

SE News
HD **Leasing risks are many**
WC 506 words
PD 28 November 2014
SN Townsville Bulletin
SC TOWNBU
ED Townsville
PG 36
LA English
CY © 2014 News Limited. All rights reserved.
LP

IN 2010 Jeff Seeney, the current Queensland deputy premier, said leasing was a sneaky and dishonest way to undertake asset sales. Tim Nicholls, the current treasurer, said a 99-year lease was as good as giving away the farm. He also said that to tell people that the long-term lease of assets was any different to a **sale** was to perpetuate a con on the people of Queensland.

Why are they now trying to ram asset leasing down our throats as a “Strong Choice”. I’m sure you’ve seen the ads, how could you not. So far the government has spent \$10 **million** trying to brainwash us with these lies and by the time the election rolls around they will have easily spent twice that. This is our tax dollars they are wasting.

TD

The LNP claims that they have listened to the people of Queensland by flipping on the asset **sale** plan and reverting to a long-term lease arrangement. However they blatantly refuse to release the details of this lease for public scrutiny. Why? Because there is no real difference between a lease and a **sale**.

Last financial year our electricity network returned a profit of \$1.1 **billion** into state coffers; money that was spent on schools, hospitals, roads etc.

If we lease these assets for a one-off cash grab we will lose these profits to an overseas **company** far into the future.

What’s more the **company** that wins the lease will only be focused on making a profit for their shareholders, which means higher prices for you. They will also try to cut costs by reducing staff numbers, closing depots and reducing maintenance on the network.

Remember that nine of the 11 Black Saturday bushfires were attributed by the Royal Commission to poorly maintained electrical infrastructure. Victoria’s power network is owned by SE (Singapore **Energy**) Ausgrid.

After privatisation in Victoria the workforce was cut from 13,000 to barely 3000 and for the next 10 years not one school leaving apprenticeship was offered in the electricity supply industry.

South Australia leased its power network to a **Chinese billionaire** and now has the highest electricity prices in the country.

Service levels will also be reduced. In many cases now in regional areas of Victoria and South Australia, when supply is lost to homes leading into a weekend, a crew is not sent out to restore power until after the weekend.

This comes down to two main reasons; firstly, there are simply not enough workers to provide the service, and secondly, even if the workers are available, private companies do not want to pay the penalties associated with the weekend call out work.

Consumers are left in the dark because to send a crew out would eat into the profit margin.

Does asset leasing sound like a strong choice to you? When we do get a chance at the next election, let's repay their lies and deceit. Put the LNP last.

CLIFFORD REDMAN, Townsville.

NS gcat : Political/General News

RE austr : Australia | queensl : Queensland | victor : Victoria (Australia) | apacz : Asia Pacific | ausnz : Australia/Oceania

PUB News Ltd.

AN Document TOWNBU0020141128eabs0000o