




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Liberal National Party, Public Transport

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.44 pm): It is always an absolute pleasure to follow the member for Chatsworth—the member who is my shadow in this place and has not asked me a question since 2018. He comes in here and waxes lyrical. He waves around big figures. He ignores the facts. The facts are that the Cross River Rail project in its first iteration could have been built by Campbell Newman for \$115 million a year over six years—in its full iteration a \$8 billion project—and he said no. He said, 'I do not want to embarrass Tony Abbott, my mate.' He sold out Queensland to cut the Cross River Rail project.

We saw nothing under the LNP government other than cuts. There was \$600 million worth of cuts to road transport. They cut the Cross River Rail project. They cut people's jobs. They cut infrastructure. That is all we saw from them. The economy nosedived to 0.7 per cent growth. Unemployment skyrocketed into the sevens because they mismanaged the economy. They mismanaged public transport.

Let us look at the history of the LNP when it comes to Cross River Rail. They opposed it. They cut it when they were in government. In opposition under the leadership of the member for Clayfield they still opposed it and railed against it all over the state. Then they kind of supported it. Then they opposed it again. Only 20 minutes ago we heard the member for Everton say that Cross River Rail is a waste of money. Now they oppose the project. It is difficult to keep up with the opposition. It depends on what day it is and on who is speaking.

We know that we cannot get public transport infrastructure built under the LNP because we know that they do not believe in it. They cut it when they were in government. They did not duplicate the rail line to the Sunshine Coast like we did. They did not build light rail on the Gold Coast like we did. They did not duplicate the rail line to Helensvale and Coomera like we did. They are not investing in Cross River Rail like this government does.

If we want to bust congestion we have to deal with rail. That is what this government is doing. We will not be lectured to and have laughable figures bandied around by the member for Chatsworth who was the assistant minister for public transport under Campbell Newman. He was certainly responsible in part for ordering trains from overseas that were not compliant and led the then leader of the opposition to say that it would be 36 years before we got back to full timetable and then six weeks later we were back to full timetable. When it comes to the post-election shadow front bench I wish the member for Chatsworth good luck.

We cannot trust the LNP with public transport. What we saw under them was that no Queensland Rail train drivers started training for an entire year—2014. There was a net reduction of 48 drivers when they were in power. Knowing full well that they had six new stations and a whole new line starting in 2016 and we were holding the Commonwealth Games, they reduced the number of train drivers by 48. That is absolute incompetence.

We have seen record recruitment under this government. At this point there has been a net increase of 168 drivers and 213 qualified guards. That is a net figure. In terms of a gross figure, we have absolutely met the targets of 200 each as outlined in the Strachan report. What we have seen are 462 extra weekly services come into play between May and July 2019. We have added services multiple times throughout this term.

Queensland Rail is now delivering 740 more weekly services than ever before in South-East Queensland. That has only been possible because of our record train crew recruitment. A total of 78 external candidates from the August 2017 campaign commenced driver training between the middle of last year and January this year. Nineteen ex-QR drivers have graduated and are out working on the network. We love their work. A total of 144 external applicants were also offered positions as guards. We will continue to recruit and manage the rail system in a way that is competent, unlike those opposite.

In relation to overtime, I inform the House of a few facts rather than a few furrphies put forward by those opposite. In 2018-19 the average hours of overtime worked by an average train driver decreased by 18.09 per cent compared with 2016-17. In fact, overtime increased by 25 per cent in the last year of the Newman government. Why? That is because they were not training any train drivers. We saw a reduction of 48 drivers. It is not too difficult to work out.

This government believes in transport infrastructure. We are undertaking the road upgrades that are needed. We are building the heavy rail projects that are absolutely critical for the whole of South-East Queensland, including on the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast. We are building light rail on the Gold Coast. This government invests in jobs and invests in infrastructure for a growing South-East Queensland population. We cannot take a risk on those opposite who do not understand public transport, only know how to cut, only know how to sack and only know how to sell. Whatever promises they make, we know that that is in their DNA and that is what they will do if they get half a chance.