




Speech By
Steve Minnikin

MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Cross River Rail, Costs

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (2.24 pm): Last Sunday night I listened with interest to the news on channel 7 and channel 9 and I heard a couple of conflicting things. The channel 9 news made reference to the Cross River Rail project being worth \$5.6 million and said that it was to be operational in 2024. I then flicked channels, as we often do. The channel 7 news mentioned Cross River Rail as having a cost of \$5.4 billion and an opening year of 2025. Just by doing a quick flick between two channels there was a difference of \$200 million.

Government members interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Deputy Speaker, aren't you grateful that at least someone in this chamber can do basic mathematics because there was a \$200 million difference in the cost of that project as reported by two different news stations. That begs the question: what is going to be the cost of Cross River Rail? I note something interesting about the language used by the member for Millar, who was described as 'foolish' by the CCC, and it is important. I note that he no longer says that it is a \$5.4 billion project; he now says that the government is 'investing' \$5.4 billion in the project. There is a subtle change in language.

Is the \$5.4 billion just a down payment? No, it is meant to be the capital expenditure cost! We have tried to ask questions on notice about future payments to the public-private partnership so that, on behalf of the taxpayers of Queensland, we can try to work out what the transport minister is clearly incapable of working out. On behalf of the taxpayers of Queensland, we want to know what the signature capex project for the state—in fact, you could argue it is probably the only project of stature—will finally cost. The reality is that two figures and two different years of completion have been reported on two different channels.

We have to ask another question. We had blowouts of up to 20 per cent at the Townsville stadium. We have now had a blowout with stage 3 of light rail. We have a minister who has absolutely no idea of his brief. At the end of the day, I would think he would be able to say clearly what Cross River Rail will cost in total. Forget the add-ons such as grandstand seats at the Gabba. He should be able to say that it will cost this figure and it will be operational on this date. This minister cannot do either.