



Speech By  
**Lachlan Millar**


**MEMBER FOR GREGORY**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

**INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Note**

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (12.34 pm): I rise to speak to the report *Traveltrain renewal: Sunlander 14* and endorse the comments from the member for Burleigh. Many members in this parliament would know that rail is very important to the electorate of Gregory. It is something I have been very conscious of. I have certainly advocated for continued investment in rail and rail infrastructure in Western Queensland, because a lot of our wealth-creating regions need to use rail to get their product to port.

When we read the Auditor's report *Traveltrain renewal: Sunlander 14*, we become quite disturbed at the waste of money the Audit Office has pointed out. The report states—

While the capital outlay of \$195 million to acquire and upgrade the cars for the Sunlander 14 project was reasonable, the case presented to invest in Sunlander 14 did not demonstrate value for money.

The three 14-car train solution exceeded requirements based on patronage, which was declining.

The concern I have is that spending money on this and not doing it properly takes money away from rail upgrades and investment in Western Queensland. We need to have that investment in Western Queensland. When we see reports like this that show a lack of regard for proper business case analysis, we see the wasting of money and we consider the lack of money invested in rail over the past 20 years, it becomes quite disturbing.

What we need in places like Gregory, Warrego—I acknowledge the member for Warrego here—Mount Isa, Dalrymple, Cook and Callide—

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** Callide is one of the fastest growing food production areas in Queensland. We need proper rail. When we see reports like this which show a lack of regard for financial analysis, understanding a project and value for money and then we do not see money being invested in Western Queensland, it becomes quite disturbing.

This week Labor Party members have been talking about their great Infrastructure Plan for Queensland. In that context, the comments and recommendations in the Auditor-General's report led to me becoming quite disturbed about the Infrastructure Plan. We need value for money in electorates like Gregory.

**Mr Butcher:** Just like 1 William Street?

**Mr MILLAR:** I take that interjection from the member for Gladstone.

**Mr Butcher:** I'm going to sit over there one day.

**Mr MILLAR:** You probably will sit over there one day—and you will not sit here!

The report also found—

QR did not undertake comprehensive market or other analysis to support its expectations of patronage and full fare growth.

We need to make sure that when we are spending Queensland taxpayers' money we spend it right and on the right projects. This report shows that there was a complete lack of regard for a business case. It is certainly disappointing for people out my way who continue to see money wasted on projects. We heard earlier about water and rail projects by the previous Labor government.

**Mr Hart:** Trains without seats.

**Mr MILLAR:** Trains without seats and trains without toilets. I think it is important that we take note of this report. It gives a clear indication that we need to make sure that money is invested in the right way.

We need to make sure that Gregory and Western Queensland have the right infrastructure. Rail plays an important part. We need to be able to use rail more effectively, making sure we have cattle on rail and goods going out there on rail. Imagine how much of the wasted money identified in this report could have been used to upgrade the line from Rockhampton to Emerald and Longreach or we could have upgraded the line from Toowoomba to Roma, Charleville and Quilpie. There is a great opportunity to invest in infrastructure out there. It creates wealth for the region and for the state. We should invest in the right projects.