




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (8.16 pm): I rise to strongly oppose this disallowance motion that has been moved in this House tonight. I believe that the opposition does not get the point. The amendment to the Transport (Rail Safety) Amendment Regulation (No. 3) will continue to ensure that a rail transport operator must have and implement a fatigue management program that provides for—

Identifying and assessing risks to the safety of persons arising, or potentially arising, from the operator's railway operations that may be caused, wholly or partly, by rail safety workers carrying out work on or in relation to the operator's rail infrastructure or rolling stock whilst fatigued.

What I have just read out is common sense. We treat the train drivers like human beings and allow them to show common sense.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The member for South Brisbane might laugh. Obviously, she may not respect that train drivers have common sense.

We have spoken about how the Newman government is working towards the reduction of red tape. In 2012 the Queensland Office of Best Practice Regulation assessed the national rail safety reform. So we have already done this within our first 12 months in office. As part of that assessment, the OBPR noted the following points in relation to the potential impacts of fatigue management. In 2011, the National Transport Commission released a regulatory impact statement for the national rail safety reform. In a submission made in response to that RIS, QR National noted that mandating maximum hours of work and rest in the national legislation would increase costs and potentially compromise safety by reverting to a fatigue management system that does not effectively address the causes of fatigue.

The Leader of the Opposition spoke about how she was in Townsville quite recently. She talked about rail freight rolling through Townsville. I would like to touch on the point that we are, as a government, doing everything we can to get more freight onto the rail lines. In conversation with the member for Thuringowa it was interesting to note that during the election campaign he, along with the candidates around Townsville, spoke to several train drivers who had been train drivers for between 10 and 15 years, which is a long period of time. What they discussed with these now good members for electorates around Townsville was that due to the lack of management under the Labor government to go by train to Cairns was now eight hours when it should be six. Two hours was added.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: If your government was planning to force them to drive longer without breaks.

Mr Cox: Because of the quality of the track.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you. I will take the interjection. The quality of the track was that bad that they had to—

Mr Cox: Slow down.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you for that interjection. I believe that is a very good point to make for the Leader of the Opposition. If I could just get back on track, the Transport (Rail Safety) Amendment Regulation introduced prescriptive hours of work and rest for train drivers. At the time of these amendments there was considerable uncertainty nationally on how to best manage fatigue risks related to train drivers. The Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, ably chaired by the member for Warrego, Mr Howard Hobbs, had the opportunity to review this regulation. It is important to note that advice was sought from the Department of Transport and Main Roads on the fatigue management systems and requirements that would be in place between the removal of the requirements from the regulation and the enactment of the national law. I note the words that were said in this House by the member for Warrego.

In closing I will touch on something that the member for Chatsworth noted and that is how we were able to give these train drivers some commonsense in their work life and also to remind the opposition that they are bound by their industrial agreements and their workplace health and safety agreements. Obviously these drivers would have fatigue management plans around the hours of their work. I congratulate the minister for all the hard work and effort that he has put in to safety on our trains. He is doing absolutely wonderful work. I reiterate that I strongly oppose this disallowance motion.