

Question on Notice

No. 868

Asked on 20 August 2024

MR R STEVENS ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS AND MINISTER FOR DIGITAL SERVICES (HON B MELLISH)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Citytrain services delivered in 2024 (to date)—

Will the Minister advise how many scheduled or planned six-car train services operated with a three-car set (reported separately by month)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Mermaid Beach for the question.

Queensland Rail aims to provide six carriages on each train for customers. Sometimes, due to unit availability, a decision to operate a three-car train will occur. Queensland Rail acknowledges that three-car services can be inconvenient to some customers. However, running a three-car train is preferable to cancelling a service altogether.

In early 2024, a number of trains servicing the South East Queensland (SEQ) network were undergoing critical maintenance to ensure their safety and compliance to standards, as well as preventative and corrective maintenance on the Queensland Rail fleet.

On top of that, the number of New Generation Rollingstock (NGR) trains available for service has been continually impacted since 2019 due to the ongoing NGR Accessibility Upgrade Program. This cost Queensland taxpayers an extra \$335 million to retrofit foreign-made trains ordered by the LNP in 2014, in response to a Commission of Inquiry.

These works were completed in late July 2024. This meant for five years, the number of six-car train sets were consistently reduced, forcing more three-car sets to be used in their place.

Another reason three-car sets are a feature of the SEQ Rail Network is that the 75 NGR trains—bought under the former government—are not fully compatible with the Ferny Grove, Beenleigh and Rosewood lines.

The NGR trains are not able to run on the Ferny Grove line at all, as they leave a large gap between the train and platform at some stations, meaning passengers cannot board safely and, at Newmarket and Keperra, the platforms are too short to accommodate the NGR trains at all.

Due to these issues—and the pairing of the Ferny Grove and Beenleigh lines—it means the NGR trains also do not run on the Beenleigh line as part of the regular timetable.

On the Rosewood line, the NGR trains are too long for the platform, forcing passengers into the front three cars, otherwise they would step and fall onto the tracks.

This requires Queensland Rail to run more three-car train services, on all three of these lines. The number of three-car services has decreased throughout the year, however, as the NGR Accessibility Upgrade Program came to a close, the NGR fleet availability increased.

Between 1 January 2024 and 22 August 2024, Queensland Rail operated a total of 251,948 services (including Airtrain) and the total number of three-car sets used was just over three per cent:

- January – 1637* of 28,957 (5.65%)
- February – 1936* of 33,530 (5.77%)
- March – 1782* of 33,824 (5.27%)
- April – 1234* of 32,185 (3.83%)
- May – 609* of 35,997 (1.69%)
- June – 520* of 30,634 (1.70%)
- July – 302* of 31,096 (0.97%)
- August (as at 22 August) – 108* of 25,725 (0.42%).

*Excludes scheduled three-car services between Ipswich and Rosewood.