




Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2019

TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (3.38 pm): I am pleased to speak on this report, which is the review of Auditor-General's report No. 4 into integrated transport planning. The Auditor-General's report assessed whether the state's approach to strategic transport planning enables efficient use of transport resources and a transport system that is sustainable over the long term.

The report notes that there are four key pieces of legislation and the state planning policy that guide transport planning in Queensland. The key planning documents include the Transport Coordination Plan—a 10-year framework—regional plans and regional transport plans. I would probably add to that the *TransformingSEQ* document, released just this week, which is a far-reaching blueprint by the Palaszczuk government and the Council of Mayors South-East Queensland. The *TransformingSEQ* proposal highlights the need for a genuine partnership between all tiers of government to deliver a future for one of Australia's fastest growing regions that puts connectivity, livability and jobs first. I was pleased to see in the document released this week an acknowledgement of open level crossing removals as a way of optimising our transport network and a mention of the Beams Road level crossing in my area.

Going back to the report, the Queensland Audit Office identified that, in developing and implementing various planning documents to achieve preferred transport trends, a number of challenges need to be addressed. These include expected population growth, rapidly changing consumer expectations, extreme weather that affects the transport system, rapidly changing technologies, the need to maintain and improve transport in regional areas, constrained funding for maintaining the transport network, and the need to integrate planning across all levels of government.

I am pleased to see that this government through its departments and agencies is getting on with addressing these challenges. Our committee is also hopefully assisting in looking at some of these challenges through the transport technology inquiry that is currently underway. It is looking into, among other things, automated vehicles, connected vehicles and electric vehicles, and the future of all of those things.

In relation to these challenges faced in integrated transport planning, when we are talking of the huge sums of money needed in major transport projects, no discussion can be complete without mentioning the federal government's role in all of this. I quote from the committee hearing on 11 June last year. The DTMR spokesperson said—

In terms of the challenge of the environments and the transparency of Australian government contributions to investment, it is fairly clear. We have just had the federal budget handed down. We are well aware of the major programs that were included in the budget. What is not as clear at the moment is some of the announcements in the budget, including a large pot of money for roads of strategic importance. There was also an urban congestion fund. There was also a fund around major business cases. At the moment there is no guidance in terms of what the process will be, the time frames and the guidelines that each state will adopt to try to bid for those pots of money. That is probably the uncertain bit.

Basically, we can do all the transport planning we like here in Queensland but, if the federal government does not want to be transparent, up-front and cooperative with the state about what it wants to fund, we will always be behind the eight ball. The constant black mark against the federal government on transport planning is plain for everyone to see—its lack of commitment to Cross River Rail, the single most important transport project in the state.

All 13 Queensland Audit Office recommendations have been agreed to and are being implemented. Specifically, there are eight for DTMR and five for DILGP. These relate to, among other things, strengthening how regional transport plans integrate with regional land use plans, setting baselines for key performance measures, developing a plan to implement the actions from regional transport plans and things like developing performance monitoring mechanisms. In terms of performance monitoring, I was pleased to see a couple of weeks ago that, when measuring public transport usage across South-East Queensland from December 2018 compared to December 2017, there was a 6.5 per cent increase in patronage. That was certainly good to see, particularly for my area.

I would like to thank all of the committee members who took part in the review. I thank the committee secretariat for their ongoing work. I thank the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah. I would also like to wish my wife a happy Valentine's Day.