




Speech By
Hon. Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2025

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Train Manufacturing Program

 **Hon. BA MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (5.28 pm): I rise to make a ministerial statement. In question time today, the Labor opposition questioned the support of the government for the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program in Maryborough. Those questions were strange given our government has repeatedly reiterated our steadfast support—not only for the program but for the train manufacturing workers in Maryborough. In fact, the people of Maryborough well know our government has given the workers a guarantee that the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program will continue, as planned, because it not only delivers the trains needed for our transport network but it also delivers important jobs for the Maryborough region.

Given what was clearly a highly-politically charged and motivated question, we did some digging. What we found was very interesting, very interesting indeed. Lo and behold, we discovered none other than the former member of Maryborough has been surreptitiously whipping up a campaign of fear in his former community. In fact, the former member—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): I do not suppose that the member for Buderim or the minister needs my protection but the interjections were extraordinary. Member for Pine Rivers, I could hear you quite clearly. Tone it down and we will listen to the minister's statement.

Mr MICKELBERG: The former member has been attempting to suggest that recent decisions of Downer were somehow linked to the government—clearly untrue. It is shocking to hear such grubby mistruths coming from a former member of parliament.

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry to interrupt you, minister. The member for Waterford, did you just interject? You are, if I recall correctly, under a warning. You will leave the chamber for one hour under standing order 253A.

Whereupon the honourable member for Waterford withdrew from the chamber at 5.31 pm.

Mr MICKELBERG: It then all became very clear. More digging revealed that the former member for Maryborough is actually on Labor's payroll. The Labor Party are now funding the former member for Maryborough as a political operative with the sole task of raking as much muck in Maryborough as he can. Labor, with the full knowledge and the full support of the Leader of the Opposition, has been paying the former member for Maryborough to run around spreading fear and mistruths in a deliberate and deceitful political campaign. Queenslanders know that there is zero truth to Labor's mistruths because it has even been confirmed by Downer themselves. Downer have today publicly advised—

There has been no change to any Queensland Government contracted work with Downer that impacts our current workforce in Maryborough. Our work on the Queensland Train Manufacturing—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my right, I will start warning you and all.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you, Deputy Speaker. I will continue with my quote from Downer—

Our work on the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program is continuing as expected and we look forward to working with the Queensland government on potential future opportunities. The consultation we have commenced with our workforce specifically relates to the cessation of a contract with a private freight operator. We want to confirm no final decision has been made and we continue to explore opportunities to fill the gap in work in order to ease any impact on our people.

The Leader of the Opposition, in full knowledge that there is no truth to it whatsoever, is trying to run a deceitful campaign of smear in Maryborough for his own political purposes. He is weaponising the fear of train manufacturing workers in Maryborough for political gain. I can guarantee the House that this is more about the Leader of the Opposition trying to protect his own political job, rather than the job of any train manufacturing workers. Queenslanders know that they cannot trust a single thing that comes from this weak Leader of the Opposition. This is the same Leader of the Opposition who just last sitting week was forced to march into this place and apologise for misleading the House. The same Leader of the Opposition who marched around the state trying to spin a web of truths about hospitals when the truth is, he was only a risk to the hospitals being built himself. Our government, through the health minister—

Ms Boyd interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Pine Rivers is warned under the standing orders.

Mr MICKELBERG: Queenslanders know that the Labor party has zero credibility and cannot be trusted. The only party that will deliver the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program and protect these jobs is the LNP. There has been no reduction in the amount of state government work being sent to Maryborough. We are proud that we are pressing ahead with building 65 new trains by Downer in Maryborough—supporting local jobs and supported by the local MP who has been a strong champion for the project and those local jobs, Mr John Barounis, a tremendous local member—unlike his predecessor.

Mr de BRENNI: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The standing and sessional orders provide opportunities for ministers to make statements in this House under standing order 62 and the clear purpose of those is outlined. I have raised this in the House before—that the content of ministerial statements should be about public affairs or the minister's portfolio. The minister is straying very much into his political opinions about individuals. I would ask you to ensure he maintains the intent of the standing order and delivers a ministerial statement—not a political statement.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the House, you have a counter point of order?

Dr ROWAN: In responding to the Manager of Opposition Business who has risen under standing order 62, the minister is correcting the record in relation to commentary and questions that were asked this morning. He is making a detailed response and explanation to those matters that is very fulsome in relation to all of the information to ensure the record is accurate in the House with respect to those issues that were canvassed this morning. I submit to you that the matters that are being canvassed are important. There is a broad nature to covering those and he is providing a detailed ministerial statement and explanation.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I will seek some advice from the table. There is no point of order.

Mr MICKELBERG: The Minister for Manufacturing said it this morning—and I will say it again now—the Crisafulli LNP government will fight for every single train manufacturing worker in Maryborough. Two things need to happen today. The Leader of the Opposition needs to get up in this House and apologise for weaponising workers' fears. He must come in here and he must condemn the mistruths and the deceptive actions of the former member for Maryborough. Anything less will be a failure of his leadership.