

Question on Notice

No. 1297

Asked on Wednesday 4 September 2019

MR S MINNIKIN ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline the initiatives put in place over the past three financial years to increase ridership of full-fare paying adults on the Translink bus network for South East Queensland, along with the measures used to gauge the results?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Chatsworth for the question.

Over this time period, full fare-paying adults on the South East Queensland (SEQ) bus network has grown by around 950,000 even though the government introduced job seekers and veteran's discounts which converted some full fare-paying adults to concession paying ones.

The Palaszczuk Government has taken strong action to make public transport as affordable and accessible for SEQ commuters. We acted swiftly to freeze the annual public transport fare increase in early 2016 and implemented the Fairer Fares for the SEQ package (Fairer Fares) in late-2016, to provide much needed fare relief across SEQ, and have introduced new concessions for job seekers, asylum seekers and veterans.

These initiatives have delivered more than \$178 million in savings, as at June 2019, for Queensland public transport users. Additionally, up to 109,000 commuters now benefit each week from the new 'eight and 50' policy introduced by the Palaszczuk Government. Previously only 80,000 commuters were able to access the former 'nine and free' arrangement each week in the 12 months prior to the Fairer Fares being implemented.

To continue to provide accessible public transport, the Queensland Government is investing \$371 million to deliver a new Smart Ticketing System to make choosing public transport even easier. The new system will mean customers will be able to access the network and pay for their travel using contactless debit and credit cards, smartphones and wearable devices, as well as continuing to use current payment methods. Existing go cards and paper tickets will continue to be accepted. Smart Ticketing will be progressively rolled out across all modes of public transport in SEQ and 18 regional bus services by 2022.

The Palaszczuk Government is also committed to ensuring investment in public transport keeps pace with the growing and changing demands of customers across the State.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads' Passenger Transport Infrastructure Investment Program funds projects such as bus stations, interchanges, bus priority measures, park 'n' rides, bus stops and customer signage. Importantly, the program also has a specific focus on providing accessibility upgrades to infrastructure. These important investments provide more people with more attractive options for using public transport, helping to manage congestion on our roads.

Finally, the Palaszczuk Government recognises the importance of continued investment in our public transport network to enable Queenslanders to connect more easily to health services, education, jobs and with each other.

We are committed to providing an integrated and efficient public transport network accessible for all Queenslanders. In the last three years, the Palaszczuk Government has invested in significant bus service improvements on our network, including:

- new bus services to growing areas of SEQ including Ripley Valley, Pimpama, and Caloundra South
- increasing the frequency and span of hours of bus services to and from the University of Queensland to encourage more students and staff to use public transport to travel to this key SEQ attractor
- changes to the bus network in locations such as Redcliffe, the Gold Coast and Moreton Bay to support seamless connections for customers connecting to other transport modes, such as rail lines and stage two of the Gold Coast Light Rail.

Furthermore, the Palaszczuk Government is working hard to publicise and market the benefits of public transport. For example, TransLink has been running local area marketing trials where it uses a range of data to analyse public transport patronage, suburb by suburb, to identify areas that have opportunities to improve based on the characteristics of the area and the services available. TransLink initiates a targeted marketing campaign in the identified areas using a range of advertising techniques to encourage people to get out of their cars and give public transport a go.

The Palaszczuk Government's investment in affordable and accessible public transport is resulting in record patronage on the SEQ TransLink network with a record 189 million trips taken in 2018–19, up by 6.9 million trips from the previous year.