

Question on Notice

No. 438

Asked on 24 March 2005

MRS ATTWOOD asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS)—

QUESTION:

What are his department's strategies to promote the use of public transport in the greater Brisbane region?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for her question about promoting public transport in the greater Brisbane region.

Since the introduction of TransLink's integrated ticketing system on July 1 2004, an extra 5.5 million passengers have used public transport in South East Queensland (SEQ), the first eight months alone surpassed all expectations, with patronage up by around 7% on the same period the previous year. TransLink has brought together the State and local Governments and unified 18 transport operators to provide a single public transport network from Gympie North and Noosa on the Sunshine Coast to Coolangatta on the Gold Coast and west to Helidon. This is the first time in the world a Government has attempted to integrate so many different operators over such a large area into one system, and with 60% of fares now cheaper under integrated ticketing, the affordability and convenience of public transport has been made enormously appealing to customers.

Already, more commuters are choosing public transport because TransLink's system makes it more flexible and easy to catch, provides people with more choices to explore travel options, and promotes public transport on the TransLink network via a continuing public education program including activities such as:

- Distributing TransLink information and a Public Transport Directory through operators, Government agency networks and the TransInfo phone line and website, thus providing passengers with answers to common questions, and fares and ticket product information.
- Promoting TransLink's TransInfo service as the one stop shop for public transport information, and for taking feedback and enquiries from the public.
- Operating the TransLink Information Bus (a mobile information display) across the Greater Brisbane region to educate the community about TransLink and encourage public transport usage, including presence at university open days, community festivals and the Brisbane Ekka.

However, to help manage the anticipated explosion in travel growth in SEQ due to unprecedented population growth in the coming decades the Premier, Mr Beattie launched the Draft TransLink Network Plan on 23 March this year, seeking feedback to refine the plan, and shape the development of public transport services and infrastructure in SEQ. By incorporating community input, the Government will be able to provide a public transport system that truly meets community needs now and in the future, and will be able to promote this truly responsive public transport network accordingly.

Another key strategy to promote public transport usage is the implementation of a Smart Card system currently under development and testing within TransLink. The smart card

project is geographically one of the largest in the world, and will take the integrated ticketing system one step further, as a single rechargeable smart card will enable travel on all services across the network. With the addition of the smart card, the SEQ public transport system will offer passengers a fast, efficient and seamless method of public transport use, and include the convenience of multiple recharging methods such as via the phone, ticket machines, at ticket agents or over the internet. The resulting world-class public transport ticketing system in SEQ will be of enormous benefit to both passengers and staff, and will see even greater levels of patronage growth in coming years.