



Hon John Mickel MP
Member for Logan



**Queensland
Government**

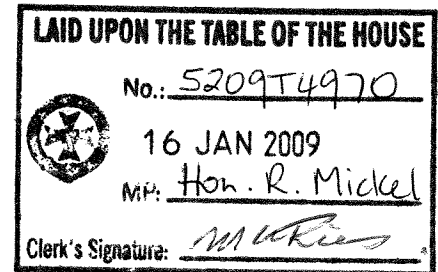
Our ref: MC39801

Your ref: Petitions

15 JAN 2009

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

**Minister for Transport, Trade,
Employment and Industrial Relations**



Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a petition lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 13 November 2008 regarding policies in the *Far North Queensland Draft Regional Plan 2025*. I have provided comments on the petition's key points for the consideration of Parliament.

Queensland Transport has reviewed the issues raised and addressed them according to the department's perspective and policy position.

1. Adopt as a guiding principle the fundamental link between renewable energy and sustainable transport

This is primarily a question for the Office of Clean Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency as they set renewable energy policy in Queensland. Queensland Transport's *Corporate Plan 2008-2012* identifies environmental sustainability as a core goal of the department, with supporting strategies to enhance the proportion of environmentally friendly vehicles in public transport fleets and to minimise greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector.

2. Set a minimum 40 percent reduction target for the region's greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 in the statutory regulations

This is a policy question for the Environmental Protection Agency.

3. Adopt a proactive approach to public transport and rail freight, rather than the reactive approach advocated in the *Far North Queensland Draft Regional Plan 2025*

The draft regional plan adopts an extremely proactive approach to public transport by protecting the long-term public transport network and requiring Transit Oriented Communities to develop around key station locations. The draft plan also requires a minimum population density within urban areas so that public transport can be provided in an efficient and cost-effective manner. This level of forward planning is unprecedented for a non-capital city in Australia.

Capital Hill Building
85 George Street Brisbane 4000
GPO Box 2644 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3237 1111
Facsimile +61 7 3224 4242
Email TTEIR@ministerial.qld.gov.au
ABN 65 959 415 158

4. Adopt a substantially higher target for public transport use within Cairns – not the proposed minimum target of 10 percent by 2036, but at least 40 percent by 2025

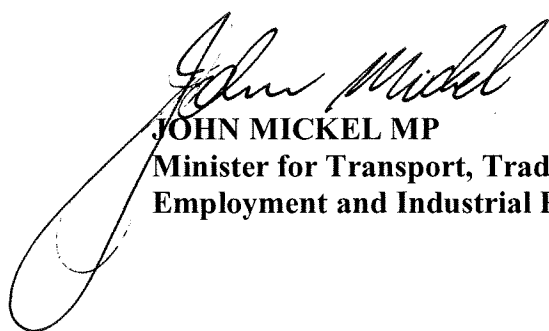
The 10 percent target referenced in the draft regional plan reflects the minimum public transport mode share that is required to cope with travel demand in Cairns. This is a very functional and basic target. Failure to meet this target will result in unacceptable levels of congestion on state-controlled roads. Queensland Transport through the Cairns Transit Network project is planning for a high-quality, high-speed urban public transport system that will capture a large percentage of trips. The proposed system would be capable of meeting 100 percent of the travel demand in Cairns to 2036. However, it should be noted that the 10 percent target is extremely challenging. Currently public transport use in Cairns is between two percent and three percent; even in Brisbane, the rate is only 11 percent. The department considers that achieving a 10 percent public transport mode share in Cairns within the next 17 years will require significant government investment and effort.

5. Immediately commit to a rail-based “spine” for a renewable energy based public transport system for Cairns (incorporating the existing Gordonvale-Central Business District-Redlynch rail as the first stage)

Previous planning which has been endorsed by both state and local government has identified a bus-based rapid transit system as the most appropriate solution for Cairns until at least 2025. The Cairns Transit Network project is developing the concept design for this system and welcomes discussions with members of the community about the many reasons why a rail-based system is not the best solution for Cairns at this time. Information and contact details can be found at the website <http://www.cairnstransitnetwork.com.au>.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



JOHN MICKEL MP
Minister for Transport, Trade,
Employment and Industrial Relations