

Question on Notice

No. 373

Asked on 25 March 2021

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

QUESTION:

With reference to fare revenue from the Translink network—

Will the Minister advise (a) how much fare revenue Translink collected in November 2019, December 2019, January 2020, February 2020, November 2020, December 2020, January 2021 and February 2021 respectively, (b) projected fare revenue expected to be collected by Translink in the next 12 months and (c) whether the department has conducted any modelling on costs, savings and associated risks or benefits of making all travel on the Translink network free?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Maiwar for the question.

- (a) The Palaszczuk Government understands the important role that public transport plays in connecting people with jobs, education, essential services and each other. Revenue collected between November 2019 and February 2020 was \$110.8 million and \$66.3 million between November 2020 and February 2021.

Revenue collected <i>excluding GST</i>	November \$M	December \$M	January \$M	February \$M	Total \$M
2019–2020	29.2	24.6	27.5	29.5	110.8
2020–2021	17.6	16.2	13.8	18.7	66.3

- (b) Due to the dynamic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is too early to predict precise revenue for the next 12 months. However, it is pleasing to note that, despite the continued impact of the pandemic, revenue has rebounded strongly from being down by 83.7 per cent in April 2020, to 37 per cent instead in February 2021. Further gains are expected as the vaccine rollout progresses and international student—as well as and tourism participation—levels return to normal.
- (c) The Palaszczuk Government is committed to making public transport as affordable and accessible as possible across Queensland. The Palaszczuk Government already cover 80 per cent of the cost of every bus, train, tram and ferry ticket sold in Queensland. Last year, the Palaszczuk Government put a freeze on public transport fares across Queensland for 2021 to provide commuters certainty during the state's economic recovery. Commuters also continue to benefit from the Fairer Fares review, which has provided much needed fare relief for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. As part of this review, there were new concessions introduced for job seekers, asylum seekers, seniors and veterans across Queensland. This has resulted in savings of \$312.51 million in the 2019–20 financial year. Fare revenue plays a vital role in ensuring public transport services can continue to increase and attract more passengers. Revenue is invested into transport infrastructure, such as station upgrades and park 'n' ride facilities, and the improvement of services for all users—such as increasing frequency of services, adding new services into growing areas and expansion of hours of services. As a matter of policy, the Palaszczuk Government does not support free travel, to ensure a focus on fairness and the sustainability of public transport services for all Queenslanders, not just those in South East Queensland.

Queensland's public transport network is one of the largest in the world, with more than 10,000 square kilometres across eight zones. I note the Member has previously talked about free public transport in cities such as Luxembourg and Estonia to which neither of these locations can be compared to Queensland, as it is one of the most geographically dispersed states in the world with an area of 1,727,000 square kilometres.