




Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (12.39 pm): I rise to speak to the Queensland Audit Office report 8 of 2014-15, titled *Traveltrain renewal: Sunlander 14*. I take this opportunity to thank the committee that I worked with when we considered this report. I have changed committees. The work that that committee did with the secretariat was a great opportunity for me to get an understanding of how the Queensland Audit Office reporting system works and the way reports are considered by committees.

The Sunlander service in Queensland, particularly in my region of Gladstone, is fantastic. I note that the minister travelled by train to come to Gladstone for the community cabinet. I met him on the deck of the train there at Gladstone. It was good to see the minister utilise the train to come to Gladstone.

A government member interjected.

Mr BUTCHER: I will take that interjection. It was great to be there to greet the minister at Gladstone station, because at that time we also celebrated 10 years of service of one of the members of the Gladstone based staff of QR. We have great people working for us in Queensland Rail in Queensland.

After considering the Auditor-General's report, the committee came to the conclusion that there were some errors in the process, particularly the change in the structure of the board and how different groups had access to the way the project was put forward. As the member for Burleigh said, the committee found that some funds were wasted. But to QR's credit, a lot of the issues that were recognised in the Auditor-General's report were tabled at a later stage and were fixed.

I am proud to be part of a government that has released the State Infrastructure Plan. We are getting on with the job of building these vital pieces of infrastructure. As we have heard recently, the Queensland government has just released the funding for a bridge renewal program. So the government is not only fixing rail in our state but also getting on with providing vital infrastructure such as replacing bridges in my electorate of Gladstone.

Mr Millar: There is 24 per cent unemployment in the outback.

Mr BUTCHER: I will take that interjection. We will utilise local labour to help build bridges for vital roads leading to Gladstone Harbour. Speaking of Gladstone Harbour, this Labor government has saved our assets, including the Gladstone port. It would have been absolutely pointless building vital infrastructure to connect our regional areas to the Gladstone port if we were giving that money and all of those bonuses to the Chinese. That massive port in Gladstone is now generating billions of dollars for the Queensland government instead of being potentially owned by a foreign corporation. Not only

that, these vital roads leading from our regional areas into the wonderful Gladstone port, as mentioned this morning by the minister, will supply cattle for a potential beef processing plant in the Gladstone industrial estate. That is a fantastic opportunity and a great investment by the Labor government to provide \$40 million for infrastructure to rebuild bridges.

We have a great train system in Queensland. As I said before, many people in Gladstone utilise that service to travel to Cairns or to go down to Brisbane. A lot of my friends in Gladstone use the train service to get from Gladstone to Brisbane to watch certain events that are staged in Brisbane. It is great that those people can travel in comfort on the Queensland Rail service. As I said before, the committee recommended that the report be accepted.