

Question on Notice

No. 457

Asked on 21 April 2021

DR M ROBINSON ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the publicly announced 15 minute time saving for rail travel from the Redlands to the City due to Cross River Rail—

Will the Minister confirm (a) if this projected timeframe stands as correct and (b) the commencement date for construction of the duplication of the line from Manly to Cleveland to facilitate the projected time savings?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Oodgeroo for the question.

- (a) Cross River Rail (CRR) will transform the way we travel to, through and from Brisbane in the future. Multiple major transport investments in South East Queensland (SEQ), including ongoing road and bus improvements across the Redlands region, will improve the connectivity of our network for passenger transport users.

The Cross River Rail Delivery Authority, Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Rail and other experts, are planning the seamless integration of new services into the SEQ rail network once Cross River Rail becomes operational. This work includes consideration of wider rail network strategies, and other factors like the impact on patronage due to COVID-19.

Queenslanders can have full confidence that planning to determine the exact configuration and timing of services will be completed well ahead of Cross River Rail's opening.

There are a number of ways travel time savings and other travel benefits will be generated for Redlands public transport passengers with the introduction of CRR. CRR will create new high-capacity stations in convenient city centre locations, enable better interchanges between bus and rail services, and lead to shorter journeys door-to-door, especially for commuters travelling to the heart of the Brisbane central business district (CBD) and to Woolloongabba.

It is clear that commuters will notice great benefits from the first CBD train station built in more than 120 years. The new underground Albert Street station will dramatically improve connectivity to the southern part of the CBD from its main entrance.

For example, a commuter wanting to travel to Queens Wharf Precinct, walking from Roma street, would typically take 17 minutes. From the new Albert Street station, this walk would take just five minutes. This is a 12-minute saving in walking time.

There will be more direct public transport to more locations and greater capacity for future service increases. More services, via the new CRR alignment, will mean less congestion on the existing rail lines through the city and inner southern area.

The Palaszczuk Government consistently backed commuters with more train services than ever before with another 105 weekly services—or 58,000 seats—added to the network to increase social distancing during COVID-19.

CRR would not be happening if the LNP was in office. In addition, even as recently as last year, the LNP have stated its support for the New Dutton Station option, which would have meant Cleveland line commuters facing a nine-minute walk to interchange to access CRR stations.

In contrast, Cleveland line commuters on the current CRR project route can seamlessly change at Boggo Road for new tunnel services for the first time to the Gabba and Albert Street and Ekka stations.

Economies worldwide are enduring the harshest economic downturn in generations, and Queensland's economy is not immune. We know that every job counts more than ever right now. The Palaszczuk Government will always back Queenslanders and jobs, especially as we rebound from a global pandemic.

Thousands of construction workers on CRR would have been robbed of their jobs if this project did not go ahead. I note that no progress was made on duplication of the Cleveland line by the 2012–15 LNP Newman Government, of which the Member for Oodgeroo was a part.

- (b) The Palaszczuk Government remains committed to delivering efficient and reliable rail connections for the residents of eastern Brisbane and Redland City along the Cleveland line. This commitment is reflected in the recommendations and actions of *ShapingSEQ* and the recently released *South East Queensland Regional Transport Plans*. Single track and slow curved tracks limit how many services the Cleveland line can currently run. The extra capacity on the network enabled by CRR will make other rail network growth projects like the Manly to Cleveland line duplication more viable.

TMR is currently undertaking planning for the Cleveland line, which includes the Manly to Cleveland section. This planning will result in a better understanding of the possible reliability and travel time improvements to identify the most suitable solutions to address and enhance rail services on the line.

Commencement of any construction would occur following the completion of planning and identification of the most suitable solution to improve reliability and travel time on the Cleveland line, in line with demand and other network priorities.

The *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2020–21 to 2023–24* represents a record investment in road and transport infrastructure for the fifth year in a row, with \$26.9 billion in works committed over the next four years, supporting an average of approximately 23,600 direct jobs over the life of the program. Of this, \$120.2 million is committed across the Redlands City area.

With the pandemic impacting Queensland businesses and communities, significant road upgrades will be delivered to help stimulate the economy as part of *Unite and Recover: Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan*. These upgrades provide immediate economic record benefits, support more jobs and deliver ongoing benefits of vital infrastructure for years to come.