




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2019

TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.20 pm): I thank the Transport and Public Works Committee for its report on the inquiry into Queensland's intrastate shipping industry. I am particularly glad that its members travelled to Gladstone, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns to hear from regional communities. The Palaszczuk government recognises that a sustainable shipping industry is critical for our economic growth, particularly in regional Queensland. The committee's report should be mandatory reading for policymakers who have responsibility for the development of Australia's shipping industry.

There are opportunities for the Queensland government to create an environment for reform, but it must be acknowledged that the federal government has primary responsibility to influence change in this area. I will be writing to the Deputy Prime Minister and looking for opportunities for the federal and state governments to work together to improve Australia's shipping industry. However, any improvements in the intrastate shipping industry will depend on port infrastructure and accessibility to port services. Queenslanders continue to own our publicly owned ports and port infrastructure thanks to the election of the Palaszczuk government in 2015.

Mr Powell: You sold off the port of Brisbane.

Mr BAILEY: That was a very important time in Queensland's economic culture. The end of Strong Choices meant that publicly owned ports stayed in public hands. In terms of the sell-off attempt by the LNP and the \$100 million spent on Strong Choices, they failed. Despite having the largest majority in Australian political history, after fewer than three years they were out—absolutely hopeless.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Weir): Member for Miller, just stop for a moment. We will have a bit of quiet. I ask the member for Miller to come back to the subject of the report.

Mr BAILEY: I was just responding to those who objected to keeping our assets in public hands which they in the LNP still do. To reiterate, we put an end to the LNP's plan to sell off ports—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: They are still interjecting by way of objection to keeping our assets in public hands. It is extraordinary.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members on my left, the member for Miller has the call. I ask the member for Miller to speak to the report. Do not make your remarks inflammatory, please.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly. I keep getting sort of Dixier interjections here. Our ports support jobs in regional Queensland and the economic development and supply chains across our state. For example, in Central Queensland 740 people are employed in the ports operated by the Gladstone Port Corporation which will see over 127 million tonnes of throughput this year. North Queensland Bulk Ports handles 11 per cent of Australia's trade by tonnage and 53 per cent of Queensland's trade by tonnage.

Some 30 mines export from the NQBP ports, connecting seven mining towns in Queensland with the world and supporting thousands of regional Queensland jobs. Apart from more than 120 direct NQBP employees, the NQBP ports are a place of work for more than 1,000 Queenslanders and support a further 28,000 direct trade jobs involved in mining, farming and the transport trade.

Our ports play a critical role in supporting a sustainable shipping industry in Queensland, and only Labor will keep our vital ports in public hands and support growth in our shipping industry. I now table a copy of the government's response to the committee's report.

Tabled paper: Transport and Public Works Committee: Report No. 23, 56th Parliament, May 2019—Inquiry into a sustainable Queensland intrastate shipping industry, government response [1343](#).

In relation to recommendation 1, I have requested my department to assess areas where it may be able to influence the increased use of Australian seafarers.

Mr King: Hear, hear!

Mr BAILEY: I take that interjection from the member for Kurwongbah. Recommendation 2 recommends that to protect against skill shortages state and federal jurisdictions provide more maritime training opportunities. I am pleased that my department recently provided support to the broader development of skills in the sector and will continue to evaluate more courses at the state's Smartship simulator. The committee's view was that my department could facilitate greater coordination between ports. I agree with that. In terms of recommendation 3, I have asked my department to convene a working group with appropriate agencies to see what could be achieved.

I support recommendation 4 and will ask my department to work with other agencies to investigate the matter further. In response to recommendation 5, I will ask my department to establish a working group of relevant departments to examine the issues and, where possible, develop viable options to address inequities faced by remote communities in Queensland. I support recommendation 6 and will report back to parliament during this term.

I once again thank the committee for its work and all those who made submissions. I particularly thank the chair, the member for Kurwongbah, who chairs it so well. I also acknowledge Bob Carnegie and the Maritime Union of Australia, who continue to argue forcefully for the employment of more Queenslanders in the intrastate shipping industry. I hope that by working with other jurisdictions and industry participants and by implementing the recommendation we will see improvements in Queensland's intrastate shipping.