

Question on Notice

No. 1062

Asked on 14 October 2022

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

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise the total construction cost for Cross River Rail (CRR) (including any ancillary projects that are required to make this project operational)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Chatsworth for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is making a number of investments to modernise the South East Queensland rail network.

At the heart of these investments is the Cross River Rail project which the Member has described as “transformational”.

Cross River Rail is a new 10.2-kilometre rail line which includes 5.9 kilometres of twin tunnels under the Brisbane River and central business district, four new underground stations being built at Boggo Road, Woolloongabba, Albert Street and Roma Street, and two above ground stations being rebuilt at Dutton Park and Exhibition.

The funding allocation for this core scope of work in Budget Paper 3 of the 2022–23 Budget Papers is \$5.389 billion, with a contribution from private sector of \$1.499 billion. There has been no change to that number since it was first published.

As outlined in *SEQ Rail Connect*, this second rail crossing of the Brisbane River and underground path through the centre of the South East Queensland rail network acts as a catalyst for important additional rail network upgrades. As a result, a wide variety of planned network enhancements become more viable to implement.

The Member has previously sought to describe the Palaszczuk Government’s broader network investments as Cross River Rail costs:

Mr MINNIKIN: for example, if you add the Breakfast Creek Bridge, realign track at \$34.7million; Clapham Yard Stabling at Moorooka, construct stabling yard at \$301 million; Fairfield train station to Salisbury train station upgrades, various locations, upgrade stations at \$52.5 million; Mayne Yard, relocate facility at \$22.4 million; Mayne Yard, upgrade vehicle and pedestrian access at \$96.8 million; Moolabin Power, upgrade power supply at \$18 million; and Roma Street to Exhibition Station, Normanby, construct third track at \$7.1 million, these extras total a further \$533 million. Added to the initial \$5.389 billion plus the \$1.499 billion PPP, one arrives at a total cost of Cross River Rail—kerching!—of \$7.421 billion.

(House Hansard, 23 June 2022)

During Budget Estimates the Member asked of Mr Neil Scales, Director-General (Department of Transport and Main Roads):

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales: \$5.4 billion, plus PPP—\$6.888 billion—agree. Plus there is Breakfast Creek Bridge, realign track; Clapham Yard stabling at Moorooka; Fairfield train station to Salisbury train station upgrades; Mayne Yard, relocate facility; Mayne Yard, upgrade vehicle and pedestrian access; Moolabin power station; Roma Street to Exhibition station (Normanby), construct third track; NGR, installing new signalling; and NGR, operations and platform screen doors fitment. If I go through the figures sequentially outlined for the individual item IDs from 5733 to 5850 and add them all together, that comes to a total figure of \$8.24 billion. That is a 48.6 per cent cost increase. Mr Scales, again, the total cost including PPPs to be paid back by the taxpayers of Queensland for the Cross River Rail project I put it to you is close to \$8 billion....

(Budget Estimates Hansard, 2 August 2022)

To which the Director-General replied:

Mr SCALES: Breakfast Creek Bridge and the station upgrades are things that we would be doing anyway. In terms of the network access—making it safe for the Breakfast Creek Bridge is a good example—the work we are doing on Mayne Yard and the work we will be doing on Clapham for another staging point is work that we would be doing anyway.”

(Budget Estimates Hansard, 2 August 2022)

I further note that the European Train Control System (ETCS) appeared as a line item prior to Cross River Rail in the State’s Budget Papers, and that planning for ETCS has been underway preceding the election of the Palaszczuk Government in 2015. When the Newman Government (whose policy was not to build Cross River Rail) managed the procurement for New Generation Rollingstock trains, the scope of the project specified that the trains be delivered to the State with the ability to be retrofitted with digital signalling technology. It is inaccurate to link the cost of retrofitting trains with signalling technology to the Cross River Rail project.

The Palaszczuk Government will deploy ETCS technology into the tunnel and south to Salisbury first, so as to derive the greatest benefit from this investment to the broader network.

Costs and budgets allocated for these additional works are clearly detailed in both *SEQ Rail Connect* and *Budget Paper 3* of the *2022–23 Budget Papers*, as they have been since 2019.