

Question on Notice

No. 538

Asked on 10 May 2023

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the Beerwah to Caloundra to Kawana to Maroochydore rail extension planning—

Will the Minister advise (a) work done between 2015 to 2022 to progress the project, (b) the date that the current planning work will be completed and (c) if the current planning will include a business case and all other work necessary for the government to make an investment decision?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Glass House for the question.

The Direct Sunshine Coast (DSC) Rail Line project—formerly known as the CAMCOS—is an important part of the Queensland Government’s vision for public transport on the Sunshine Coast. This project is flagged as a key initiative in the state’s rail blueprint, SEQ Rail Connect.

When Infrastructure Australia assessed the “North Coast Connect” business case, it said it would welcome considering a “stronger” case for a rail connection between the North Coast Line and coastal communities in the Sunshine Coast community.

I wrote to the federal infrastructure Minister seeking Australian Government cooperation to develop a more robust planning document that both governments could have confidence in, prior to making an investment decision.

The Palaszczuk Government secured \$6 million in joint funding with the Australian Government (50:50 funding arrangement) to progress investment planning in accordance with the Queensland Treasury’s Project Assessment Framework (PAF). Preliminary evaluations started in 2022 and a business case is now underway, which is the final step of the PAF process to inform an investment decision. Government consideration of business case outcomes is anticipated in 2024.

The Direct Sunshine Coast business case is assessing the 37-kilometre heavy rail line corridor Beerwah and Maroochydore to confirm various project elements, such as rail alignment, rail operations, stabling and construction, as well as environmental and community impacts of the project. Pre-delivery work, such as site surveys and geotechnical investigations are underway as part of the business case stage.

A project cost estimate and potential delivery timeframes, construction staging, integration with the broader rail network and market conditions, will be confirmed during the business case stage to inform the investment decision by the Queensland and Australian governments.