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MEDIA RELEASE

Rail fail bad news for the North

Continued failings throughout the state's rail network has the potential to decimate key industries in North Queensland according to Member for Burdekin, Dale Last.

Mr Last said the reliance on rail may prove an Achilles heel if recent debacles in South East and Western Queensland are anything to go by.

"The State Government has dropped the ball as cattle crates in the State's west literally fall to pieces and vacancies for drivers in the South East corner remain unfilled," Mr Last.

"Despite a price tag of \$13 Million, crates used to transport livestock have been plagued by doors and gates falling off while bolts and pins are simply missing.

"This makes them unsafe for livestock and means extra expense for drought-ravaged primary producers. Meanwhile a driver shortage in the South East of the state still has not been addressed despite being identified as an issue in 2015."

"In addition to the safety issues, the poor quality is also costing producers up to \$20 a head to truck cattle to port. This is a significant amount of money for producers already grappling with drought."

"It's not just the financial impact that this government is ignoring. Graziers are having to resort to trucks and this is putting more heavy vehicles on the road. There is also the issue of animal welfare, all of which the LNP has been raising with Labor for over 7 months but there has been no action by the government."

"The fact is agriculture or resources would grind to a halt with these sorts of problems on the rail network. This government has shown it simply cannot manage rail. Perhaps that's why Labor chose to sell off Queensland's Rail Assets."

Mr Last said it was important to realise that the faulty crates were not failing due to wear and tear, but that they were faulty when first purchased.

"This is another example of Labor not understanding or not caring about the farming sector, the resource sector or North Queensland as a whole. We know Labor doesn't want expansion in resources or agriculture but failures like this could destroy whole industries."

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