




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Record of Proceedings, 17 October 2018

**MOTION: QUEENSLAND RAIL; NO CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTER FOR
TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS**

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (5.34 pm): This outrageous motion is a very broad attack on our government and our transport minister. I proudly rise to speak against it. Our fine transport minister and, indeed, our entire Palaszczuk government have, are and always will be committed to providing safe and reliable public transport for all Queenslanders, including those naysayers I am hearing from at the moment.

As South-East Queensland's population grows, we have to ensure that Queensland Rail's 152 stations on the region's network provide every person with equal access. Some of our stations are more than a century old, or were built well before modern disability legislation set the standards that we expect our stations to be measured by. Modernising our stations is an enormous task. It is a challenge that is also faced by rail operators in other states and across the world. I go back to my old industry where we would much prefer to build a high-voltage substation on a greenfield site rather than construct an alive substation or brownfield while keeping the power on. Similarly, upgrading a station while it is in use has to be a very well-considered project where public and commuter safety as well as keeping the trains running has to be front and centre. Owing to the nature of the network, building a new station is not always an option, so in most circumstances brownfield upgrades are what we face.

The work that I have done to secure the upgrade of Dakabin station at the last term is no secret to those in this place. I will be there through every step as that upgrade progresses through the planning stage to the design and construction phases. The shifting of the station was canvassed, but commuters who used Dakabin station were very clear about what they wanted and that is to have what they currently have there upgraded. I am sure that this decision was mostly due to waiting for so long to have some action on the station and bird-in-hand logic prevailed.

The Palaszczuk Labor government is investing \$300 million to upgrade 16 stations—not just Dakabin, although that is my priority. Queensland Rail's Station Accessibility Upgrade Program has already delivered important station improvements at the Graceville, Dinmore, Nambour, Alderley and Newmarket stations. Construction will soon start at the Morayfield, Boondall and, as my colleague will be very happy to know, Strathpine stations. Upgrades like that of Dakabin station are also planned for the Buranda, Albion, Cannon Hill, Auchenflower, East Ipswich and Loganlea stations. Queensland Rail is working closely with developers around Albion and Buranda and with the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority at Fairfield station to ensure the best facility outcomes for customers.

As part of the South Bank transit oriented development, platform 1 at South Bank station will be raised and the lift and platform works at Central station are included in the ongoing Central station upgrades. Thanks to the transport minister, work is planned or underway right across the south-east—from its busiest stations to its outer urban stops. The accessibility upgrades that I am talking about typically focus on new lifts, raised platforms to assist boarding, pedestrian overpasses, tactile floors, ramps, hearing loops and accessible toilets.

Queensland Rail is also seeking feedback from the Accessibility Reference Group, which is an important group that provides feedback from the sector to drive improvements and ensure that our rail services meet the community's expectations. The Accessibility Reference Group includes representatives from Guide Dogs Queensland, Vision Australia, Queenslanders with Disability Network, MS Society, Spinal Life, Arthritis Queensland and Better Hearing Australia.

Our government understands the challenges ahead in making our rail service more accessible. These upgrades will increase the number of independently accessible stations on the Citytrain network from 80 to 91. That means that, once these projects are complete, about 83 per cent of rail customers will travel to and from accessible stations. The station upgrade program demonstrates that we have a plan to gradually and systematically improve facilities so that the barriers to travel that have existed for people with a disability for decades are removed.

I want to touch on the rhetoric around driver training, internally and externally. I cannot leave that alone. It is hard to train new drivers when there is no-one to train them because they have all been sacked. I have spoken to many drivers and the strong opinions that I have received from them is that the complexity around the Citytrain network calls for a very rigorous and comprehensive—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, I would like to hear the member's contribution. The level of noise is unacceptable. I ask you to hear the member.

Mr KING: Their lack of desire to understand is disappointing. Sadly, it does take some time to progress through this rigorous training. In the few seconds I have left all I have to say is that this motion is a joke. It is spurious and I urge everyone to vote it down.