



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 February 2023

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Bruce Highway**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.07 am): If you hop in a car and travel around Queensland you will see an army of high-vis workers upgrading Queensland roads: engineers, road builders, heavy machinery operators, traffic controllers and more. Those road workers are helping to deliver a record investment in roads and transport across our state and, on behalf of this government, I thank them all for their work. Nowhere is that more visible than on the Bruce Highway. Right now we have 104 Bruce Highway projects funded and underway, with 45 projects in construction. That is part of a massive \$13 billion pipeline of joint funding locked into the Bruce over 15 years.

The Palaszczuk government has turbocharged the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program since we came to office. The program has now delivered 441 Bruce Highway upgrades—yes, 441. That is in stark contrast to the four—that is four—Bruce Highway projects under the Newman government, two of which were studies.

While 441 is a very healthy first-innings cricket score, those on the opposite side are playing soccer when it comes to Bruce Highway upgrades. The inland freight route, also known as the second Bruce, has huge potential for removing heavy vehicles from the Bruce Highway.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Gregory will cease his interjections.

**Mr BAILEY:** The \$1 billion second Bruce program, from Charters Towers to Mungindi, will provide a real alternative when the coast is being hit by cyclones, heavy rain or flooding.

**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Gregory is warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BAILEY:** Our commitment to regional roads does not stop there. Some \$18.1 billion of the Palaszczuk Labor government's record \$29.7 billion investment in roads and transport goes to regional areas, supporting more than 16,000 jobs. This includes the \$276 million Peninsula Developmental Road upgrade in Cape York for which the member for Cook has advocated so strongly. We have seen a massive increase in road safety up in the cape.

On a day when this progressive government is introducing a path to treaty, it is important to recognise the First Nations workers, trainees and now local First Nations firms playing a vital role in terms of the upgrades up in the cape. So far, 36 First Nations businesses have been engaged in working in civil construction, vegetation and road maintenance work on the package, worth more than \$35 million. Almost 62,000 training and upskilling hours have been worked on the package so far, and more than 140 trainees have trained in civil construction over the life of the second stage of the Cape York package.

Our record investment in the Bruce Highway and regional roads is supporting not just motorists and truckies on our roads but also, of course, our First Nations workers and increasingly First Nations businesses here in Queensland. Only the Palaszczuk Labor government delivers for regional roads in our First Nations communities through better roads and not from cuts.