

Question on Notice

No. 690

Asked on 12 May 2005

MR LAWLOR asked the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (MR LUCAS) -

QUESTION:

What benefit will the Gold Coast derive from the Federal Budget so far as road funding is concerned?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Southport for the question.

Yet again, the federal government's 2005-06 budget provided very little for Queensland's road and rail network. In particular, people on the Gold Coast have missed out badly and are entitled to be particularly upset.

The federal budget basically reflected existing commitments and, again, failed to provide a matching funding commitment to the upgrade of the Pacific Motorway in Queensland, despite the Beattie government's commitment to pay half of the estimated cost.

What the Queensland government needed was a matching federal funding commitment to the Pacific Motorway upgrade in Queensland over the next 8 to 10 years, to provide for transit lanes from the Gateway Motorway to Logan, including an interchange at Loganlea, and six laning of the motorway between Nerang and Tugun. The Queensland government already has \$300m earmarked for this task and had sought matching federal funding.

But, what we got was: nothing.

While the federal government's \$120m commitment to the Tugun Bypass over two years from 2006-07 is appreciated, it is simply a rehash of the previous allocation (announced in 2003); no further funding has been committed under AusLink for constructing other infrastructure on the Gold Coast – a glaring omission, considering the Australian Bureau of Statistics predicts that population on the Gold Coast is expected to grow by over 12 per cent between 2005 and 2010.

Under AusLink, Queensland's overall share of federal government funding for both the National Highway System (NHS) and Roads of National Importance (RoNIs) averages \$293m a year over the next five years – less than half the funding required to address Queensland's identified NHS needs alone.

On the other hand, the New South Wales government has obtained a federal funding commitment of \$1.6b a year over the next ten years.

In the interim, the Beattie government will continue to get on with the job of delivering improved transport infrastructure outcomes for Queensland, mindful of the Gold Coast being the country's sixth largest city.