



Speech By  
**Hon. Brent Mickelberg**


**MEMBER FOR BUDERIM**

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Record of Proceedings, 19 February 2025

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**Bruce Highway**

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.33 pm): The 1,673-kilometre Bruce Highway is the spine of Queensland's road network, connecting Brisbane to Cairns as well as providing critical linkages for freight movements, ports and major regional centres. More than half of all Queenslanders rely on the Bruce to keep them moving but, after a decade of neglect and inaction from those opposite, we have seen a drastic decline in the performance of our national highway.

Last year alone, the Bruce experienced 81 separate instances of closure in both directions. The total time the Bruce was closed last year was around 31 days—a whole month where Queenslanders' mobility was restricted and where the supply of essential goods was delayed. The Crisafulli LNP government is committed to ensuring our Bruce is more productive, efficient, reliable and safe.

In delivering on that commitment, we already have runs on the board within our first 100 days because we have re-established the Bruce Highway Advisory Council after the former Labor government axed it following just a handful of meetings. At the end of last year, I joined key industry stakeholders and regional representatives in convening the first of these advisory council meetings. Importantly, the membership consists of regional representatives and everyday Queenslanders—from truck drivers to small business owners who rely on the Bruce day in and day out—so they can have their say on how we can best get on with the job of making the vital improvements that are needed.

Through the advocacy of the Bruce Highway Advisory Council, and alongside the Crisafulli government, we have already been able to do what those opposite could not: restore the 80-20 funding for our highway alongside the Australian government's injection of a total of \$9 billion in additional funds for safety upgrades. Previous Labor transport ministers abandoned the 80-20 funding for the Bruce. As a result, Queenslanders have been worse off because the investment in Queensland roads was left on the federal government's table.

I am pleased to share that the second meeting of the Bruce Highway Advisory Council will be held in Rockhampton—another key regional centre along the Bruce—on 19 March. By bringing the Bruce Highway Advisory Council members back together to discuss how the Crisafulli government can maximise safety outcomes through the delivery of the \$9 billion program, we are giving them the chance to consider and provide advice on how we go forward. This will build on their important role to date and support the Crisafulli government to deliver on our commitment to the Bruce and to our regional communities.

Unlike the Labor Party, we will not take Queenslanders for granted. Our government, the Crisafulli government, will continue to listen to the voices of those who regularly use the highway to ensure we get back to delivering those vital upgrades. This \$9 billion investment will focus on those sections of the

Bruce Highway which have the poorest safety records. It will deliver upgrades such as overtaking lanes, intersection upgrades and heavy vehicle rest stops in addition to pavement strengthening works and other upgrades.

The Crisafulli government is doing all of this to ensure the severity and frequency of accidents are reduced. An improved safety record and a more reliable Bruce Highway will mean that families can be better connected. It will mean that Queenslanders will spend more time at home rather than commuting or sitting at the scene of an accident. It will mean that the goods and services our regional and remote communities rely on will get to them when they are needed. It will mean that the Bruce Highway can be a road all Queenslanders can be proud of.

Labor's decade of inaction and neglect is over. The Crisafulli government will continue to deliver a fresh start for Queensland.