (see Attachment B)

Approved / Not approved

- Cobalt Blue Holdings – Broken Hill Cobalt Project (see Attachment C).

Approved / Not approved

- INPEX Browse E&P Aust. – Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage Project (see Attachment D).

Approved / Not approved

- Diatrema Resources – Northern Silica Project (see Attachment E).

Approved / Not approved

- That you sign and date the letters to approved proponents, relevant Commonwealth Ministers, State Premiers and Chief Ministers (see Attachment F).

Signed / Not signed

- That you agree to the department working with your office to draft a media release.

Agreed / Not agreed

s22

Signature

Date: 11/6/2025

**KEY POINTS**

- The department recommends awarding Major Project Status (MPS) to four projects assessed as nationally significant and aligned to the government's priorities. MPS provides eligible proponents with tailored regulatory facilitation services to navigate government approvals.
  - a. You hold portfolio responsibility for major project facilitation and are the decision maker for awarding MPS (see Attachment A).
  - b. The Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) assessed the projects against 3 key eligibility criteria; national significance, regulatory complexity and commercial viability.
  - c. Subject to your decision, letters will be sent to the MPS proponents, the relevant Premier/Chief Minister advising of your decision, and to Commonwealth portfolio ministers to encourage their assistance with the major project's regulatory issues.
- The awarding of MPS supports the pipeline of major projects while work is underway on Future Made in Australia 'Front Door'.
  - a. Treasury is designing the Front Door and aims to settle functions and implementation in 2025-26 MYEFO. Interim services to make it simpler to invest in Australia and attract more global and domestic capital are publicly stated to be open from September 2025.
  - b. The department is working closely with Treasury with the aim of smoothing industry's experience through establishment of the Front Door that builds on insights from current industry challenges.

**SunCable Holdings – Australia Asia Power Link Project (renewal of MPS)**

- SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable) aims to construct one of the largest solar plants in Australia in the Northern Territory. At full capacity, the project will generate as much renewable power as all the wind and solar in the National Electricity Market in 2021.
- SunCable will provide power to support Darwin's industrial demand and for export to Singapore via a subsea power cable. The project has a CAPEX of approximately A\$60 billion and is estimated to deliver 1,750 direct construction jobs and 350 ongoing jobs.
- The MPFA recommends you renew SunCable's MPS (see Attachment B):

s47E(d)

s47E(d)

**Cobalt Blue Holdings – Broken Hill Cobalt Project (renewal of MPS)**

- The Broken Hill Cobalt Project has a total CAPEX of A\$727.7 million across 2 sites; cobalt mine in Broken Hill, NSW and cobalt and nickel refinery in Kwinana, WA. It aims to be one of the first domestic critical minerals refining operations and provide enough product to make batteries for around 375,000 electric vehicles per year. The project is estimated to deliver 20 direct construction jobs and 350 ongoing jobs.
- The MPFA recommends you renew Cobalt Blue's MPS (see [Attachment C](#));

s47E(d)

**INPEX Browse E&P Aust. – Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage Project (new MPS application)**

- The Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) project has a CAPEX of A\$3.5 billion, will support 370 direct construction jobs and provide 40 ongoing jobs. The project is located at Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct (MASDP) in Darwin and is connected via a 250 km pipeline to a subsea CO<sub>2</sub> injection site that straddles the NT and Western Australia coast.
- The CCS hub aims to enable development of new industries and projects in the MASDP, especially in hard to abate, energy intensive industry sectors (e.g. metals and chemical refining). These sectors would otherwise have difficulties reducing emissions.
- The MPFA recommends you approve INPEX's MPS (see [Attachment D](#)):

s47E(d)

s47E(d)

**Diatreme Resources – Northern Silica Project (new MPS application)**

- The Northern Silica Project is a silica sand mining development in Far North Queensland with a CAPEX of A\$534.8 million, 120 direct construction jobs and 90 ongoing jobs.
- The mine will produce 3 to 5 million tonnes of silica sand per annum over 25 years and support domestic manufacturing of solar panels, silicon wafers for semiconductors and related products for high-end electronics.
- The MPFA recommends you approve Diatreme's MPS (see Attachment E):

s47E(d)

**Next steps**

- Subject to your decision, the department will work with your office to draft a media release.
- If you choose not to renew or award MPS, the MPFA could provide the project proponent with more limited support through targeted assistance on specific regulatory issues.

Clearance Officer

Julia Pickworth  
Deputy Secretary  
Industry & Commercialisation Group

s22

Contact Officer

John Krbaleski  
General Manager  
Industry Participation and Major Projects  
Facilitation

s22

**CONSULTATION**

Relevant regulators, departments and agencies consulted are detailed in Assessment Attachments B, C, D and E. Your office may wish to consult with relevant offices of your colleagues.

## ATTACHMENTS

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- A: Major Project Status Background
- B: Assessment: SunCable Holdings – Australia Asia Power Link Project
- C: Assessment: Cobalt Blue Holdings – Broken Hill Cobalt Project
- D: Assessment: INPEX Browse E&P Aust. – Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage
- E: Assessment: Diatreme Resources – Northern Silica Project
- F: Letters to proponents, federal ministers, state premiers and chief ministers

**Attachment A – Major project status background**

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The Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) administers the Major Project Status (MPS) initiative. A project must meet the following criteria to be eligible for MPS:

- Criteria 1: Project is of strategic significance to Australia and has an estimated capital investment that exceeds over A\$50 million.
- Criteria 2: Project is challenged by complex regulatory approvals administered under Australian Government legislation.
- Criteria 3: Project proponent has the capability and capacity to deliver the project and is commercially viable.

By awarding of MPS you are signalling the Australian Government's in-principal support for a project. It does not guarantee a project's regulatory approval or commercial success.

Proponents awarded MPS are given a dedicated MPFA case manager to provide tailored regulatory facilitation services.

The decision to award MPS is an administrative decision at your discretion. The MPFA can provide lighter touch, ad hoc support (known as General Services) for projects that are not awarded MPS.

Project proponents typically apply for MPS prior to getting key regulatory approvals and making a final investment decision. By helping to derisk regulatory approvals, the MPFA makes it simpler to invest in Australia and attract more global and domestic capital.

Changing market conditions will mean that not all projects will progress. Projects may also experience delays and/or drawn-out regulatory approvals. These projects may seek renewal of MPS, and if successful, an additional 3 years of facilitation services from the MPFA.

As at 20 May 2025, the MPFA is servicing 19 MPS projects. In total, the projects are valued at approximately A\$246 billion in CAPEX and plan to create approximately 10,100 direct jobs. Key sectors include critical minerals (9 projects), renewable energy (4 projects) and hydrogen (2 projects).





































## Attachment F – LETTERS FOR SIGNATURE

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### Suncable Holdings – letters to:

- **s22** Suncable Holdings Pty Ltd
- Hon Lia Finocchiaro MP, NT Chief Minister
- Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Attorney General
- Hon Murray Watt MP, Minister for Environment and Water
- Hon Madeleine King MP, Minister for Resources, Minister for Northern Australia
- Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Home Affairs
- Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
- Hon Anika Wells MP, Minister for Communications
- Hon Richard Marles MP, Minister for Defence
- Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

### Cobalt Blue Holdings – letters to:

- **s22** Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd
- Hon Christopher Minns MP, NSW Premier
- Hon Roger Cook MLA, WA Premier
- Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Home Affairs
- Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy
- Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer
- Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Attorney General
- Hon Murray Watt MP, Minister for Environment and Water

### INPEX Browse E&P Aust. – letters to:

- **s22** INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd
- Hon Lia Finocchiaro MP, NT Chief Minister
- Hon Murray Watt MP, Minister for Environment and Water
- Hon Madeleine King MP, Minister for Resources, Minister for Northern Australia
- Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Home Affairs
- Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer

### Diatreme Resources – letters to:

- **s22** Diatreme Resources Limited
- Hon David Crisafulli MP, Queensland Premier
- Hon Murray Watt MP, Minister for Environment and Water
- Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Attorney General
- Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy
- Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy, Minister for Indigenous Australians
- Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

s22

MS25-000493

SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd  
Level 31, 85 Castlereagh Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

s22

Dear s22

Thank you for your application seeking to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link (the Project).

I am pleased to advise I have awarded MPS for your Project for three years from the date of this letter. The decision to award the status was based on the Project's potential contribution to Australia's renewable energy industry.

I have written to the Hon Lia Finocchiaro MP, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, and several of my ministerial colleagues advising them of my decision and to encourage their assistance with your Project.

The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government endorsement of your Project or guarantee its commercial success. Your Project still needs to meet the requirements of the relevant Australian, Northern Territory and international regulatory, grant or funding approval processes. MPS is subject to a requirement that the proponent, its directors, and officers continue to be fit and proper persons in compliance with the responsibilities of the Project.

The Major Projects Facilitation Agency will be in contact with you regarding next steps.

I wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/6/2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Lia Finocchiaro MP  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory  
Parliament House  
DARWIN NT 0801  
chief.minister@nt.gov.au

Dear Chief Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

I have written to several of my ministerial colleagues regarding this decision and to encourage their assistance with this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11 / 6 / 2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Michelle Rowland MP  
Attorney General  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified the *Native Title Act 1993* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11/6/2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Murray Watt MP  
Minister for the Environment and Water  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified: Ballast Water requirements under the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, *Sea Installations Act 1987*, *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*, *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*, *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*, and *North Marine Parks Network Management Plan* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Madeleine King MP  
Minister for Resources  
Minister for Northern Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.King@industry.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified the *Offshore Petroleum and Green House Gas Storage Act 2006* and the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2022* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Tony Burke MP  
Minister for Home Affairs  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Tony.Burke.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified the *Customs Act 1901* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/16/2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Catherine King MP  
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development  
and Local Government  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.King@mo.infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified: *Submarine Cables and Pipelines Protection Act 1963*, *Navigation Act 2012*, *Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983*, *Protection of the Sea (Harmful Anti-fouling Systems) Act 2006*, and *Civil Aviation Act 1988* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Anika Wells MP  
Minister for Communications  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified: *the Telecommunications Act 1997*, *the Radiocommunications Act 1992*, and the *Schedule 3A to the Telecommunications Act* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

**11 / 6 / 2025**

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Richard Marles MP  
Minister for Defence  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister@defence.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified: *the Australian Notices to Mariners, the Defence Act 1903, the Control of Naval Waters Act 1918, the Defence (Special Undertakings) Act 1952, the Defence (Areas Control) Regulations 1989, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Perth Treaty* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/16/2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Julie Collins MP  
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.Collins@aff.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) for the Australia Asia Power Link project (the Project), proposed by SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$60 billion, providing 360 direct jobs and will develop a renewable energy generation and battery storage precinct in the Northern Territory. The generation of up to 6GW of power will be available for domestic and international markets.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist SunCable to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approvals or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

SunCable has identified the *Australian Fisheries Management Authority - Fisheries Management Act 1991* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this MPS Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

s22

Chief Executive Officer  
Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd  
Suite 17.03, 100 Miller Street  
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060

s22

s22

Dear

Thank you for your application for Major Project Status (MPS) for the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project).

I am pleased to advise that I have granted renewal of MPS for your Project for three years from the date of this letter. My decision to grant MPS recognises the national significance of the Project to Australia through its alignment with the Australian Government's Future Made in Australia agenda, Critical Minerals Strategy and National Battery Strategy.

I have written to the Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier of Western Australia, the Hon Christopher Minns MP, Premier of New South Wales, and several of my ministerial colleagues regarding this decision and to encourage their assistance with this Project.

Please note, the awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval of your Project or guarantee its commercial success. The Project still needs to meet the requirements of the relevant Australian, New South Wales and Western Australia Government regulatory, grant or funding approval processes. MPS is subject to a requirement that your business, its directors and officers continue to be fit and proper persons in compliance with the responsibilities of the Project.

The MPFA will be in contact with you regarding the next steps. I wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/6/2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Christopher Minns MP  
Premier of New South Wales  
Suite 1, Ground Floor  
22-24 Regent Street  
KOGARAH NSW 2217

Dear Premier

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) to the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project), proposed by Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd (Cobalt Blue).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$728 million, providing 20 direct jobs and will establish the first vertically integrated mining and refining cobalt sulphate plant in Australia with the mine in New South Wales and refinery in Kwinana, Western Australia.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Cobalt Blue to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

I have also written to several of my ministerial colleagues regarding this decision and to encourage their assistance with the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11 / 6 / 2025

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**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Roger Cook MLA  
Premier of Western Australia  
13th Floor, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
WEST PERTH WA 6005  
wa-government@dpc.wa.gov.au

Dear Premier

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) to the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project), proposed by Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd (Cobalt Blue).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$728 million, providing 20 direct jobs and will establish the first vertically integrated mining and refining cobalt sulphate plant in Australia with the mine in New South Wales and refinery in Kwinana, Western Australia.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Cobalt Blue to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

I have also written to several of my ministerial colleagues regarding this decision and to encourage their assistance with the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Tony Burke MP  
Minister for Home Affairs  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Tony.Burke.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) to the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project), proposed by Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd (Cobalt Blue).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$728 million, providing 20 direct jobs and will establish the first vertically integrated mining and refining cobalt sulphate plant in Australia with the mine in New South Wales and refinery in Kwinana, Western Australia.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Cobalt Blue to navigate government approvals processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

Cobalt Blue has identified the *Customs Act 1901* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this MPS Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 12 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Chris Bowen MP  
Minister for Climate Change and Energy  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.Bowen@dcceew.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) to the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project), proposed by Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd (Cobalt Blue).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$728 million, providing 20 direct jobs and will establish the first vertically integrated mining and refining cobalt sulphate plant in Australia with the mine in New South Wales and refinery in Kwinana, Western Australia.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Cobalt Blue to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

Cobalt Blue has identified the *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007* and the *Safeguard Mechanism* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this MPS Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP  
Treasurer  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Jim.Chalmers.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Treasurer,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) to the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project), proposed by Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd (Cobalt Blue).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$728 million, providing 20 direct jobs and will establish the first vertically integrated mining and refining cobalt sulphate plant in Australia with the mine in New South Wales and refinery in Kwinana, Western Australia.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Cobalt Blue to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

Cobalt Blue has identified the *Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Act 1993* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this MPS Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11/6/2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Michelle Rowland MP  
Attorney General  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to renew Major Project Status (MPS) to the Broken Hill Cobalt Project (the Project), proposed by Cobalt Blue Holdings Pty Ltd (Cobalt Blue).

The Project has an estimated capital expenditure of \$728 million, providing 20 direct jobs and will establish the first vertically integrated mining and refining cobalt sulphate plant in Australia with the mine in New South Wales and refinery in Kwinana, Western Australia.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Cobalt Blue to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

Cobalt Blue has identified the *Native Title Act 1993* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with your department on the regulatory pathway of this MPS Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

s22

Manager – Technical Authority and Nature Based Solutions  
INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd  
Level 22, 100 St Georges Terrace  
PERTH WA 6000

s22

Dear s22

Thank you for INPEX Browse E&P Australia's application seeking Major Project Status (MPS) for the Bonaparte Carbon Capture & Storage Development Project (the Project).

I am pleased to advise I have awarded MPS for your Project for three years from the date of this letter. The decision to award the status was based on the Project's alignment with the Australian Government's Net Zero Plan and transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

I have written to the Hon Lia Finocchiaro MP, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, and several of my ministerial colleagues advising them of my decision and to encourage their assistance with your Project.

The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government endorsement of your Project or guarantee its commercial success. Your Project still needs to meet the requirements of the relevant Australian, Northern Territory and international regulatory, grant or funding approval processes. MPS is subject to a requirement that the proponent, its directors, and officers continue to be fit and proper persons in compliance with the responsibilities of the Project.

The Major Projects Facilitation Agency will be in contact with you regarding next steps.

I wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Lia Finocchiaro MP  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory  
Parliament House  
DARWIN NT 0801  
chief.minister@nt.gov.au

Dear Chief Minister

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Bonaparte Carbon Capture & Storage Development Project (the Project) being developed by INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd.

The Project is a A\$3.5 billion CO<sub>2</sub> carbon capture and storage development located in the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct in Darwin and connected to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf via a 250 km pipeline. The Project is expected to create 370 jobs in the construction phase and 40 direct jobs in the Northern Territory once operational.

MPS for the Project is valid for a three-year period from the date of this letter. The Major Projects Facilitation Agency will facilitate and assist INPEX Browse E&P Australia to navigate Australian government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes.

I have written to several of my ministerial colleagues regarding this decision and to encourage their assistance with this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Murray Watt MP  
Minister for the Environment and Water  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Bonaparte Carbon Capture & Storage Development Project (the Project) being developed by INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd (INPEX). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$3.5 billion CO<sub>2</sub> carbon capture and storage development located in the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct in Darwin and connected to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf off the Northern Territory and Western Australian coasts via a 250 km pipeline. The Project is expected to create 370 jobs in the construction phase and 40 direct jobs.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist INPEX Browse E&P Australia to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

INPEX has identified the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999 and the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981* as relevant for this project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/6/2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Madeleine King MP  
Minister for Resources  
Minister for Northern Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.King@industry.gov.au

Dear Minister

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Bonaparte Carbon Capture & Storage Development Project (the Project) being developed by INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd (INPEX). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$3.5 billion CO<sub>2</sub> carbon capture and storage development located in the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct in Darwin and connected to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf off the Northern Territory and Western Australian coasts via a 250 km pipeline. The Project is expected to create 370 jobs in the construction phase and 40 direct jobs.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist INPEX Browse E&P Australia to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

INPEX has identified the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* as relevant for this project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Tony Burke MP  
Minister for Home Affairs  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Tony.Burke.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Bonaparte Carbon Capture & Storage Development Project (the Project) being developed by INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd (INPEX). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$3.5 billion CO<sub>2</sub> carbon capture and storage development located in the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct in Darwin and connected to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf off the Northern Territory and Western Australian coasts via a 250 km pipeline. The Project is expected to create 370 jobs in the construction phase and 40 direct jobs.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist INPEX Browse E&P Australia to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

INPEX has identified the *Customs Act 1901* and the *Security of Critical Infrastructure Act 2018* as relevant for this project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

// 16/2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP  
Treasurer  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Jim.Chalmers.mp@aph.gov.au

Dear Treasurer,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Bonaparte Carbon Capture & Storage Development Project (the Project) being developed by INPEX Browse E&P Australia Pty Ltd (INPEX). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$3.5 billion CO<sub>2</sub> carbon capture and storage development located in the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct in Darwin and connected to the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf off the Northern Territory and Western Australian coasts via a 250 km pipeline. The Project is expected to create 370 jobs in the construction phase and 40 direct jobs.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist INPEX Browse E&P Australia to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

INPEX has identified the *Foreign Acquisitions and Takeovers Act 1975* as relevant for this project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

s22

MS25-000493

General Manager - Development Projects  
Diatreme Resources Limited  
Unit 8, 55-61 Holdsworth Street  
COORPAROO QLD 4151

s22

Dear s22

Thank you for Diatreme Resources Limited's application seeking Major Project Status (MPS) for the Northern Silica Project (the Project).

I am pleased to advise I have awarded MPS for your project for three years from the date of this letter. My decision to grant MPS recognises the Project's alignment to the development of Australia's critical minerals sector in line with the Critical Minerals Strategy.

I have written to the Hon David Crisafulli MP, Premier of Queensland, and several of my ministerial colleagues advising them of this decision and to encourage their assistance with your Project.

The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government endorsement of your Project or guarantee its commercial success. Your Project still needs to meet the requirements of the relevant Australian and Queensland Government regulatory, grant or funding approval processes. MPS is subject to a requirement that your business, its directors and officers continue to be fit and proper persons in compliance with the responsibilities of the Project.

The Major Projects Facilitation Agency will be in contact with you regarding next steps.

I wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon David Crisafulli MP  
Premier of Queensland  
Minister for Veterans  
PO Box 15185  
CITY EAST QLD 4002  
premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au

Dear Premier,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Northern Silica Project (the Project) being developed by Diatreme Resources Limited.

The Project is a A\$534.8 million critical minerals project located in Far North Queensland, approximately 200 kilometres north of Cairns. The Project is expected to create 90 direct jobs once operational, with half of these targeted for indigenous Australians.

MPS for the Project is valid for a three-year period from the date of this letter. The Major Projects Facilitation Agency will facilitate and assist Diatreme Resources Limited to navigate Australian government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success. The Project will need to meet the requirements of relevant regulatory, grant or funding approval processes,

I have written to several of my ministerial colleagues regarding this decision and to encourage their assistance with this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

**Senator the Hon Tim Ayres**

11 / 6 /2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Murray Watt MP  
Minister for the Environment and Water  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Northern Silica Project (the Project) being developed by Diatreme Resources Limited (Diatreme). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$534.8 million critical minerals project located in Far North Queensland, approximately 200 kilometres north of Cairns. The Project is expected to create 90 direct jobs once operational, with half of these targeted for Indigenous Australians.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Diatreme to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

Diatreme has identified the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Michelle Rowland MP  
Attorney General  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Attorney General,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Northern Silica Project (the Project) being developed by Diatreme Resources Limited (Diatreme). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$534.8 million critical minerals project located in Far North Queensland, approximately 200 kilometres north of Cairns. The Project is expected to create 90 direct jobs once operational, with half of these targeted for Indigenous Australians.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Diatreme to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

Diatreme has identified the *Native Title Act 1993* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/6/2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES**  
**MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION**  
**MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Chris Bowen MP  
Minister for Climate Change and Energy  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.Bowen@dcceew.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Northern Silica Project (the Project) being developed by Diatreme Resources Limited (Diatreme). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$534.8 million critical minerals project located in Far North Queensland, approximately 200 kilometres north of Cairns. The Project is expected to create 90 direct jobs once operational, with half of these targeted for Indigenous Australians.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Diatreme to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

Diatreme has identified the *Clean Energy Regulator Act 2011* and the *National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for the Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

Senator the Hon Malarndirri McCarthy  
Minister for Indigenous Australians  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Senator.mccarthy@aph.gov.au

Dear Minister,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Northern Silica Project (the Project) being developed by Diatreme Resources Limited (Diatreme). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$534.8 million critical minerals project located in Far North Queensland, approximately 200 kilometres north of Cairns. The Project is expected to create 90 direct jobs once operational, with half of these targeted for Indigenous Australians.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Diatreme to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11 / 6 / 2025

OFFICIAL



**SENATOR THE HON TIM AYRES  
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND INNOVATION  
MINISTER FOR SCIENCE**

MS25-000493

The Hon Catherine King MP  
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development  
and Local Government  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Minister.King@mo.infrastructure.gov.au

Dear Minister

I am writing to inform you of my decision to award Major Project Status (MPS) to the Northern Silica Project (the Project) being developed by Diatreme Resources Limited (Diatreme). MPS recognises the strategic significance of the Project to Australia and alignment with Australian Government priorities.

The Project is a A\$534.8 million critical minerals project located in Far North Queensland, approximately 200 kilometres north of Cairns. The Project is expected to create 90 direct jobs once operational, with half of these targeted for Indigenous Australians.

MPS is valid for three years from the date of this letter and the Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) will facilitate and assist Diatreme to navigate government approval processes. The awarding of MPS does not imply Australian Government approval or guarantee the Project's commercial success.

Diatreme has identified the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law 2012*, the *Navigation Act 2012* and the *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1983* as relevant for this Project. The MPFA will engage with officers from your department on the regulatory pathway for this Project.

Yours sincerely

s22

Senator the Hon Tim Ayres

11/6/2025



## Ministerial Submission

MS25-000493

### FOR ACTION - Major Project Facilitation Agency - Major Project Status Approvals

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TO: Minister for Industry and Innovation; Minister for Science

CC:

### TIMING

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s47C

### Recommendation

- That you note the role of the Major Project Facilitation Agency in implementing the Future Made in Australia agenda (Attachment A)

Noted / Please discuss

- That you approve Major Project Status for:

- SunCable Holdings – Australia Asia Power Link Project (Attachment B)

Approved / Not approved

- Cobalt Blue Holdings – Broken Hill Cobalt Project (Attachment C)

Approved / Not approved

- INPEX Browse E&P Aust. – Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage Project (Attachment D)

Approved / Not approved

- Diatreme Resources – Northern Silica Project (Attachment E)

Approved / Not approved

- That you sign and date the letters to the approved proponents, relevant Commonwealth Ministers and State Premiers (Attachment F)

Signed / Not signed

- That you agree to the department working with your office to draft a media release

**Agreed / Not agreed**

Signature

Date:    /    /2025

**KEY POINTS**

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1. We will work with you on the design of the Future Made in Australia's 'Front Door', with the aim of smoothing industry's experience through establishment and that it builds on insights from current industry challenges
  - a. The 'Front Door' will support investors with major, transformational investment proposals. It aims to make it simpler to invest in Australia and attract more global and domestic capital.
  - b. Treasury is designing the Front Door and will seek to settle functions and implementation in 2025-26 MYEFO. It has committed to offering interim services from September 2025
2. You have portfolio responsibility for major project facilitation and the decision maker for awarding Major Project Status, which provides eligible proponents with tailored regulatory facilitation services (Attachment A provides further detail).
  - a. As at X May 2025, the department's Major Project Facilitation Agency (MPFA) is servicing 19 projects with MPS with a total CAPEX of approximately \$200 billion and around 10,000 direct jobs. Add sentence with info on sectors.
3. This brief sets out the MPFA's assessment of four MPS applications (Attachment Y for detailed assessment) against the eligibility criteria for your decision and potential announcement.
4. Subject to your decision, letters to proponent and relevant Premier/Chief Minister advising of your decision and to relevant Commonwealth portfolio Ministers to encourage their assistance with the regulatory issues.
5. Proponents awarded MPS are given a dedicated case manager within the MPFA to provide facilitation services and act as a conduit for regulatory discussions. While the MPS is promoted as providing support to navigate regulatory pathways, business has indicated other benefits including:
  - a. Being able to identify as a project of significance for Australia.
  - b. An avenue to open doors to gain access to Commonwealth and State entities.
  - c. Utilised to demonstrate Commonwealth support and seek foreign investment and secure engagement with multinational firms.
  - d. Obtainment of MPS can be seen as providing a competitive advantage.

s47C

**Major Project Status eligibility**

7. To be eligible for MPS a project must meet the following eligibility criteria. This assessment is undertaken by the MPFA. The criteria are currently:

- a. **Criteria 1:** The project is of strategic significance to Australia and have an estimated capital investment that exceeds over A\$50 million.
    - i. Contribute to strategic priorities of the Australian Government.
    - ii. Contribute significantly to economic growth, industry development, innovation exports, and/or employment and upskilling.
    - iii. Have an economic benefit to regional Australia, considering a region's investment needs
  - b. **Criteria 2:** The project is challenged by complex regulatory approvals administered under Australian Government legislation in order to progress the project.
    - i. Project has identified interactions with Commonwealth legislation/ regulators which are complex in nature.
    - ii. Requires assistance and support to navigate regulatory approvals.
  - c. **Criteria 3:** The proponent has the capability and capacity to implement the project and is commercially viable.
    - i. Project has attracted sufficient funding, at a minimum to complete the approval processes.
    - ii. Project can demonstrate reasonable commercial viability.
8. It is your discretion to award or not award an eligible project. Those who are not awarded MPS can be assisted through General Services, where the MPFA can provide short term support to a proponent.

#### **SunCable Holdings – Australia Asia Power Link Project (renewal of MPS)**

9. SunCable Holdings Pty Ltd (SunCable) aims to construct one of the largest solar plants in Australia in the Northern Territory. At full capacity the project will generate as much renewable power as all the wind and solar in the National Electricity Market in 2021.
10. The project will provide power to support Darwin's industrial demand and for export to Singapore via a subsea power cable. The project has a CAPEX of A\$60 billion and is estimated to deliver 6,800 direct and indirect jobs during construction and 350 ongoing jobs.
11. The MPFA recommends you renew SunCable's MPS on the basis that it meets the eligibility criteria and demonstrates (see Attachment X):

s47E(d)

s47E(d)

SunCable applied for renewal of MPS after it expired in February 2024.. **Diatrame Resources – Northern Silica Project (new MPS application)**

12. The Northern Silica Project is a silica sand mining development located in Far North Queensland with a CAPEX of \$A534.8 million, 90 ongoing jobs per annum and significant economic development opportunity for the local community.
13. The mine will produce three to five million tonnes of silica sand per annum over the 25 year life of the mine and will support domestic manufacturing of solar panels, silicon wafers for semiconductors and related products for high-end electronics.
14. Based on the assessment (Attachment X) the MPFA recommends awarding MPS to Diatrame on the basis that it meets the eligibility criteria and demonstrates:

s47E(d)

**INPEX Browse E&P Aust. - Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage Project (new MPS application)**

15. The Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) project has a CAPEX of \$A3.5 billion, will support 370 jobs during construction and provide 40 ongoing jobs. The project is located in Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct (MASDP) in Darwin and connected via a 250 km pipeline to a subsea CO<sub>2</sub>-e injection site located in Joseph Bonaparte Gulf that straddles the NT and Western Australia coast.
16. The CCS hub aims to enable development of new industries and projects in the MASDP, especially those in hard-to-abate, energy intensive industry sectors (e.g. metals and chemical refining). These sectors would otherwise be unable to meet requirements to reduce emissions under the Safeguard Mechanism.
17. Based on the assessment (Attachment X) the MPFA recommends awarding MPS to INPEX on the basis that it meets the eligibility criteria and demonstrates:

s47E(d)

**Cobalt Blue Holdings - Broken Hill Cobalt Project (renewal of MPS)**

18. The Broken Hill Cobalt Project has a total CAPEX of \$A727.68 million comprising two operations across two locations:

- a. **Broken Hill Cobalt mine** – a \$644.68 million CAPEX cobalt mining project comprising of five exploration licenses and two mining leases. The mine, located approximately 25 km southwest of Broken Hill in far western New South Wales, will produce an estimated 1000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of Nickel Metal and 150,000 tpa of Elemental Sulphur.
- b. **Kwinana Cobalt Refinery Project (KCRP)** – a \$83 million CAPEX cobalt and nickel refinery located in Kwinana, WA. The refinery will take feedstock from the Broken Hill mine and produce battery ready sulphates as feedstock for the electric vehicle markets (EVs). Once operational, the project will be one of the first domestic critical minerals refining operations and provide enough cobalt sulphate for around 375,000 EVs per year.

19. Based on the assessment (Attachment X) the MPFA recommends renewing Cobalt Blue's MPS on the basis that it meets the eligibility criteria and demonstrates

s47E(d)

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### General Guidance

- All Ministerial Submissions must be Cleared in PDMS.
- Please thoroughly proof-read prior to submitting to the Ministers' Office using the Quality Assurance Checklist on iCentral as a guide.
- For guidance on the Ministerial Submission process, please refer to the [Parliamentary – Engaging with ministers](#) page.

#### Clearance Officer

[Name]

[Position]

[Division/Branch]

[Clearance Date]

#### Contact Officer

[Name]

[Position]

Ph: [Landline] Mob: [Mobile]

### **CONSULTATION**

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[Insert details of other Divisions and/or Agencies consulted with in the preparation of the Submission]

### **ATTACHMENTS**

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A: Major Project Status Background and current Ministerial Role

B: [Title of attachment]

C: [Title of attachment]

[Note: Please do not insert a blank page between attachments]