




Speech By
Bart Mellish

MEMBER FOR ASPLEY

Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2025

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Transport, Gold Coast

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (2.44 pm): The Crisafulli government is lining up to create a mess on the Gold Coast. In terms of Gold Coast Light Rail, this transport project has been completely taken out of the hands of the transport minister, just as Sunshine Coast direct rail has—or the Wave as it is now called. I do not mind the transport minister—he seems to be trying his best—but it must be pretty hard to do your job when the member for Kawana keeps sticking his beak in. It is the same on the Sunshine Coast.

We have two concurrent reviews by two different departments underway into Gold Coast Light Rail. We have a \$30 million business case jointly funded with the Gold Coast city council underway and now the Deputy Premier has kicked off his own review through his own director-general, John Sosso. For more than a week when the review started participants did not need to provide ID and could make multiple submissions. That changed mid consultation and participants then needed to make an account and log in. Then the Deputy Premier said they would be favouring people on the southern Gold Coast. This is chopping and changing as they go. We all know the purpose of this consultation is to line it up for a cut. Mayor Tom Tate has come out and said that the timing of these negative leaks, as well as the very broad consultation with a lack of information, appears to be setting it up to fail. I agree with the mayor. It is clear that the Crisafulli government is chasing a certain outcome and it is clear that the answers they were receiving did not fit their narrative. They are throwing away the answers they do not like and keeping the answers they do like. What is the purpose of the Deputy Premier's review? His own director-general said in a committee meeting earlier this year—

I am saying that we are not in the business of supplying to the Deputy Premier the cost of rail projects.

The Gold Coast wants light rail to go all the way to the airport. The LNP need to get on with it. I am glad the member for Burleigh is having a say here today because he has done a bigger backflip on this than Peter Dutton has on working from home. The member went from voting in support of light rail stage 4 as a Gold Coast city councillor to outright opposing the project as soon as he was appointed an assistant minister by the Premier. The member for Burleigh needs to tell the people of the Gold Coast what he really feels about light rail stage 4. As reported in the Gold Coast *Bulletin*, a state government MP is telling people it is a done deal. They are telling people that light rail is going to get scrapped. This is history repeating.

The LNP MPs on the Gold Coast have failed to deliver for the people they represent again and again. The Crisafulli government is clearly trying every which way it can to not build stage 4. The Crisafulli government is not committed to this project. If they fail to deliver this project to the border their legacy will be turning Burleigh Heads into a bus depot. They have floated buses; maybe they have floated a metro like they want to do on the Sunshine Coast. Their legacy will be a transport mess, turning Burleigh Heads into a bus depot, incomplete light rail that does not go to the airport and failed transport on the Gold Coast.