




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Infrastructure and Jobs

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.07 am): There is a regional jobs boom happening right across Queensland thanks to our major road projects funded by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Billions of dollars are being poured into upgrades to get people out of traffic and home safely and to get freight to and from regional communities. The \$1.6 billion jointly funded Toowoomba bypass, which was finished a couple of months ago, is a prime example. That project supported 9,260 direct and indirect full-time jobs, with more than 3,700 of those jobs in the Darling Downs region. The contractor Nexus spent \$677 million with more than 1,000 Australian companies, many of them Queensland companies. Nexus estimated that that spend generated more than \$1 billion in additional value for the wider economy.

When it gets going, the inland rail is expected to support a further 7,200 jobs in Queensland over time—most of them around Toowoomba and the south-west. Mackay's largest ever infrastructure project—stage 1 of the Mackay Ring Road—a \$497 million investment, is powering on. More than 1,500 workers have been inducted on site, with over 80 per cent local to the Mackay region. When that opens we will move on to the Walkerston bypass and then stage 2 of the ring-road to the Mackay port. This long pipeline of projects means more local jobs for longer. I thank the member for Mackay for her strong advocacy.

Rockhampton is enjoying a roads jobs boom as well. The Rockhampton northern access upgrade on the Bruce Highway and the duplication of the Capricorn Highway are both underway, supporting more than 500 jobs. We will move on to the much larger Rockhampton Ring Road when they are done which will support up to 780 jobs. Thanks to the members for Keppel and Rockhampton for their support.

The largest roads project in North Queensland right now is the \$514 million Haughton River-Bruce Highway upgrade south of Townsville, supporting 544 jobs. Having been on site, I can say that it is a massive site. In Cairns, between the Smithfield bypass and major Bruce Highway upgrades south of the city—which are under construction or about to start construction in the near future—we have backed the city with a billion dollar pipeline of construction jobs that will run until 2023.

We successfully campaigned the federal government to bring forward funding to keep sealing the Peninsula Developmental Road to Weipa on the cape. That will provide valuable local and Indigenous jobs and training and tourism opportunities going into the future. Almost 1,000 jobs in Western Queensland communities will be supported by \$809 million in joint funding for road upgrades over the next three years. There are more than \$200 million in Bruce Highway safety upgrades due to start next year in the Wide Bay region. There are close to \$2 billion in jointly funded upgrades for the Bruce Highway between Caboolture and Gympie coming online in the next few years which will support thousands of jobs.

With the infrastructure funding deal announced last week, our government has worked with the federal government to back an accelerated pipeline of road projects right across the state. Queensland thrives when our regional communities have access to jobs, infrastructure and opportunities. The Palaszczuk Labor government's record investment will ensure that these regional opportunities are available well into the next decade.