



Speech By  
**Jeff Seeneey**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 October 2015

**INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Report, Motion to Take Notice**

**Mr SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (11.57 am): I was not going to make a contribution to the consideration of this report, until I heard the contribution made by the member for Mirani. This issue of transient workforces—because that is what it is: it is transient workforces, not fly-in fly-out—always generates a lot of emotion, a lot of misinformation and a lot of misleading comments from people who have a huge self-interest. Nobody has a greater self-interest in this than the member for Mirani. The member for Mirani is owned lock, stock and barrel by the CFMEU. The CFMEU found him lost and alone in the Coal ‘n’ Cattle Hotel one day in Moura and said, ‘We want someone to run for Mirani,’ and he has been a puppet of the CFMEU ever since.

**Mr PEARCE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The allegation made by the member with reference to a hotel has come from the member for Whitsunday. It is wrong and I ask for that to be withdrawn because I do not spend my time in hotels.

**Mr SPEAKER:** It is not a point of order.

**Mr PEARCE:** I am offended by it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** It is not a point of order. I call the member for Callide.

**Mr SEENEY:** He was in Moura and someone needed to buy him a feed and the CFMEU found him lost and alone. That is how he has ended up here with the CFMEU agenda because this agenda against transient workforces is all about the CFMEU power. It is all about concentrating people in a situation where they can be manipulated by the CFMEU as they used to be in the good old days when the mining towns like—

**Mr PEARCE:** I rise to a point of order.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide—

**Mr SEENEY:**—Maranoa, Biloela and Blackwater—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, one moment.

**Mr SEENEY:**—were hotspots for the CFMEU.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide, you are not going to shout over the top of me. When I ask you to stop, please stop. Member for Mirani, what is your point of order?

**Mr PEARCE:** Mr Speaker, for the first time in 20-odd years I am insulted and deeply offended by the words of the member for Callide, by his reference to me and his reference to the CFMEU.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Unfortunately, I did not hear the comments the member for Callide made. Are you rising on a point of order that you found comments that the member for Callide made about you personally offensive and you have asked for them to be withdrawn?

**Mr PEARCE:** Thank you.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Callide—

**Mr SEENEY:** I will move on, Mr Speaker.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Did you make comment—no, no?

**An honourable member:** Can't he withdraw it? Can't he withdraw?

**Mr SEENEY:** If the member found something offensive, I will withdraw.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr SEENEY:** Let us move on to the substance of the report. I had the opportunity to meet with the panel that was appointed by the Premier, led by Leo Zussino. It is very notable that they have not reported, that their report has not been provided to this House, because that panel understood the economic importance of transient workforces. Transient workforces are not just about boosting CFMEU power; this issue is not just about propping up the investment decisions that were made by speculators in Sydney and Melbourne who paid huge amounts of money for houses in Blackwater and Emerald on the basis that they could get \$2½ thousand or \$3,000 a week in rent. This is about a whole generation of people who work in the resources industry from every community across Queensland—from my community, from your community, from your community and wherever I point, from your community. Those people who choose to live somewhere else and travel to work in Central Queensland do it because they choose to do it. In my electorate they live primarily on a whole range of subeconomic agricultural enterprises that could not survive without that off-farm income. In the time that I have been representing my electorate it has gone from almost entirely agricultural income to now 80 to 90 per cent of people on those small agricultural blocks depending on some form of off-farm income and the majority of that is in the resources industry. They drive to Moura, Blackwater and a range of other mining sites in Queensland. They are not going to go and live in a place where the member for Mirani and his CFMEU colleagues or comrades can control every aspect of their life like they used to do. They are not going to be subject to that sort of a lifestyle.

The issue that the CFMEU and the member for Mirani can never get past is that people in Queensland and Australia have a choice. This is a free country; they have a choice as to where they live and where they work. The issue that they bring up all the time about the two that have 100 per cent fly-in fly-out was put in place by the Labor government. It was put in place by the Labor government when I was the opposition spokesman. It was put in place because they had not invested in the infrastructure in those Central Queensland towns. There was no way that extra people could be accommodated in Moranbah at the time. The Labor government at the time—and Andrew Fraser was the driving force—put in place this provision to allow these two mines to proceed on the basis that work opportunities were provided for people who lived in Cairns. There was a requirement for 300 people, I think it was, to fly from Cairns—

**Mr Cripps:** Unemployment was high.

**Mr SEENEY:**—because unemployment was high in Cairns. The only way those jobs could be made available to the people in Cairns was if the particular shifts in those mines were structured around the transport options. They advertised for 300 jobs in Cairns and they got 2½ thousand applications so those people in Cairns could take advantage of the opportunities in the Central Highlands. They could not go and live in the Central Highlands in those days because the Labor government had not invested in the communities, in the infrastructure. We turned all that around. We changed that. The point is that this provision that they hate was put in place by a Labor government, their colleagues.