

Question on Notice

No. 835

Asked on Tuesday, 5 June 2007

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

QUESTION:

With reference to the Queensland Rail Q-Link service which undertakes the delivery of freight to, and the collection and forwarding of freight from Warwick and Stanthorpe—

1. What are the future long term plans for the continuation of this service?
2. What is being planned for the receiving and despatching of freight from these centres and specifically how will this disrupt Q-Link clients who regularly despatch significant quantities of fresh produce?
3. Are there any other plans by Q-Link to change services for other receivable and despatching points across the electorate of Southern Downs, such as Inglewood and Goondiwindi?

ANSWER:

I have been advised that Queensland Rail's (QR) future long-term plans include the continuing provision of a freight pickup and delivery service for its customers in Warwick and Stanthorpe. It should be noted, however, that QR does regularly review its services to ensure the most cost-effective solution is achieved and maintained, without making any significant impact on the overall requirements of its customers.

QR is planning a review of its current Sunday service which it provides for its fruit customers located between Warwick and Stanthorpe. The reason for this review is the high cost of providing this service and the low volumes of fruit that it carries. QR only has one regular customer who generally only consigns between two and four pallets each Sunday and another who only uses this service occasionally. QR has commenced consultation with both these customers to explore options for a suitable alternate-service arrangement that will still meet their requirements.

QR has no plans to make significant changes to its service schedules in the Southern Downs electorate.

The Government continues to support rail services in the Southern Downs electorate through the expenditure of \$18.9m in the current financial year for below rail services and about \$360m statewide. Across the State, the Queensland Government maintains its commitment to regional rail freight transport by purchasing a range of rail services to regional areas from QR. Queensland Transport and QR formalise these activities through contracts, which fund both specified rail services and ongoing track maintenance. Current QR receipts from Government total \$307m per annum for track maintenance and a further \$145m per annum to provide regional passenger and freight rail services.

QR will, however, continue to monitor and review its service schedules in all areas of the state and if necessary adjust them accordingly. This is necessary to ensure that the services provided to its customers are cost effective. QRN aims to provide a long-term, financially sustainable freight service that will ultimately benefit customers and the broader community.