




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 1 March 2017

MOTION

Queensland Rail, Timetable; Order for Production of Documents

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (6.00 pm): I move—

That, in accordance with standing order 27, this House orders the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport to produce to the House within 72 hours a report from Queensland Rail on the outcome of the chair's 'stress test' of the Citytrain timetable.

Those opposite should hang their head in shame for how they have treated South-East Queensland rail commuters: they have cut and slashed train services; they have not hired enough drivers; they have packed passengers onto trains like sardines; and they have stuffed up the new train order. The Premier claims to lead an open and accountable government; she claims to be the paragon of integrity and transparency, but the Palaszczuk Labor government will not let commuters know what is going on. They keep commuters in the dark and it is simply not good enough.

We have a test for the Deputy Premier. Will she be up-front with commuters and table the Queensland Rail timetable stress test results? It is as simple as that. Will the Deputy Premier be up-front with commuters and table the Queensland Rail timetable stress test results?

Commuters need confidence. They need confidence that they will be able to catch a train when they want to go to work, when they want to go to school, in periods of high demand, in periods of low demand, during school holidays, on Christmas Day, to attend the Adele concert or during the biggest event that Queensland will have seen for such a long time, the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. We know the Queensland Rail commissioner Phillip Strachan had serious concerns about Queensland Rail's ability to handle these events. That is why Mr Strachan recommended this stress test of the timetable be undertaken. Mr Strachan is now Queensland Rail Chair. He has undertaken the stress testing that he wanted, so where is the report? It is hardly surprising that we have not seen it because this government has form in covering up unfavourable data and reports.

Just recently we had to consistently call for access to the TransLink monthly performance data, which was long overdue. It was simply like pulling teeth. Then, finally, the government dumped the data late in the afternoon on a Friday. They were so embarrassed by what was contained in that report. Is it any wonder, because it showed that train services in South-East Queensland have not been this bad since the Premier was Anna Bligh's transport minister, and we all know what dark days they were for commuters here in South-East Queensland.

Today the October to December 2016 TransLink Tracker was released. Is that not a doozy? It has confirmed what we all knew: commuters are fleeing our public transport network and it is because of the inexperience and ineptitude of those opposite. Across the TransLink network, patronage is down 4.35 million from the previous quarter while specifically for trains, patronage is down 1.35 million from the previous quarter. This is a damning indictment of this government's rail fail. The last time patronage was going down and down like this was under the tenure of the Premier as the then transport minister. It is simply a case of back to the future with this lot.

The TransLink Tracker also shows reliability on the network falling off a cliff. They could not even change the vertical scale to make that look any better. A cliff is a cliff is a cliff when it looks like that. Rail on-time running is down three per cent over the quarter while the number of services actually delivered is down 1.07 per cent at a time when there was supposed to be more services.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has also buried the report on the Moreton Bay Rail Link signalling issues—the report that the Premier’s hand-picked director-general wanted edited. This was the red flag, the precursor, to the rail fail issues we are seeing today, but the government refuses to fess up to commuters about their incompetence.

SEQ commuters are the ones who need a stress test after putting up with the cuts, the cancellations and the delays that this Labor government has served up to them. Commuters will need a stress test for the extra 2½ years of rail fail they will have to endure and the 16,000 service cuts that will occur this year alone. The government must release the stress test results. This is the Premier’s and the Deputy Premier’s mess. Again, it will take the LNP to clear it up.

(Time expired)