

Question on Notice

No. 224

Asked on 10 March 2011

MS CROFT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (MS PALASZCZUK)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide an update on the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project and advise why this project is such an important project for the Gold Coast?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Broadwater for the question.

I am pleased to confirm that the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project is quickly taking shape. Early works construction activities are already well underway along sections of the corridor.

The project is on track with the operation of Queensland's first light rail system set to commence in 2014.

The Gold Coast is Australia's fifth largest city with a population already over 500 000. By 2031 it is estimated that approximately 800 000 people will live in the region and like all major cities, the Gold Coast is not immune to the challenges of increasing traffic congestion.

This light rail will go where people live and work and will significantly contribute to moving people along the coastal corridor. This together with improvements to the existing bus network will provide a better whole of network public transport solution for the Gold Coast. By connecting neighbourhoods, community and retail centres, residents and visitors will enjoy fast, frequent and reliable access to the key activity centres of Griffith University, the new Gold Coast University Hospital, Southport, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach.

In addition to the transport benefits, the project has and will continue to provide an important economic boost for the people of the Gold Coast by generating direct and indirect jobs and directly supporting the city's key local employment industries including construction and retail trade.

We are already seeing this in action with the current early works activity being carried out by a workforce that is almost 80% local.

The Gold Coast Rapid Transit project will deliver a light rail system that provides a quality journey from doorstep to destination with benefits including travel time savings, greater accessibility to employment areas, traffic management and reduced emissions.