



**Hon Rachel Nolan MP**  
Member for Ipswich



Our ref: MC48497

**Minister for Transport**

**28 APR 2010**

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
Cnr Alice and George Streets  
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a petition number 1364-10 lodged with the Legislative Assembly by Ms Fiona Simpson MP, Member for Maroochydore, on 9 March 2010 about the fare increase, *go* card retail agents and system reliability.

The cost of running the TransLink Transit Authority's public transport network that spans more than 10 000 square kilometres, across 23 zones is significant. Yearly operating costs such as equipment, wages and fuel have steadily increased over the last few years. Furthermore, South East Queensland's \$1.2 billion public transport network is heavily subsidised with the Queensland Government paying \$3 for every \$1 collected in fares.

Additionally, South East Queensland is Australia's fastest growing region. By 2031, our population is expected to grow from 2.8 million to 4.4 million people. With this growth comes increased demand on public transport services.

It is acknowledged that any increase in fares impacts public transport users. However, the Queensland Government has a responsibility to all taxpayers across the state to ensure that the financial burden of providing public transport services is kept to a reasonable level and that all attempts are made to ensure reasonable cost recovery. We believe that this is a reasonable and responsible fare increase that will allow us to continue to deliver new and improved services in order to meet with the growing demand.

The fare increase will deliver additional 301 000 public transport seats every single week.

TransLink has been encouraging the use of the *go* card product since its introduction in 2007. The *go* card is now used for more than half of all passenger trips on week days – a saving of more than 3000 hours per week in boarding times.

The *go* card offers flexible and seamless travel across the 23-zone network. This offers customers with the freedom and flexibility to change their plans at any time without having to change their ticketing product due to zonal restrictions, as specified on ticketing products such as weekly and monthly tickets.

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The *go* card is a trip-based card so that the fare charged is fair for all customers. The *go* card provides incentives for frequent travel where customers receive a 50% discount when they use their card more than ten times in a week, from Monday to Sunday.

I am pleased to advise that there are over 506 places for passengers to buy a *go* card (newsagents, 7 Elevens, all staffed train stations and ticketing machines located at selected busway stations), and over 1000 places to top-up a *go* card across South East Queensland (selected newsagents, 7 Elevens, train stations, selected busway stations and non-Brisbane Transport buses). 17 new ticketing machines are now available at 12 busway stations. A further 23 machines will be rolled out in the coming months.

In addition, *go* cards can be ordered and managed by phoning the TransLink Call Centre on 13 12 30 open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as well as on the website [www.translink.com.au](http://www.translink.com.au) at anytime.

Alternatively, customers are able to top-up registered cards online or by phoning the call centre. However, funds may not be available for travel for up to 48 hours.

Customers can now also register for the auto top-up functionality. This is when a customer's *go* card balance falls below \$5 and a preset amount of their choice is transferred to their *go* card. The preset amount starts from \$20, increasing by \$20 increments up to a maximum of \$200. The first transaction requires the *go* card to be presented to a card reader before the funds are loaded; the subsequent transactions will be automatic.

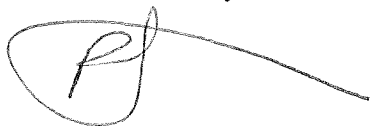
The *go* card equipment failure rates are closely monitored and from April 2009 to January 2010 the fare gates, the card readers and the fare machines at rail stations have reported over a 99% on average availability level. All *go* card equipment and devices are required to be fixed within prescribed timeframes, to minimise impact to users of the system.

TransLink is planning an expansion of the *go* card product suite to introduce products to meet the needs of a range of customer groups, such as tourists, convention attendees and occasional users of public transport.

Furthermore, TransLink has introduced the TransLink Access Pass for people with a significant permanent disability who travel independently on public transport services and can demonstrate that due to their disability they are unable to touch on and off a *go* card. The TransLink Access Pass entitles the pass holder to unlimited travel on all TransLink bus, train and ferry services.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Nolan', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**RACHEL NOLAN MP**  
**Minister for Transport**