

## Question on Notice

No. 1016

Asked on Thursday, 16 June 2011

DR ROBINSON asked the Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (MR WALLACE)—

### QUESTION:

With reference to variable message sign (VMS) units in use on Queensland roads—  
Will the Minister list the (a) installation costs, (b) repair/maintenance costs and (c) reported malfunctions of VMS units in 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 to date (each year reported separately)?

### ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Cleveland for the question.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads has not calculated the exact costs you requested as many of these Variable Message Signs (VMS) have been costed as part of a motorway project and not as a one-off addition to a roadway.

VMS are the large electronic boards that give important timely traffic information to commuters like conditions ahead, upcoming events that will affect traffic flow and directions, so drivers can respond to real-time traffic conditions.

When there is nothing of this nature to report, the signs promote safety messages and travel services like the 131940 traffic and travel information line and website.

(a) A budgetary cost for a new VMS site varies depending on location, ground conditions, existing power and communications services and their proximity, site accessibility by construction machinery and any geometric constraints.

(b) Estimates for maintenance and operation costs of a single VMS in the Brisbane Metropolitan area are \$8000 per annum for operations including power and communications, and \$6000 per annum for maintenance and repairs.

(c) In Metropolitan region, there are 37 operational VMS plus four awaiting commission and two portable units. This number is expected to increase as more VMS are installed as part of upgrading existing motorways and when new ones are constructed. The region has transferred ownership of three on the Bruce Highway to North Coast region and three on the Pacific Motorway to South Coast region earlier this year to add to their regional tallies. Please note there are also VMS owned by councils and road operators like Clem7.

The BMTMC uses Streams Incident Management System (SIMS) data to report faults in all its devices, including VMS.

This database has been recording all faults for over 12 months so from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011, there have been 52 VMS faults recorded.

Prior to this there were two available databases operating, so from records from the BMTMC there were 27 recorded VMS faults from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 and 50 faults from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009. These are therefore indicative and not final numbers.

Faults recorded by SIMS include fibre optic communications failures, power outages and component failures on pixel boards and power conversions.