

Question on Notice

No. 31

Asked on Tuesday 12 February 2019

MS F SIMPSON ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With regards to fare evasion on Sunbus services across the Sunshine Coast—

Will the Minister advise (a) for 2018 (i) how many times Senior Network Officers were deployed on Sunbus services, (ii) how many warnings and penalty infringement notices were issued and (b) what the Minister is doing to address security and fare evasion issues?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Maroochydore for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government takes the issue of fare evasion seriously and is committed to addressing this issue. The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) employs a frontline operational workforce of 55 senior network officers (SNOs) who work alongside 27 Queensland Rail authorised officers, 78 Queensland Police Service (QPS) rail squad officers and 31 GoldlinQ customer service officers to stage regular station lockdowns and patrols, educate public transport users, and issue penalty infringements and warning notices.

A further round of recruitment for SNOs is about to get underway with advertisements appearing in the next few weeks.

The safety of passengers is always a priority for the Palaszczuk Government. At the same time, there is a strong community expectation that users of the public transport network accept their responsibility to pay their fares.

In 2018, SNOs were deployed on Sunshine Coast Sunbus services a total of 572 times, and issued 12 Penalty Infringement Notices and 215 Warnings.

As the Member is likely aware, the Palaszczuk Government has undertaken a number of initiatives to address security and fare evasion, including:

- deployment of TransLink's 55 SNOs across the TransLink network, alongside 27 Queensland Rail authorised officers and 78 QPS rail squad officers
- working jointly with police to undertake special operations targeting fare evasion and anti-social behaviour at the Maroochydore, Noosa and Caloundra bus interchanges on the Sunshine Coast
- police operations which included Maroochydore and Noosa local police riding bus services with SNOs, as well as patrolling the Maroochydore, Noosa and Caloundra bus interchanges
- early detection and intervention of youth offenders with referrals through QPS to Youth Justice, and TransLink attendance at Youth Justice as a support to educate the young person on the associated impacts of transport-related offences
- continued roll-out of the school 'Step Up' education program targeting schools with high fare evasion and behavioural offences.

It is important that all areas of the community work together to tackle fare evasion. That is why the Palaszczuk Government is committed to ensuring early intervention methods, such as 'Step Up' and liaising with Youth Justice, are undertaken alongside compliance measures such as the deployment of SNOs, and special operations involving QPS. The government is also committed to working with bus operators and bus drivers to address this issue and will hold a roundtable with parents, police, operators and schools to find new ways to tackle this issue.