




Speech By  
**Trevor Watts**

**MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Toowoomba Range Crossing, Roadworks**

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.09 pm): I rise today to represent the people of Toowoomba. The people of Toowoomba live in a beautiful part of the world. It is the gateway to Western Queensland. It is 700 metres above sea level and this has left everybody who lives in Toowoomba with a logistical problem and that is the Toowoomba range crossing. The Toowoomba range crossing was severely damaged in the flood of 2011 and it is now considered that it needs a safety upgrade. These upgrade works are being undertaken. The contract has gone out and the state government has contributed substantial funds to ensuring that we have a safe and reliable road. Unfortunately, deadlines of 30-minute delays will be applied to the range while these repairs are going on. This week some people and businesses in my area were very, very disappointed when the time delays went past the 30 minutes. I would like to thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads and the director-general for assisting me. My community was crying out because the delays went over an hour and 10 minutes. I spoke to the minister and the director-general and we have already made some changes. The director-general is visiting Toowoomba in the early part of next week to make sure that we get the delays while these very necessary are being undertaken down to 30 minutes.

I want to reassure the people of Toowoomba—not just the families, but also the businesses, the bus drivers and the other people who rely on the Warrego Highway—that I will represent them and work hard in this place not only to make sure that the road is safe and reliable but also—whilst these repairs are going on—to keep the delays to the bare minimum while ensuring that the work can be done and the workers are safe.

I should just add that the Warrego Highway as it drives through Toowoomba is James Street. It divides my counterpart on the south side of my electorate. People should be aware that 50 per cent of the Port of Brisbane's exports come down that road. The entire rest of the road network in the south-east corner between them carry the other 50 per cent. When people tell me their roads are busy, they have to understand that the heart of Toowoomba is cut by over 6,000 B-double trucks on a daily basis getting up and down that road. We cannot wait any longer for the range crossing to be built. I am pleased with the Deputy Premier's efforts in ensuring that we have a good workable business plan and I would encourage the minister and the Deputy Premier to make this an absolute priority, not just for me but for everybody who uses the Warrego Highway and for the financial benefit of everybody in Queensland.