




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 20 April 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Road Infrastructure, Freight; Bundaberg Miriam Vale Road, Correction to *Record of Proceedings*

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.09 am): If trucks keep Australia moving, then investing in better roads keeps Queensland's economy growing. The Queensland Palaszczuk Labor government is overseeing an infrastructure boom, with record investment in our key freight routes. This investment is critical for our agricultural producers and our regional businesses transporting goods long distances. In a state as vast as ours, with the longest state road network in the country, there is always work to be done.

The Palaszczuk Labor government committed \$200 million at the last state election for the inland freight route between the New South Wales border and Charters Towers along the Carnarvon, Dawson and Gregory highways. The route is recognised as a nationally important freight corridor, with \$125 million in joint funding already committed and works underway which I was very pleased to witness when I visited Roma a fortnight ago. Improving this 1,200-kilometre freight corridor will cut travel times for freight operators, improve safety and flood resilience and create more regional jobs.

There is a strong case for more federal funding, so we have called on the Morrison government to commit \$800 million towards future upgrades in its next federal budget. Locking in a billion dollars for the inland freight route would upgrade it to the benefit of regional jobs and businesses all along the route and throughout the south-west and north-west.

Earlier this month I had the pleasure of meeting Roma business operators David Whiley and Gina Tedford and their team in Roma. David and Gina's company, Wild Desert, is a local success story. Putting their house on the line to start it in 2005—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The disrespect for regional Queensland from those opposite is amazing.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Chatsworth, there is no need for your interjection.

Mr BAILEY: David and Gina put their house on the line to start it in 2005. They support industry with rigs, transport and camps. After taking on many multinational companies, the company now employs more than 200 people, many of them living in the Maranoa and Western Downs. David told me that investment in better highways is good for not only business but also, most importantly, the safety of his workers and his truckies moving prime movers to remote locations across Western Queensland. These are the Queenslanders who benefit when we invest to make roads safer and more efficient in our record infrastructure investment in Queensland. That is what happens under this government.

While I am on my feet, I would like to correct the record on statements I previously made in the House about funding for Miriam Vale Road. On 10 March I referred to \$10 million being allocated for Bundaberg Miriam Vale Road. The correct figure is in fact \$5.6 million allocated for a series of upgrades on Bundaberg Miriam Vale Road. Those upgrades are in support of major regional road investments being delivered in the Bundaberg and Burnett regions by the Palaszczuk Labor government. It includes \$43 million on the Bruce Highway between Gin Gin and Miriam Vale and \$42½ million to upgrade the Isis Highway after strong advocacy from the new member for Bundaberg, who is doing such a great job.