




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Bruce Highway Upgrade Program

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.45 am): The Bruce Highway is the backbone of our state. From Pine Rivers in Moreton Bay to Portsmith in Cairns, the Bruce is the connection that brings families together, puts food on the table and delivers good services and exports to where they need to be. It is an economic driver in our state and it supports productivity, jobs, industry and a booming Queensland population. That is why the Palaszczuk government is delivering the \$13 billion Bruce Highway Upgrade Program—a 15-year program to improve reliability and flood resilience, including strengthening and widening, duplications, overtaking lanes, lane separations, intersection upgrades and wide centre line treatments. These projects are essential to keep our state growing and moving. The Palaszczuk government is proud to have delivered 466 projects—let me say that again, 466 projects—on the Bruce Highway Upgrade Program, with 80 more currently in delivery on top of that—31 in construction, 28 in design and 21 in planning. These statistics tell only part of the story.

There is no doubt that productivity and efficiency are important, but continuing to improve safety on the Bruce Highway is paramount. We know that our work to improve safety on the Bruce Highway has saved lives. The work the Palaszczuk government has undertaken since 2015 has focused on improving safety for drivers, and we are seeing the results. Over the last decade there has been a 24½ per cent decrease in crashes along the Bruce Highway and a 26 per cent decrease in fatalities. This can be attributed to our ongoing programmed upgrades and investment. There is no doubt that a shift from 80-20 funding to 50-50 funding will have a negative impact on the delivery and timing of these critical safety projects.

The Palaszczuk government will continue our commitment to a safer and more efficient Bruce Highway, but we cannot do it alone. Already my office has been receiving calls from some of our key roads and transport stakeholders and partners expressing their concern at any shift in funding arrangements that might impact Queensland's massive road network—the largest road network in Australia, despite New South Wales and Victoria having much larger populations than our state. Every member of the Palaszczuk government will continue to fight for our fair share of funding for better roads because we know that it saves lives in regional Queensland.