




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

Record of Proceedings, 13 October 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Turnbull Federal Government, Road Funding

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (6.42 pm): I rise to speak at a time when jobs and employment are much needed in North Queensland and Central Queensland, yet we see the Turnbull government dithering and disregarding job opportunities through its inaction. Yet again, I call on the Turnbull federal government to free up funding for vital roads projects in North and Central Queensland. Successful projects under the Northern Australian Roads Program and the entire funded Beef Roads Program are stuck in limbo waiting for the federal government to announce them, deferring much needed jobs in regional Queensland.

Both programs were announced in the Northern Australia White Paper released by the Abbott government on 18 June 2015—16 months ago. In November 2015 the Palaszczuk government provided its submission for the \$600 million NARP program to the federal government. It included 25 initiatives totalling \$590 million requiring federal funding in the order of \$470 million. The Turnbull government made a notional allocation to Queensland in the 2016-17 federal budget for NARP of around \$375 million. That is a lot of money! The Turnbull government has since decided to split the program into two tranches. In announcing the first tranche, the Turnbull government has committed to six of the NARP projects worth \$141 million. These NARP commitments require a state matching contribution of \$35 million, which the Palaszczuk government has committed to. This means approximately \$220 million of federal investment in Queensland Northern Australia roads projects are yet to be announced, holding off a lot of jobs in regional Queensland.

I wrote to the federal minister on 2 August 2016 seeking clarification on when the federal government will announce the remaining successful projects, and I am yet to receive advice back more than two months later. There were three beef roads round tables held between October 2015 and March this year, one each in Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The Queensland round table was facilitated by Transport and Main Roads. On 12 April 2016 the federal minister called for NARP submissions by 6 May 2016, allowing some three weeks to complete in the required format in consultation with regional roads and transport groups and industry. On 6 May I wrote back providing the Palaszczuk government's beef roads submission comprising 18 submissions, 27 packages totalling \$123 million. Again the Turnbull made a notional allocation to Queensland in the 2016-17 federal budget for the Beef Roads Program of \$62.5 million, and in my letter to the federal minister on 2 August this year I also asked the federal government for the likely timing of announcing the successful projects under this program. I am yet to receive advice back.

The federal government needs to get on with these roads projects. They are holding up about \$282 million in funding in regional Queensland. We need these jobs now. They ought to stop dithering and get on with it.