




Speech By  
**Annastacia Palaszczuk**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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**TRANSPORT (RAIL SAFETY) AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 3):  
DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT**

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (8.03 pm): Tonight I am so glad that we have heard from the Assistant Minister for Public Transport—the man who was charged with helping the minister with the most recent TransLink bus review. How evidence based was that, members? Not very much, was it, because we know what happened to that bus review? It got passed over to the Brisbane City Council. Here we have the assistant minister talking about the success of the government when he could not even handle the most simple basic community consultation in terms of a bus review. He has no credibility when it comes to public transport—absolutely none at all.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I rise to a point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I now turn to the disallowance motion at hand.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Watts): Order! The Leader of the Opposition will take her seat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I now turn—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will take her seat. What is your point of order?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It was relevance.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Absolutely relevant.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I now turn to the issue at hand in relation to the disallowance motion moved by the member for South Brisbane. Tonight in this debate we have heard how the Newman government is about reducing red tape. Well, what it is doing with the disallowance of this regulation is one clear thing: it is reducing safety. It is reducing the safety of our train drivers in this state. I was very pleased when I was transport minister to introduce—

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, you can listen to it. This is about putting workers first—putting workers first. You can all sit here in this chamber when 14,000 jobs—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The House will come to order. I will hear the speaker on their feet.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. During the last budget we heard that some 14,000 jobs would be lost by this government, and how many in Queensland Rail? Over 400 jobs were taken out of Queensland Rail—ripped out of Queensland Rail—and my understanding is that over 30 of those were rail safety jobs. If those opposite are talking about safety, be consistent. They are sacking people who are charged with looking after the safety of our passengers on our passenger

network, and it is a disgrace that these mandated train hours would now be ripped out by this heartless government.

I want to put some facts on the table about our passenger rail network in South-East Queensland. In the Citytrain network operated by Queensland Rail, there is 300 kilometres of track, 144 stations and 200 three-car trains ranging from electric multiple units which have been in service since 1979 to the latest suburban multiple units, the last of which rolled off the production line in 2011. There is an average of more than 800 train services each weekday. The network services approximately 180,000 passengers a day and there are more than 50 million passenger journeys a year. Ensuring a network of that size is operated safely should be this government's No. 1 priority, and it is not. Instead, the Minister for Transport has spent the past week grandstanding about Labor's record on rail safety. This is the typical behaviour from this minister, who is always looking backwards at who is to blame and never forward to the consequences of the decisions he makes. In fact, it is this minister who cut positions in the office of the rail safety regulator in his department. If the minister wants to try to pretend that the removal of those 11 positions will have no impact, then he is fooling nobody but himself. It is this minister who has already overseen hundreds of jobs cut in Queensland Rail. This is the same minister who said that he directed Queensland Rail not to sacrifice front-line service delivery. What could be more front line than the safety of workers and passengers? The minister pretends that all of the job cuts in Queensland Rail were back office staff who served no purpose, but we now know that that is simply not the case.

People working in safety positions right across the state in Queensland Rail have been made redundant. I was in Townsville last week and members there are very concerned about the number of rail safety positions that have been cut in the regions. There is a large amount of rail freight travelling from Mount Isa to Townsville going through the city. There is nothing more important than ensuring that these workers have the most adequate rest periods. When the union came to see me about this issue, what was it concerned about? It was concerned about workers' safety. It was concerned that if workers were made to work longer hours than necessary they would be fatigued, and that could cause huge issues on our rail network which could result in derailments or deaths. This is a very serious issue and it is one that—

**Mr Cox:** They keep telling me you guys never fixed the railway.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** We are talking about the safety of people's lives and you want to make a joke of it. If you want to make a joke of it why do you not stand up—

**Mr Choat** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** No, member for Ipswich West, why do you not stand up and speak in this debate—

**Mr Choat:** I will.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Good. I hope you will—

**Mr Choat:** I will.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You are a disgrace—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Watts): Order! Leader of the Opposition, I will ask you to take your seat. You will direct your comments in this debate through the chair.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In conclusion, I just want to say one thing. Tonight, if members vote to not keep these mandated hours, they are going to be putting at risk the lives and the safety of not only the train drivers but also passengers and the freight that they carry to and from the port. Queensland is a very large state and these drivers need to have these rest breaks. That is why we put in place this regulation in the first place.

I cannot understand a minister who would compromise safety. I cannot understand a minister who would take away rail safety positions right throughout this state. It is a very sad day in this parliament when members get up in this House and talk about cutting red tape when what they are doing is putting at risk people's lives. I ask members to think very long and hard before they make their final decision in relation to this matter because lives could be lost. I am not going to vote for something that will compromise the safety of one's life.