




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 17 October 2019

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Port of Townsville

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.21 pm): I stand today to talk about the Port of Townsville, the powerhouse of exports in north Australia. When everyone came to God's country for regional parliament in Townsville, they all saw the port. Since the last sitting, the Port of Townsville have released their report for the 2018-19 financial year. I have to say that it is a very good report card. They are the largest general cargo port in north Australia. As I said in my opening remarks, this is the powerhouse of exports for north Australia. Thirty-two different commodities are traded through our port including fuel, minerals, sugar and vehicles, just to name a few.

There are 143 full-time equivalents directly employed at that port. In fact, there are 8,000 jobs in North Queensland that depend directly on the functions of that port. This is the powerhouse of exports for north Australia. There were 7.68 million tonnes of total trade throughput. That is an increase of 4.7 per cent through the Port of Townsville. There was a 24 per cent increase in bulk tonnage which is a new record for the port. There was a 10 per cent increase in sugar exports.

There were a record-breaking 20,000 cruise visitors to the Port of Townsville! This is the Port of Townsville owned by the Palaszczuk government. We did not want to sell it. Those opposite wanted to sell it. You can see that we are kicking the goals now. Have a look at these records. Have a look at how we are kicking the goals. This is the powerhouse of exports for north Australia. We are kicking goals and you wanted to sell it!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, members!

Mr STEWART: I am a little passionate, Mr Deputy Speaker. The North West Minerals Province relies on getting its product to port. When the rail line was damaged through the floods earlier this year, mines became very concerned as the commodities were being stockpiled and not exported when our prices were exceptionally high. Thanks to the work of Queensland Rail, the 300 kilometres of damaged line was repaired in 11 weeks rather than the nine months predicted. It took those rail workers 11 weeks to repair that line. Had they taken the time that it would normally take, we would only be seeing the rail line back in service now.

The Treasurer announced \$80 million to offset the costs of rail freight over the next four years to promote greater use of that rail line. That has been very welcomed by those in the North West Minerals Province. There is \$30 million for the intermodal transport terminal, such is the significance of the Port of Townsville. It is the heart that pumps the lifeblood of the economy in the north. Our commitment to widening the channel will increase the capabilities of the larger ships that we see sailing over the seas.

(Time expired)