




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 17 March 2016

INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.29 pm): This morning we have heard some scathing comments about the lack of probity in relation to water. I refer to the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme and the Gold Coast Desalination Plant. It gives me absolutely no pleasure to stand here and talk about the Auditor-General's report *Traveltrain renewal: Sunlander 14*. This is another example of how badly Labor governments construct and build these items. Over the last couple of days we have heard from those opposite about their Infrastructure Plan. They are not going to handle this at all well.

The Auditor-General's report is absolutely scathing. We have just heard the chair of the committee read extracts from the report. What he did not mention is that the shareholding ministers involved in this were Andrew Fraser—one of the worst treasurers we have ever seen—and then minister for transport Anastacia Palaszczuk, now the Premier of Queensland. The Auditor-General's report states—

The Sunlander 14 project is a case study in obfuscation and ill-informed decision making.

This government is really good at ill-informed decision-making. There was an initial capital outlay of \$195 million. When we came to government in 2012 the project was running way over budget, so the decision was made to descope the project. We ended up with trains with fewer carriages—less bang for our buck. In fact, the descopeing process led to the then government writing off \$50 million. In order to save \$50 million it wrote off \$50 million that had already been spent. This morning we heard about the waste of money in the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme and the desal plant. This is just another thing the Labor government did not get right.

The Auditor-General's report found that by reducing the investment in the project by \$50 million, following the descopeing decision, QR wasted a similar amount of money. They just poured \$50 million down the drain. The report went on to say that it did not demonstrate value for money and resulted in writing off the \$50 million already spent on the project.

The descopeing resulted in 40 per cent fewer new cars at 88 per cent of the original price. For 88 per cent of the original price we got 40 per cent fewer train cars. Those opposite are incredibly good at spending other people's money but not getting any bang for their buck. The average cost per carriage is now slightly more than \$10 million, which represents a 92 per cent increase from the original fixed cost. A fixed price contract was negotiated, but there ended up being a 92 per cent increase in the cost. I do not know how members opposite can possibly say this is a good result for the people of Queensland because it is, quite frankly, an absolute disgrace. It seems that those opposite go from one disgraceful project to another. They have no care for the money of the people of Queensland. They just go out and spend money.

Earlier in the day the Deputy Premier said that there was an underspend in infrastructure when we were in government. Wonderful! We saved money! Those opposite just want to waste it: 'We've got no money in the bank and the credit card is full, but we will go and get another credit card and we will go out and spend it on something we really do not need.' They spent that amount of money and we are ending up with fewer train cars. Those opposite should feel disgraced by that.