

Question on Notice

No. 699

Asked on 12 May 2005

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the recent Federal Coalition Budget—

Is he aware of any funding allocations towards the upgrade of the Gateway Motorway, which passes through the Nudgee Electorate and, and as a comparison, will he detail State Government funding commitments for this road?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Nudgee for the question.

The total cost of the Gateway Upgrade Project (GUP) is \$1.64b (road \$1.05b; bridge \$590m). The road component forms part of the National Highway System for which the Australian Government has full funding responsibility. Duplication of the Gateway Bridge is a state responsibility.

The Australian Government has not specifically committed any funding towards the Gateway Motorway in AusLink 1 (2004-05 to 2008-09). I have sought funding from the Australian Government on a number of occasions but to date, the Australian Government has only provided \$8m towards the cost of planning and development of the business case, with which Australian Government representatives were closely involved.

Despite the lack of an Australian Government funding commitment at the time, the Beattie Government announced the \$1.64b project on 6 April 2005. This project is also featured in the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program released on 27 April 2005.

This will be the largest road and bridge project ever undertaken in Queensland, and is anticipated to provide:

- Gateway Bridge duplication and motorway upgrade from Mt Gravatt-Capalaba Road to Nudgee Road (approx 20km)
- \$30m shared pedestrian/bicycle facility on the new bridge
- strong economic benefits of reduced traffic congestion, reduced travel times, improved safety, improved access to Australia Trade Coast.

- 5,000-6,000 jobs created over 4-5 years of design and construction, and contribution to long-term job growth in the region.

Queensland Motorways Limited (QML) is delivering the GUP, in partnership with Main Roads and the private sector, through a design, construct and maintain (DCM) contract.

QML will operate (and maintain) the facility over a 30-year franchise period. The successful private sector consortium will be expected to start construction on the project in late 2006 and complete it by 2011. Some sections will be opened progressively to reduce congestion and improve traffic flows.

In February 2005, the state government announced that tolls on the Gateway Bridge would increase from 1 July 2005 as part of a toll strategy that included CPI from 2005 and toll increases to catch-up with CPI from 1998. These would occur in 2005, 2008, 2011 as improved service is provided, as well as CPI adjustments from 2005 throughout the franchise period.

The increase which will take effect from 1 July 2005 will see tolls rise from \$2.20 to \$2.40 for cars and from \$5.50 to \$6.00 for heavy vehicles. The first increase for motorcycles will be from \$1.10 to \$1.20 on 1 July 2006.

The level of tolls proposed also depends on a contribution from the Australian Government towards its funding obligations of the national highway. In the absence of any Australian Government funding towards the GUP, the state would need to either divert funds from other priority state road projects or increase the tolls further.

I am continuing to seek funding from the Australian Government to meet its funding obligations on the Gateway Motorway, and other critical AusLink National Network projects right across Queensland, particularly the Ipswich Motorway, the Brisbane Urban Corridor connection to the Gateway, and urgent safety works between Cooroy and Gympie to name but a few.