

Question on Notice

No. 1435

Asked on 16 November 2021

MR R KATTER ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the decision not to re-award long-term, locally-owned bus company Douglas Coaches with the contract to deliver long-distance services in the Charters Towers region on behalf of Translink—

Will the Minister explain what benefits it expects will be delivered to the local community by the decision to award this contract to a non-local operator?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Traeger for the question.

I am aware that Douglas Coaches has been operating this service through a subcontract, and had submitted an offer in response to the tender. While there are probity and confidentiality considerations preventing specific details being provided, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) advises these contracts were awarded through a competitive, open-market process that invited offers from all interested parties. These offers progressed through a rigorous assessment across several criteria including, but not limited to, value for money, operations and customer benefit. I can advise that Donric Group provided the best offer for the Charters Towers to Townsville contract, and have subsequently been awarded the contract for the next five years.

Donric Group will be offering a high quality of service on this route, providing a new 12-metre coach fully equipped with a wheelchair lift, free wi-fi, reclining leather seats with USB charging points and freight capacity. There has been no impact to service times and frequencies, with Donric Group operating to the existing timetables since they commenced operating the services on 10 December 2021.

I recognise the contribution that Douglas Coaches has made to the community in delivering this service under a subcontract to Toowoomba Transit, and can advise that TMR has offered to provide feedback to Douglas Coaches regarding their bid.