



Speech By  
**Steve Minnikin**

**MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2024


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee, Report**

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (9.16 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the elements of the estimates committee process that pertain to transport and main roads. From the outset, I too would like to congratulate the committee members on both sides of the chamber who were part of that committee as well as the chair. I also acknowledge, as I always do, the great work that is done behind the scenes by the parliamentary staff. Being the shadow minister, I have the privilege of being able to call upon different public servants to appear to answer my questions, such as the CEO of Cross River Rail and the CEO of Queensland Rail, amongst others, and I certainly appreciate their time.

In relation to the key findings themselves, the first question that I put to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads was whether he could define Project Craft for the committee. He could not answer it, and that was pretty much the theme for the remainder of the next 3½ to four hours. This minister has been in the job since December last year and it was patently obvious from the scribbling and shuffling going on at the desk across from me that he really did not have a good, deep handle on his own portfolio.

Some of the key questions pertained to Cross River Rail. Everyone in this chamber knows that the government has been banging on for years and years that it is the signature infrastructure project of the former Palaszczuk government, now Miles government. The reality is—

**Mr Bailey:** You cut it, didn't you?

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I will take the interjection from the member for Miller. When people hear the words 'budget project blowout', they are immediately drawn to the member for Miller, who is a former transport and main roads minister—hopeless!

**Mr BAILEY:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and ask that the comments be withdrawn.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I withdraw. The reality is: this project has been open to scrutiny for years and the former minister failed to adequately define for other committee hearings years before what the actual project cost would be and, moreover, when this project would open. It was beholden upon me to ask the new minister when the Cross River Rail would actually be available for people to catch a train using that bit of infrastructure. There were eight, nine or 10 attempts between the minister and the CEO of

the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority to make the best possible guess. They could not even identify a potential quarter of a calendar year when it may be open. The reality is: the signature piece of infrastructure—

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I hear the member for Miller carping in the background. I am quite happy to take his interjections because, as I have said, when it comes to failures in infrastructure delivery in this state there is no greater telling example of the legacy of someone who has failed than there is the member for Miller—singularly hopeless.

**Mr BAILEY:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. He cannot help himself. I take personal offence, obviously, and I ask that he withdraw.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I withdraw. The question was asked and put numerous ways to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Miller, you are adding to the problem. I suggest you keep quiet.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** This minister could not answer the question: when will it be open? It was more than just the Cross River Rail failures of the Miles government, as exemplified through the ordinary performance of the minister. There were other issues in relation to Queensland Rail—near misses with construction equipment left beside the track. There was also probing of the open level crossing failures in terms of open level crossings being checked on time—an abject failure when it comes to a key area of public safety.

The other issue was inspection times in relation to some of the important issues raised and exemplified by whistleblowers—weeks and months of inactivity. There were other issues covered including those related to the Bruce Highway, specifically the failure of the Bruce Highway trust which has been shut down by the Miles Labor government. In fact, a report was delayed by at least two years in coming before the committee.

Nothing comes as a surprise because when it comes to project delivery in this state, the three essential elements of time, quality and cost are anathema to the way this current government delivers project management. In fact, it has now become almost synonymous with failure project delivery when it comes to the area of transport and main roads mainly because the current minister is simply not up to the job and the former minister was hopeless.