

Launch of the National Mining Day Speech by Patron Gina Rinehart

It is an honour and a great occasion to be a part of the launch of this, the inaugural National Mining and Related Industries Day.

And how good is it, that our industry group now has its own permanent place on the calendar?

The 22nd of November every year – will be an opportunity for us to tell our story.

I'd like to ask that our board members stand so we can acknowledge their efforts and vision.

Please join me in applauding them.

We are here today to celebrate an industry group that is too often shy about speaking of its efforts and contributions

As a collective, we seem to prefer to stay 'beneath the radar' for fear of attracting too much of the wrong attention – and waking up the inevitable 'tall-poppy hit squad'!

But we have a story to tell and we should tell it proudly.

Australian Mining is a key part of this country's economy and I hope our future.

We've been credited with powering our country through the economic woes felt by the rest of the world ... and then, in the next breath, suddenly we are bad news and then some!

But Australians seem to know that when mining has a good year – so does the country. Our natural resources combined with our spirit to go after the challenges of our vast, remote and inhospitable terrain, mean many in this room take enormous risks.

When they work out – Australia is stronger.

And yes ...sometimes they don't ...but we battle on.

And yet, in a country that owes its standard of living in large part to the mining and related industries, too many Australians in the cities have a bad reaction to even the thought of mining.

While we're out there doing the workour critics can do the talking!

We live under the biased watch of a movement which seemingly wants us not to exist – but has no problem planning how to spend the billions in royalties and taxes we pay!

Increasingly, today's children are taught that 'mining is bad' – that it's "environmental vandalism".

And can you blame them for thinking it – when almost daily we have similar in our media.

I'm sure we've all often wondered how many of 'the knockers' have ever gone out to visit our great mines in the remote areas, see for themselves that we are not one giant quarry, but how far apart these mines actually are, and maybe even get their shoes dirty, put on the hard hat and reflective safety gear, wave away the flies or Mosquitos, share the dust and heat and have a look for themselves?

It's time to shake up our spirit.

How many Australians appreciate that the efforts of our country's miners keep the lights on for a large part of the world? We can bemoan coal, and uranium and shale oil but try to imagine the lives of billions of people without electricity; would we wish to be just one of them?

Many Australians believe that government spending drives the economy, not investment, businesses and industry.

We now have the greatest government debt in our history, and in comes the new government, who have increased the debt ceiling by 66 percent. They need to make the hard decisions and cut government spending and government growth, cut government regulations, approvals and permits, and guess what, we need to keep reminding them!

That's why this event and this date – National Mining Day, the 22nd of November is so important.

Let's speak up about the efforts and risks and contribution, and how important our industry group is to help pay off our debt and enable essential services, and also balance those stories with the realities.

We know that fewer than 1% of prospects become mines. The public doesn't. They even think that once you have a tenement, it just starts pouring out money to the lucky rich few, with no effort, work, risk or investment, and without providing much value or opportunities to anyone, save the privileged few.

What is portrayed as "luck" is actually the end product of decades of struggles and risk, hard work and money spent.

Our story is important but our existence is fragile in the face of growing competition from much lower cost countries of Africa, South America, Indonesia and elsewhere. Our existence is fragile because our costs are some of the highest in the world, yet we have to sell our products on the world markets in competition with all others. The world doesn't owe Australia a high cost existence; it simply won't keep buying our products if we don't try much harder to lower our costs. This important message should be understandable, but is it? No, instead almost daily our media attacks the wealthy mining magnates. Reduction in costs critical to our continuing ability to compete in world markets, is lambasted as wrong as the wealthy may get more wealthy, ignoring the reality that we must reduce our costs to compete on the world markets, and continue to earn revenue and support Australia's standard of living. We have also to work smarter and increase the diminishing, during the several last good years, productivity to be more competitive too.

Less tax and much less regulation are critical. I commend the Campbell Newman government for recognising this, and, doing something about it. And the Tony Abbott coalition government for sticking to their election pledges and moving to abolish MRRT and the carbon tax. They need to do much more however; this is just getting rid of recent investment deterrents.

If that happens, we all win....

I now have the great pleasure of welcoming the minister for resources, the Hon Ian McFarlane, who has kindly agreed to be our keynote speaker today. Ian, could you please join me on the stage? After Ian's speech we have the very great pleasure to, jointly with ANDEV Execs present, award the inaugural mining and related industries award to a very, very special Australian.

Thank you for being here, please enjoy our day, spread our messages and thank you all