

Question on Notice

No. 393

Asked on Wednesday 27 March 2019

MS S BOLTON ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to Demand Responsive Transport trials and residents' transport needs to access hospital services and return home after ambulance transfer to hospital—

Will the Minister advise of (a) the progress of current trials, and the opportunities for not-for-profits such as ComLink to increase their services and (b) how departments support areas with lower population without adequate public transport services can work together to address this issue?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Noosa for the question.

A number of factors are taken into account when determining the need for a new service, including assessing it against the requirements set out within relevant Acts and Regulations.

As the transport environment is increasingly changing, the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has been investigating new service delivery options, such as demand responsive transport (DRT) through a trial in Logan. The trial provides greater public transport coverage and resident access to nearby destinations in low density areas, which can be challenging due to demand generally being inadequate to support traditional bus services.

The trial has proven popular with the local community, surpassing 45,000 passenger trips since its introduction. In comparison to the same period in 2018, passenger trips have almost doubled as people become more accustomed to the service, and take advantage of improvements to the booking options introduced in July 2018.

Community transport providers, such as ComLink, provide integral support services such as patient transport to and from medical facilities, which complement the existing public passenger transport network in Queensland. While TMR regulates Queensland community transport services, funding is managed by the Health, Communities and Disability Services portfolios.

The legislative requirements for community transport operators and drivers under the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994* are generally less prescriptive than other public passenger services, with some operators and drivers exempt from the requirement to obtain operator accreditation and driver authorisation in certain circumstances.

DRT is one of a number of potential modes that could form part of future mobility scenarios enabled by TMR. TMR supports operators diversifying or broadening their services provided they obtain the relevant licences and authorities to do so.