




Speech By
Hon. Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 13 February 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Transport Infrastructure, Costs

 **Hon. BJ MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services) (9.58 am): The Premier has a big vision for Queensland and has led the government's \$89 billion Big Build. I am proud to support the Premier's vision to deliver the infrastructure that Queensland needs. The Miles government, in partnership with the Australian government, has over \$32 billion invested in transport and road projects. It is an ambitious program that is delivering increased connectivity for Queenslanders right across the state. Like all infrastructure programs, it is facing cost pressure challenges with the increased cost of construction.

As the House will be aware, I have made a commitment to provide more details highlighting the cost of construction for transport and road projects. On 22 December last year, the Deputy Premier and I released an itemised list detailing cost increases for 32 jointly funded major transport and road infrastructure projects that were impacted by the federal government's infrastructure review. Today I am tabling these details for the information of members. Releasing cost estimate updates on transport and road projects is part of the Miles government's plan for transparency with Queenslanders.

Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'Table 1: Jointly funded projects with cost pressures and impacted by the Infrastructure Review' [160](#).

I have committed that, as TMR becomes aware of cost increases that are confirmed through our budgeting process, we will be making them public at least twice a year—at the budget and around the midyear budget update. In addition, for some individual projects we will be making cost increases public at major project milestones such as contract award or project completion. I can also advise that the Mooloolah River Interchange project cannot proceed until the federal government changes their position on funding, noting that they have withdrawn their funding contribution for this important project.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Ms Simpson interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Member for Buderim! Member for Maroochydore!

Mr MELLISH: The Premier talked about backing Queenslanders. On my first day as minister—

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

Mr MELLISH: On my first day as minister, every state controlled road in Far North Queensland was shut following Tropical Cyclone Jasper. On 22 January we re-opened the Captain Cook Highway, restoring access for many families that were heading back to school. Last Saturday, 10 February, we re-opened a single-lane section of the Palmerston Highway to restore freight access across the Tablelands. Both of these roads were severely damaged in the cyclone. These milestones mark an incredible turnaround in the space of just two months and are a testament to the resilience of Queenslanders. I thank all of our Far North Queensland members and the member for Hill for their advocacy on these works.

As minister, our regions will be a major focus. Last month I joined the Prime Minister and Premier in Rockhampton to announce full funding for the Rockhampton Ring Road, and on Sunday I announced \$500 million in joint funding with the federal government for road safety projects right across the state. Over the coming months I look forward to keeping the House updated on these projects and many hundreds more that the Miles government is delivering for Queenslanders.