

Question on Notice

No. 994

Asked on 2 September 2021

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

QUESTION:

Will the Minister outline in detail the plan to connect Toowoomba to Brisbane via passenger rail?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Toowoomba North for the question.

The Australian and Queensland governments have partnered to undertake the Toowoomba to Brisbane Passenger Rail Strategic Business Case. This study commenced in early 2021 and is being delivered in stages, in accordance with the Queensland Government's Project Assessment Framework.

The study will help determine the future need and timing for passenger rail services between Toowoomba and Brisbane and investigate options to meet future transport needs in the corridor. The need for this study was identified as part of the Inland Rail Bilateral Agreement signed by the Australian and Queensland governments in late 2019.

The Australian Government is wholly funding this study and has committed up to \$15 million from the Major Project Business Case Fund towards a business case to investigate passenger rail services in the Brisbane to Toowoomba corridor. The Queensland Government is providing an in-kind contribution to the study through the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR).

The study is considering how the new Inland Rail infrastructure and the use of different services could help improve passenger transport in the Toowoomba to Brisbane corridor in the short-, medium- and long-term. To date, it has included comprehensive technical information gathering and analysis with key stakeholders about the existing constraints and opportunities, travel demand and identification of possible options.

The next phase of the Toowoomba to Brisbane study will involve more detailed assessment of options. This will include analysis of impacts, benefits, costs, timing, and wider transport network integration to identify a preferred option, or options, in consultation with key stakeholders. It will also recommend whether to proceed to a detailed business case and potential further investment.

Further information on the Toowoomba to Brisbane Study is available on TMR's website.

The *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2021–22 to 2024–25* outlines \$27.5 billion in road and transport infrastructure works committed over the next four years, supporting an average of approximately 24,000 direct jobs over the life of the program.

With the COVID-19 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 benefits, support more jobs and deliver ongoing benefits of vital infrastructure for years to come.