




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Budget, Rail Infrastructure

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (2.38 pm): The Palaszczuk government values the importance of innovation and understands the need to invest in technology within our current practices to achieve greater outcomes. As Minister for Transport, I am charged with revitalising and reforming our rail services and making public transport more accessible. To do this, technology can play a part. That is why I was pleased that yesterday the Treasurer announced the Palaszczuk government will invest \$634 million over the next eight years to fund a world-class rail signalling system in South-East Queensland. This new signalling system, the European Train Control System, commonly referred to as ETCS, will completely modernise the inner-city rail network, boosting capacity by 20 per cent and allowing an extra 12,000 commuters through the CBD during peak rail periods.

Rail demand is expected to double by 2026 and triple by 2036, yet as many members know the current rail system will soon be approaching capacity. This new automatic braking technology will be installed between Milton and Northgate stations and allow Queensland Rail to safely run trains closer together which will create capacity for an extra eight trains—four in each direction—every hour. Every single train line in our city network merges into a signal corridor through the CBD, with every service stopping at Roma Street, Central, Bowen Hills and Fortitude Valley stations. This new system will allow trains to move far more quickly through this bottleneck. The ETCS initiative will be delivered entirely by Queensland Rail and will create more than 250 jobs throughout the life of the project.

While the new state-of-the-art ETCS signalling system will optimise the existing rail network and provide a much needed boost to capacity, a long-term solution is required. That solution is Cross River Rail. As the Treasurer said yesterday, Cross River Rail is Infrastructure Australia's No. 1 priority initiative for Queensland, and it is in the No. 1 infrastructure priority for the Palaszczuk government. That is why we are establishing the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority, injecting \$50 million into the authority over the financial year to undertake the preparatory work, to work with federal and local governments and other stakeholders to lay the foundations and drive the Cross River Rail project. Queenslanders cannot afford a delay to Cross River Rail.