



Speech by

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RAILWAY TECHNICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (7.23 p.m.): On 16 September I officially opened a half-day seminar for the Queensland Chapter of the Railway Technical Society of Australasia on behalf of Steve Bredhauer, the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads. Present were George Nikandros, RTSA(Q) chair; Susan Booth, Queensland Anti-Discrimination Commissioner; John Davey, RTSA; Cameron Smart, RTSA; and Bernie Griffiths, RTSA. I have a special interest in the question of providing solutions for people with disabilities on the Brisbane rail network, so I was pleased to represent him at the seminar. The minister has made disability access on all public transport a priority.

Quite apart from that, the Queensland government has to meet the standards set in law for public transport. There was a session on the program to meet that legislative responsibility, which has seen tens of millions of dollars spent over the past five years to provide better access to rolling stock and buildings on the train system. This program ranges from wheelchair space to special aids on the trains, and from lifts, footbridges and ramps to accessible toilets at stations.

Queensland Transport supports the Accessible Public Transport Disability Standards established by the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992. The legislation seeks to eliminate discrimination, as far as possible, against people with disabilities, and encompasses public transport. The Queensland government's Strategic Framework for Disability requires Queensland Transport to address the public transport needs of people with a disability.

Patronage on Queensland Rail services continues to increase. 45.4 million passenger trips were completed on Citytrain services in the financial year before last, and around 1.1 million long-distance Traveltrain trips. Our policies for the future development of Queensland's rail system have to make sure it is safe, fiscally responsible, environmentally sustainable and socially equitable. A well-established set of government priorities has guided our transport policies, which strive to improve the quality of life by, among other things, promoting individual, family and community vitality that respects diversity, and improving personal and public safety.

Many people in the transport sector throughout Queensland are working hard to improve services and accessibility. They appreciate that transport provides people with disabilities with access to community life others take for granted. This is clear from Queensland Transport's sponsorship of the Transport Award during Disability Access Week each July to acknowledge those people who go the extra distance to provide these services. I have experienced this in my own electorate of Mount Ommaney, which the Citytrain line to Ipswich straddles. We now have improved disability access at the Oxley Railway Station, and public consultation on proposed work at Corinda station is expected to start this month.

We have also recently received a Greenlink bus service to the Darra station for the residents of Sinnamon Park. But there is always more to be done. Seminars such as this help raise the professional and community awareness that is needed to maintain this momentum, so people with a disability have equitable access to all public transport, not just rail. I congratulate the Railway Technical Society of Australasia on arranging this event, choosing this important topic and arranging this series of expert speakers.

Time expired.