



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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GO CARD

Ms SIMPSON (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.47 pm): You cannot fix what you will not admit is faulty. Unfortunately for commuters on the public transport network, this government is refusing to take responsibility and acknowledge that the go card rollout has been a debacle, and the problems—not the solutions—continue to roll out. Minister Rachel Nolan has refused to take responsibility and say sorry for the fiasco. Under Labor we see that there is a pattern. Just as with the Gold Coast car race fiasco, it seems that in the Transport portfolio the minister's only responsibility is to do PR rather than to make good decisions. This transport minister will not say sorry for the botched rollout and she will not acknowledge that there is a problem. As the complaints from furious commuters have continued to mount, her response has been, 'I do acknowledge we didn't do enough in the lead-up to this change to promote them.' In other words, the commuters were wrong and she was right because she believed more PR was needed. This minister has failed in her responsibility to manage public transport in this state. The rollout of this ticketing system can only be described as inept, botched and a disgrace. In this matter the Minister for Transport's performance has matched that of the Iraqi information minister who kept denying that there was a war, even as the bombs rained down.

Before the January rollout of the increased fees that made paper tickets up to 20 per cent more expensive than go cards, we warned that there were not enough go card outlets in South-East Queensland. But the transport minister denied that there was a problem. The minister said that the go card was a leading-edge ticketing system that had been successfully rolled out. So what happened after the January changes came through? There was chaos. Consumers found that they could not easily access an alternative system, they could not easily access go cards and when the system failed the problems continued.

The LNP said there were huge holes in go card availability at rail stations. Only 34 out of 144 train stations could sell go cards when the changes to the system came through. The minister belatedly announced a rollout of go card outlets at rail stations. The LNP warned that some pensioners had to travel up to five kilometres to buy go cards, as there were no nearby outlets in their areas. The minister acknowledged that more should have been done. What? More should have been done to increase access to go cards? No, to promote go cards! The LNP warned that school students over 15 years of age would be caught out and would have to pay for full-fare paper tickets because of their inability to access concession cards when schools reopened. One would think that if this government was really ready for the changes that it was foisting on commuters school students should have been easily able to access go cards anywhere, before school went back. But, no! Only about half of the retail outlets and points of sale could sell concession go cards to those students. This affected all concession holders. When I raised this, of course they were in denial and then a few days later they had to roll out more concession retail outlets.

I will table the explanation that TransLink gave to some of those retail outlets who had been lobbying since last year, saying that there was a problem but the government would not listen. TransLink said—

Feedback from our customer base and the community has shown a strong interest in purchasing Concession go cards from the retail network. As a result, Concession go cards of all types ... will be added to the range available to be ordered.

I table that response.

Tabled paper: Email, dated 28 January 2010, from Carly Ambler, SEQfinanceTier3, to a go card reseller, in relation to changes to the existing reseller licence agreement, and related documents [\[1684\]](#).

But that response did not come out before school went back; it came out towards the end of the first week of school. Will the minister take responsibility? No. The LNP warned that commuters were experiencing go card scanning malfunctions and also that there was a problem with the complaints system. The transport minister, however, continues to deny that there is a problem with these systems failing. This minister is so out of this world that she is travelling on a spaceship, not public transport, when she claims that it is quite easy to use technology and it is working consistently and reliably.

I table a quote from a commuter who is typical of the many people who have been complaining that they have tried to lodge their complaint but they cannot get through on the complaints system. So how can this government say that there is not a significant number of complaints and failures? This commuter says—

I've only used my Go card twice in 2 months, yet 2 errors occur. The money is not the issue it is the error AND how long it took to report the errors ...

Tabled paper: Document, dated 5 January 2010, regarding go card issues [\[1685\]](#).

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