

## Question on Notice

No. 160

Asked on 6 March 2024

**MS F SIMPSON** ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS AND MINISTER FOR DIGITAL SERVICES (HON B MELLISH)—

### QUESTION:

With reference to the Mooloolah River Interchange—

Will the Minister advise (a) changes made to the design of the project since the business case was completed and lodged with Infrastructure Australia at a P90 level, (b) the cost forecast for land acquisition as contained in the project business case and the current budget for land acquisition, (c) the construction cost as contained in the project business case and the current forecast construction cost and (d) how the department plans to address growing traffic congestion should this project not proceed?

### ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Maroochydore for the question.

I refer the Member to the Question on Notice 114, tabled on 18 March 2024.

On 22 December 2023, I announced a revised indicative total cost of \$743.6 million for the Mooloolah River Interchange (MRI) Upgrade project – as part of the Queensland Government’s renewed plan for transparency with Queenslanders.

It is acknowledged that since preparation of the project’s business case and cost estimate in 2020, significant labour and materials cost escalations and unprecedented property market conditions in the Sunshine Coast region have impacted the project budget.

Additionally, detailed site investigations conducted during the project’s design phase identified technical refinements were required. Changes in road, bridge and rail standards since the finalisation of the MRI Upgrade business case have further contributed to the cost escalation. Collaboration with interfacing projects, such as the Direct Sunshine Coast Rail Line, has also been undertaken to ensure the project aligns with the broader multi-modal network solution desired by the community.

As I have stated publicly, the challenge to deliver this project has been significantly compounded by the outcomes of the Australian Government’s Independent Strategic Review of the Infrastructure Investment Program, announced in November last year, which has seen the Australian Government cancel funding for the project. Without federal support, the MRI simply cannot be delivered.

The Miles Government is delivering its eighth record transport and roads infrastructure program in a row, as detailed in the *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2023–24 to 2026–27*, which outlines \$32.1 billion in investment over the next four years and is estimated to support an average of 25,200 direct jobs over the life of the program. Of this, \$3.147 billion is committed across the Department of Transport and Main Roads’ North Coast Region, estimated to support an average of 2460 direct jobs over the life of the program.