



Speech by

**Hon. STEVE BREDHAUER**

**MEMBER FOR COOK**

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Hansard 10 November 1998

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Nerang-Broadbeach Road**

**Hon. S. D. BREDHAUER** (Cook—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads) (9.55 a.m.), by leave: I rise on this occasion to take issue with the member for Nerang for his abuse of parliamentary privilege by making scurrilous attacks in recent parliamentary sittings on a Main Roads public servant. Let me place on the Hansard record that I am appalled at the tone that the member for Nerang has adopted in his dealings with public servants in my department who are endeavouring to do their jobs.

The attack by the member for Nerang on the Main Roads district director over speed limits on the Nerang-Broadbeach Road is ill-founded. Decisions on speed limits are not made in isolation but on the basis of a recommendation of the Traffic Advisory Committee comprising representatives from the Gold Coast City Council, Queensland police, Queensland Transport, the RACQ and Main Roads. Speed limits are assessed against Queensland Transport's Guide to the Application of Speed Controls in terms of the road function, prevailing vehicle speeds and other factors, including accident history.

Road improvements totalling some \$4.7m have been undertaken on the Nerang-Broadbeach Road between Alabaster Drive and Hoy Street over the past 10 years, and the accident history has improved to an extent that the Traffic Advisory Committee found that 70 km/h was the appropriate regulatory speed on this section. I was particularly outraged by the claim of the member for Nerang that this decision would prompt "renewed slaughter on the Nerang-Broadbeach Road". For the record, I point out that the road toll on the Nerang-Broadbeach Road has fallen dramatically over the past five years. The attempts by the member for Nerang to attribute any road accident to the work of my department is irresponsible.

Let me now turn to the second issue raised by the member for Nerang, the preferred alignment for the section of the Nerang-Broadbeach Road between Ross Street and Nielsens Road. Two options have been considered for this upgrading: namely, to upgrade the existing Nerang-Broadbeach Road alignment or to construct a new deviation commonly referred to as the Nielsens Road deviation. Main Roads has embarked on a detailed planning study on both possible alignments involving extensive community consultation.

On 11 November last year, the Main Roads district director met with the member for Nerang. At that meeting, the member for Nerang requested that Main Roads not consult further with the community but, instead, proceed with the Nielsens Road deviation because he had told the residents adjacent to the existing road that the Nielsens Road deviation would be the one followed. On 19 December 1997, my predecessor the member for Gregory noted advice from his department of the problems that the Department of Main Roads was having because of the meddling of the member for Nerang in the consultation process for this planning study. For the information of members, I table a copy of that advice and a letter to the member for Nerang from the former Minister which outlines that consultation with the community should continue.

In 1992 the Nielsens Road deviation was considered the preferred route. A number of factors have contributed to a need to reassess the appropriate alignment for upgrading the Nerang-Broadbeach Road. These include—

the findings of the Carrara/Merrimac flood plain study;

the outcome of a court case between the developer and the Gold Coast City Council;  
the Gold Coast City Council's reaffirmation that it supports upgrading the existing road; and  
indicative costs for the Nielsens Road deviation at \$30m whilst upgrading the existing alignment would cost only \$10m.

The Main Roads district director at Nerang has explained to the member for Nerang and representatives of local residents groups that, if duplication does follow the existing alignment, the traffic will be further away from residences; quiet road surfacing would be used and, if warranted, landscaped noise mounds and barriers would be built between the upgraded road and the houses. The member for Nerang refuses to understand—

that Main Roads is required to adhere to the public consultation standards and guidelines approved by the previous Government;

that the views of all members of the community and of local government must be considered;  
and

that departmental officers have a legislative obligation to deliver road projects which represent best value in terms of cost and community needs.

For the record, the consultation phase on the Nerang-Broadbeach Road alignment between Ross Street and Nielsens Road has now concluded and I am currently considering the department's recommendation as to the preferred alignment. Before I make that decision, I propose to meet with representatives of key community groups in Nerang and, clearly, I will take their views into account.

What I will not cop is a continuation of the personal attacks on public servants in my department by the likes of the member for Nerang. Parliamentary privilege is an important part of our democratic institutions, but to use it to attack a public servant, who has no right of reply, is not only clearly inappropriate but also a cowardly act.

**Mr CONNOR:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The Minister is misleading the Parliament. First of all, a public servant—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! This is not a debate. What is your point of order?

**Mr CONNOR:** That anyone has the right of reply if they have been—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! There is no point of order. The Honourable the Minister?

**Mr CONNOR:** I did not mislead the Parliament. The public servant in question had misled the public—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! You are debating the issue.

**Mr CONNOR:**—and had lied to the public.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! You are debating the issue. Resume your seat.

**Mr BREDHAUER:** The member for Nerang continues with cowardly attacks on public servants under privilege. This is all about the incompetence of the member for Nerang in promising some of his constituents a particular outcome and then seeking to bully public servants into delivering that outcome.

**Mr CONNOR:** Mr Speaker, I find the remarks of the Minister untrue and offensive. I did not promise Nielsens Road. The previous Minister, Labor Minister Hamill—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Are you asking for a withdrawal?

**Mr CONNOR:** I ask for it to be withdrawn. I find it offensive and untrue.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will withdraw the words that the member finds offensive.

**Mr BREDHAUER:** I withdraw. This is all about the incompetence of the member for Nerang in promising some of his constituents a particular outcome, then seeking to bully public servants into delivering that outcome.

**Mr CONNOR:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. That is the same as what the Minister said before. I find it offensive and I have asked for it to be withdrawn. The previous Labor Minister, David Hamill, made the promise—not me.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! You have asked for it to be withdrawn. Minister?

**Mr BREDHAUER:** I withdraw, Mr Speaker. I am sorry; I forgot where I was up to. I was not sure which bit the member found offensive. I can guarantee the people of Nerang a fair and logical outcome—something that the member for Nerang has no interest in delivering.

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