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A HUNTER mining manufacturer has won a \$4.5 million boost from the federal government to replace diesel equipment in underground mines with battery-driven machinery.

Tomago manufacturer Batt Mobile Equipment is one of eight companies to win funding under the federal government's Modern Manufacturing Initiative, a \$1.3 billion fund.

The initiative is geared towards ensuring Australian manufacturing remains sustainable and high quality. It has laid out roadmaps for upgrading manufacturing in the resources technology and critical minerals processing, food and beverage, medical products, recycling and clean energy, defence and space sectors.

The *Newcastle Herald* reported in October the company had retrofitted a 20-tonne loader in what was believed to be a world first.

Minister for Industry, Science and Technology Christian Porter said the sector was "world class".

"We are helping to unlock the enormous potential by providing targeted support for projects that will deliver big rewards for our local economy, generate more export earnings and create new

jobs," Mr Porter said.

Patron senator for the Hunter Hollie Hughes said the \$4.5 million injection would help the company build heavy battery electric vehicles for work in underground mines, billed as the nation's first commercially and operationally viable alternative to a diesel fleet.

The funding can comprise no more than 50 per cent of the project's cost.