



Speech By  
**Hon. Brent Mickelberg**


**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 December 2024

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Infrastructure, Costs**

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.09 am): The Crisafulli government has committed to deliver a fresh start for Queensland, and that includes being honest with Queenslanders about the true cost of infrastructure. Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3 was originally priced by the former Labor government at \$709 million. By this year's budget the price had increased to \$1.219 billion, an increase of 72 per cent. Unbeknownst to Gold Coast voters at the recent state election, however, the former Labor government had agreed to further increase the budget by \$330 million, meaning that the project had doubled in price. That \$330 million Labor blowout was hidden from Queenslanders. Mr Speaker \$330 million is not an insignificant amount of money. Queenslanders should have been told about this blowout before the election. They had a right to know about it, and this right was denied them by the former Labor government.

Gold Coast Light Rail is not the only example of Queenslanders being kept in the dark about the true cost of infrastructure. Last week I was in Cairns with the hardworking members for Barron River, Cook and Mulgrave to talk about infrastructure, including the common user facility at the Cairns port. This facility was signed off as a \$360 million project in 2021 by the then Labor minister for state development, the member for Murrumba and now opposition leader. That project now sits at over \$800 million. Despite knowing months before the election that the budget had blown out by hundreds of millions of dollars, the previous government did not tell the people of Cairns. They hid that information from the people of Far North Queensland. The LNP knows how important the marine industry is to the Far North's employment and economic growth, and that is why Ports North is now in discussions with stakeholders on an appropriate way forward.

The Crisafulli government has committed to releasing the full cost of the Cross River Rail project because we will be open and transparent with Queenslanders. We have already identified an almost \$500 million increase in the cost of surface works for Cross River Rail, and I look forward to updating Queenslanders about that project in the future. Given their pattern of behaviour, Queenslanders will be asking themselves how they can trust anything they were told by former Labor governments. We must rebuild people's trust in government. That is why the LNP is going through the budget line by line to get a true understanding of the infrastructure pipeline and costs to deliver projects here in Queensland. The Crisafulli government will not keep Queenslanders in the dark. We will be honest and accountable when it comes to the cost of our road and public transport projects. Queenslanders voted for a fresh start, and that is exactly what the Crisafulli government will deliver.