

Question on Notice

No. 1452

Asked on Tuesday, 30 August 2016

MR BLEIJIE asked the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games (HON S HINCHLIFFE) —

QUESTION:

Will the Minister provide details with respect to bus public transportation on the Sunshine Coast including the responsibility of routes, fares, ownership of assets and detail the financial contribution to the ownership and running of the Sunshine Coast bus network (reported separately) by the State Government, Local Government and Federal Government?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Kawana for the question.

Responsibility for planning and delivery of public transport bus route services rests with the Department of Transport and Main Roads, through its TransLink Division (TransLink).

TransLink is also responsible for setting fares for public transport services, and periodically reviewing them. For example, the results of the latest fare review will be implemented in January 2017 when TransLink fares and fare zones will be restructured. Key changes that will benefit people travelling in the Sunshine Coast include:

- Reducing the number of zones from twenty three to eight.
- Lower fares for all zones of travel.
- Half-price trips after the eighth journey in a week will replace free travel after nine journeys.
- Off-peak discount available until 6 am weekdays.
- Free travel for children 14 years of age and under when using a child go card.
- Introducing a 50 per cent concession for unemployed people receiving Newstart and Youth Allowance, and for asylum seekers (from early 2017, pending discussions with federal agencies).

TransLink's Sunshine Coast network currently spans fourteen zones, from zone ten to zone twenty three. Once the Fairer Fares package is implemented and zones are simplified, the Sunshine Coast will fall into five larger zones, from zone four to zone eight. This will mean greater savings for local bus travel across the Sunshine Coast. For example:

- A current two zone journey from Wurtulla to Maroochydore on route 600 will become a one-zone journey, costing only \$3.20 (-\$0.73 saving per journey).
- A current three zone journey from Peregrine Beach to Coolumbia on route 620 will become a two zone journey for \$3.90 (-\$0.76 saving per journey).

TransLink has contracts with bus operators to provide public passenger transport services. All fleet and depot assets are owned and maintained by the contracted entities.

Ownership of infrastructure relating to public transport – such as bus stops or bus interchanges may be owned by State or Local Government depending on the specific facility and its location.

In the Sunshine Coast region, bus services are delivered through a variety of contracting mechanisms:

1. Under the South East Queensland 3G contracting framework, services are currently delivered by SunBus and Buslink (School services only). These services connect the Sunshine Coast region covering an area from Noosa to Caloundra, and Landsborough to Pomona, and beyond. Services connect with the rail line and cover key destinations such as retail hubs, schools, hospitals and community centres. In 2015–16 the State invested more than \$46 million dollars in services.
2. Under the *qconnect* regional contracting framework, services operate in the Hinterland area and are delivered by Glasshouse Country Coaches. These services provide essential access to transport services for the residents of Nambour/Maleny/Landsborough and Beerwah. In the 2015–16 financial year, State investment in service delivery totalled \$466,958 (GST Exclusive). This includes TransLink funding of \$303,186 with Sunshine Coast Council providing \$163,772 towards additional trips weekdays and weekends in the Hinterland area.

While the State funds the majority of public transport services through TransLink, funding partnership arrangements also exist with Noosa Shire and Sunshine Coast Regional Councils. Noosa Shire Council subsidises free travel during the summer holidays period for residents and visitors to the Sunshine Coast, and additional services during the Easter period. New Year's Eve services are also funded each year by Sunshine Coast and Noosa Shire Councils allowing passengers to attend New Year's Eve celebrations.

Noosa Shire Council is also partnering with the State to co-fund the Electric Bus trial and implementation.

The Australian Government does not currently consider that funding for bus or infrastructure services is part of its area of responsibility.