

Question on Notice

No. 1095

Asked on Wednesday 5 September 2018

MR D LAST ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what is being done to reduce the number of closures of the Burdekin Bridge on the Bruce Highway for maintenance and wide loads?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Burdekin for the question.

Managing roadworks in an already busy and constricted traffic environment presents a unique set of challenges. However, it should be noted that the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has not implemented a full closure of Burdekin River Bridge to accommodate maintenance works since 2012. This is due to the construction of an overhead gantry which allows the majority of maintenance works to be undertaken without impacting on traffic.

Recent works as part of the \$43 million Burdekin River Bridge maintenance and rehabilitation project have, however, required single-lane closures on the bridge to ensure the safety of workers and bridge users.

While I appreciate that single-lane closures impact traffic flow across the bridge, it does allow one lane of traffic to remain operational under shuttle flow while works occur. Where possible, TMR attempts to minimise further disruptions to traffic by performing works which require lane closures outside of peak periods and at night, however, the scheduling of works must be balanced against a variety of other considerations.

TMR understands the need for community members to reach their destinations on time, and is doing everything possible to minimise traffic disruptions as a result of these works. TMR has a well-developed traffic and community engagement plan in place to notify the local community of traffic changes.

In terms of wide loads, I am sure the Member for Burdekin can appreciate the importance of the Bruce Highway as a critical freight route. This often involves transporting large equipment and machinery to support continuing growth across North Queensland, requiring a temporary closure of traffic on the bridge.

While it would be ideal to support the state's economic development without impacting Bruce Highway traffic, TMR does its best to minimise disruptions by not permitting oversize vehicles to traverse the bridge during peak periods.

Motorists are advised to plan their trip along this section of the Bruce Highway according to the latest traffic conditions, including taking account of expected delays during maintenance works and wide load transportation.

Motorists can keep up to date with changing traffic conditions for the Burdekin River Bridge by either:

- subscribing to email updates about bridge closures by emailing engagement.northern@tmr.qld.gov.au
- visiting www.qldtraffic.qld.gov.au
- using the free QldTraffic app for Apple and android devices
- calling our statewide Traffic Management Centres on 13 19 40.