



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**


**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.06 pm): The transport minister is fast becoming the Palaszczuk Labor government's grim reaper. When Queenslanders see Minister Hinchliffe on TV—

**Mr Hinchliffe:** He is not tall and thin.

**Mr POWELL:** The comparisons continue!—not only do they let out a collective groan; they know that bad news is coming. This rang true last Wednesday. With tens of thousands of people at the Ekka, the minister saw his chance to announce that a major stretch of the Sunshine Coast and Caboolture rail line will be closed for six days. For six days commuters will have to catch rail buses and transfer services—

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I just want to ensure that the member for Glass House is not misleading the House. There is no stretch of the Sunshine Coast line; it is the Caboolture line that has been closed.

**Mr POWELL:** I am sorry, Madam Deputy Speaker, but to get to the Sunshine Coast you have to go on the Caboolture line.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): I ask the member to proceed.

**Mr POWELL:** For six days commuters will have to catch rail buses and transfer services. It is simply going to be a nightmare. With his track record, commuters are right to be sceptical about whether the minister will be able to make this work. If the minister needs proof, I refer him to a meeting that was held late last week between TransLink and the member for Aspley. It was the member for Aspley who had to explain to TransLink that the Bald Hills and Carseldine railway stations are significant commuter park-and-ride stops for anyone further north and that those commuters will not be stopping at Bald Hills and Carseldine but will be driving on to Zillmere, creating parking chaos, a nightmare for residents of Zillmere and a commuter nightmare for anyone heading into town.

We have also seen today the magnitude of the transport minister's blunders when it comes to the Moreton Bay Rail Link. RTI-ed documents from the minister have shown that the signalling testing and precommissioning works on the Moreton Bay Rail Link have been delayed three different times— from Christmas 2015 to February 2016, then to March and again to April. All the while, as late as March, the minister was putting out media statements telling Queenslanders that all was well. Four months of delay is what this minister considers 'on track'.

After the first delay, do you think the minister thought to request a briefing? No. How about the second? No. The third? Well, it was not until May that this Palaszczuk Labor transport minister thought, 'Something's not right here. I had better get a brief.' You can forgive the minister for being a little confused when the brief finally came. The member for Sandgate suddenly found himself in the middle of a turf war between Queensland Rail and his own department—nine pages of conflicting advice.

Queensland Rail said the system was risky. TMR said, 'No, it's not.' Queensland Rail said the system was not up to the job. TMR said, 'There's no such evidence.'

TMR, the project team in charge, said that the system was safe but, in a snub to his department and to his director-general, the minister sided with Queensland Rail. What a show of confidence! The transport minister must now come clean with Queenslanders about what his incompetence has cost taxpayers. We now know that the new system may not be compatible with the ETCS program the government is spending some \$600 million on. Does that mean that in a couple of years we will be back here spending money on a new system for the MBRL because this minister could not enforce a contract? What additional costs have built up on the MBRL project because of this minister's delay? We on this side, the opposition, are always wanting to be helpful in situations like this, so I do have some advice for the transport minister. The transport minister might like to pick up the phone and call Sir Topham Hatt. He might be able to call in Thomas the Tank Engine because, let us face it, not only is Thomas a really useful engine, not only does Thomas come with guards who can actually—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! I do not think we need the use of props thank you, member.

**Mr POWELL**:—jump out of the engine and change the signals—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER**: I think we have seen that, thank you.

**Mr POWELL**:—themselves, manually overriding the automatic system, but Thomas is also a steam engine and for those six days that the Caboolture line will be closed perhaps Thomas could be assisting commuters get to and from Caboolture and all stations north into the city. As I said, the transport minister must now come clean with Queenslanders about what his incompetence has cost them, because surely all of these extra costs to commuters and these bungles should cost this minister his job.