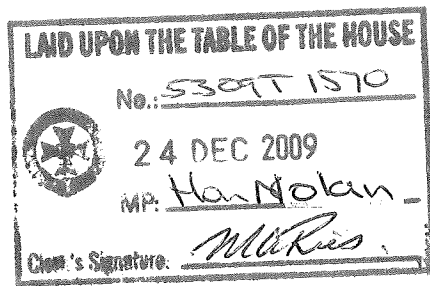




Hon Rachel Nolan MP
Member for Ipswich



**Queensland
Government**

Office of the
Minister for Transport

Our ref: MC45386

Your ref: Petitions

23 DEC 2009

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4001

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

I refer to a petition number 1331-09 lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Mr Peter Dowling MP, Member for Redlands on 29 October 2009 requesting the government to consider assuming control of ferry services that operate between the mainland and the southern Bay Islands, including bringing fares into line with other government-subsidised ferry services.

The Queensland Government, through the TransLink Transit Authority, is committed to providing fair and equitable access to public transport within South East Queensland. The TransLink network spans from Noosa on the Sunshine Coast to Coolangatta on the Gold Coast and west to Helidon. Due to the costs associated with operating such a vast network, requests for new services are considered on a priority basis.

The petition raised an issue which is very complex with a number of stakeholders involving commercial matters and potentially a large taxpayer-funded subsidy.

Since the introduction of TransLink in 2004, a significant number of improvements have been made to public transport in South East Queensland. Some highlights in the Redlands during TransLink's first five years include:

- 42 new buses and 16 replacement buses with 44 of these being low floor, air-conditioned buses – a 60% increase in the fleet
- \$6.4m spent on new services in the Redlands area – a 142% increase in expenditure
- expanded NightLink route 250 to Victoria Point
- additional capacity for 10 500 customers on the Cleveland line since March 2008.

It is worth noting that Redlands City Council contributes nothing to public transport in the region, unlike Brisbane City Council and Gold Coast City Council which both make funding contributions to public transport. Brisbane spends \$73m on bus and ferry services every year, the equivalent of \$178 per ratepayer. The Gold Coast has introduced a transport levy of \$79 per ratepayer, and the Sunshine Coast has introduced a levy of \$20 per ratepayer in this year's budget.

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If Redlands City Council was to contribute the same level of funding per ratepayer as Brisbane City Council this would generate over \$11m in extra funding to spend on more public transport services and infrastructure.

The government would welcome any future contributions from the Redlands City Council to help improve public transport for residents in the Redlands region. Council contributions could be used for any number of projects including the integration of the Bay Island ferry services.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



RACHEL NOLAN MP
Minister for Transport