



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Cross River Rail**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.57 am): 612,500—that is how many hours 190 Queensland apprentices have worked on the Cross River Rail project. The Palaszczuk government is backing the jobs and industries of the future. Right now, apprentices are cutting their teeth on Queensland's largest infrastructure project. From working on our tunnel-boring machines—cutting through that rock and getting those tunnels in—to fitting out trains, our public transport investment is giving Queenslanders the skills for the next decade and beyond.

Cross River Rail will deliver more than 450 apprenticeships and trainee opportunities. The Palaszczuk Labor government's investment in Cross River Rail injects about \$4 million into the economy every single day. Our investment in 800 Queensland suppliers and subcontractors is supporting businesses to grow and hire workers. Queensland's economic recovery is not just focused on jobs today but on the next generation of jobs for workers in industries.

Cross River Rail is one of the key projects driving our economic recovery and the infrastructure boom in South-East Queensland and across the state. New train services will reduce road congestion by making commuting on public transport even more attractive and competitive. We will build the first new underground station in the CBD in 100 years, meaning a faster commute for workers right into the heart of the city for the first time.

Cross River Rail will also be the fastest way to travel to the new Gabba Olympic stadium if we are successful in our bid to host the 2032 Olympics. Cross River Rail fixes the bottleneck over the Merivale Bridge in the inner city by creating a second inner-city rail crossing, enabling us to run more trains more often. The Palaszczuk Labor government already operates more rail services than ever before. Mr Speaker, 800 more weekly train services now run in South-East Queensland since we were elected in 2015, and we have seen four service uplifts in the last two years. That is more South-East Queensland train services than ever before. We have also maintained services during the pandemic and we added 105 weekly train services last year. Right now patronage on public transport services in South-East Queensland is running just below 70 per cent of pre-COVID levels.

Cities around the world are grappling with COVID-19 impacts to their transit systems. Leading experts predict that CBD workers will continue to work from home one or two days a week after the pandemic for some time yet. My department is partnering with the University of Sydney on an 18-month research project that looks at behavioural changes associated with working from home. That research will be included in a Transport and Main Roads transport analysis and planning models moving forward. It is not clear yet what the long-term impacts on public transport caused by the global pandemic will be. We will have a clearer picture of that closer to 2025 when Cross River Rail opens, and what great day that will be! Using that information we will be able to make more informed decisions on services and timetables, and commuters will be well-informed ahead of the opening.

One thing that is certain is Queensland's population growth. With over 88 per cent of all net domestic migration over the next few years coming to Queensland and a strong Olympics bid in the advanced stages, there is no question about how important delivering Cross River Rail is for the future of South-East Queensland.