

Question on Notice

No. 1922

Asked on Thursday 28 November 2019

MR E SORENSEN ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Auditor General's report No. 4 for 2017-18 Integrated Transport Planning wherein it indicates that DTMR had a \$4b renewal backlog as at 30 June 2017—

Will the Minister advise (a) if an updated backlog figure has now been calculated for 30 June 2019 and (b) could the backlog figure be separated out by regions?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Hervey Bay for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to maintaining a safe and resilient road network for all Queenslanders. That is why our government invested a record \$4.13 billion for maintenance, preservation and operation of the state-controlled road (SCR) network in the *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program (QTRIP) 2019–20 to 2022–23*.

Queensland has the longest SCR network of any Australian state or territory. As at 30 June 2019, the SCR network comprised 33,369 kilometres of roads, including 398 kilometres of motorway, 3919 kilometres of unsealed roads, 3119 bridges, 4804 major culverts and 32 tunnel sections. The length of the busway network is 29 kilometres.

The National Land Transport Network (NLTN) component of the SCR network comprises 4996 kilometres for which the Australian Government has primary funding responsibility.

The first Total Asset Management Plan prepared in 2014 in response to the 2013 Commission of Audit Recommendation 41 predicted state road network renewal requirements (existing backlog, plus predicted network renewal needs over the following 10-years) of \$7.4 billion by 2024.

Not only did the former Newman LNP Government fail to increase investment in maintenance, but it also cut more than \$600 million from the 2012–13 to 2015–16 QTRIP and it sacked over 700 staff from RoadTek.

While the Palaszczuk Government has been steadily increasing its commitment to roads and transport investment, with its fourth record investment in QTRIP out of five budgets, the Australian Government has refused to properly fund maintenance of the NLTN in Queensland, by only contributing some 50 per cent towards related maintenance costs.

The increased Palaszczuk Government investment has ensured that, since 30 June 2016, the total length of the SCR network which requires rehabilitation or resurfacing, has been reduced by 643 kilometres (as at 30 June 2019). This comprises 854 kilometres that has been eliminated from the backlog of road-resurfacing treatments, offset by an additional 211 kilometres requiring rehabilitation.

Building on the extra \$100 million allocation provided for maintenance, preservation and operation activities in last year's QTRIP 2018–19 to 2021–22, an additional \$48 million has been allocated to the maintenance works program in the QTRIP 2019–20 to 2022–23.

By comparison, the current four-year QTRIP (2019–20 to 2022–23) represents an increase of \$1.36 billion (or 49 per cent) over that approved by the Newman LNP Government for maintenance, preservation and operation activities which totalled \$2.77 billion in its last four-year QTRIP published in 2014–15.

Once again, the Palaszczuk Government is doing the heavy lifting to make up for the Federal LNP's failure to fairly fund maintenance on the NLTN in Queensland, and is continuing to repair the damage caused by the Newman LNP Government's cuts.

Any maintenance backlog on the SCR network is being effectively managed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads, assisted by increased investment by the Palaszczuk Labor Government. It is hardly surprising that the renewal backlog has grown from that estimated in the first Commission of Audit report, considering the cuts imposed by the Newman LNP Government and the refusal of the Federal LNP to properly fund maintenance on the NLTN.

It is important to note that several factors impact on the estimated value of the backlog. For example, between 30 June 2016 and 30 June 2018, the cost of asphalt and other seal treatments increased by up to 33 per cent, particularly in urban areas and on highly trafficked roads.

I can confirm the estimated value of the SCR network backlog as at 30 June 2019 is approximately \$5.418 billion.

Further, outlined below is a breakdown of the estimated backlog value as at 30 June 2019 by regional areas.

Far North Queensland	\$308 million
North Queensland	\$831 million
South East Queensland	\$2,445 million
South West Queensland	\$894 million
Central Queensland	<u>\$940 million</u>
	<u>\$5,418 million</u>