




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Record of Proceedings, 15 March 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

State Infrastructure Plan

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (10.00 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to building this state up, building our economy, building our human capital and building infrastructure. This requires investment in people, ideas and infrastructure. At its heart, the State Infrastructure Plan is about growing Queensland; it is about rebuilding Queensland after three years of paralysis from those opposite—three years of economic vandalism.

I am pleased that transport infrastructure will play a key role in the State Infrastructure Plan. This government is committed to ensuring that maintaining and enhancing our very important north coast rail line remains an infrastructure priority for Queensland. This is why I am pleased to highlight to the House that the State Infrastructure Plan includes \$95 million in new funding for the North Coast Line Capacity Improvement Project. This project will deliver approximately 290 jobs, deliver improved infrastructure and increase the performance of the north coast line. As identified in the SIP, the Queensland government recognises the importance of the 1,680 kilometre north coast rail line in supporting the growth of the Queensland economy.

The north coast line, as you appreciate, Mr Speaker, is a key freight route that generated \$45.73 million in raiiling minerals, sugar and molasses and containerised freight last year alone. The line moves containerised and industrial freight, minerals, livestock and bulk commodities including sugar and grain. It connects Brisbane to major centres in Central and North Queensland, including Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns.

Sugar traffic is hauled from sugar mills to the ports of Mackay and Townsville. Mineral resources traffic from the Mount Isa line runs on the north coast line from Stuart to the Port of Townsville. Industrial products such as cement and fuel are hauled on the line from the Port of Townsville to Stuart before joining the Mount Isa line to commence the journey to the mining centres of Cloncurry and Mount Isa. Investing in upgrading and boosting the freight capacity on this rail line delivers for our economic performance as a state.

Our investments in regional rail and freight boosts have been widely welcomed by industry, I am pleased to say. The Australasian Railway Association said that they—

... applaud the commitment by the Queensland Government in allocating \$95 million towards a major freight rail project 'the North Coast Line Capacity Improvement,' as announced in today's release of the State Infrastructure Plan.

Commuter group RAIL Back On Track said they—

... welcomed the final State Infrastructure Plan. We note the focus on transport particularly, and welcome the North Coast Line Capacity Improvement Project.

Infrastructure Partnerships Australia said—

The State Infrastructure Plan is a sensible and realistic complement to the Infrastructure Australia Priority List outlining what Queensland needs to move forward.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering for all of Queensland. Only under a Labor government do things start to happen. Labor plans, Labor delivers, Labor builds.