

Question on Notice

No. 488

Asked on Tuesday 2 April 2019

MRS J STUCKEY ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to public safety on Gold Coast Surfside Buses in 2016-2017 and 2017-18—

Will the Minister advise (reported separately by location and route) the (a) number of assaults on bus drivers, (b) number of assaults on passengers and (c) number of additional crimes on buses (reported separately by crime type)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Currumbin for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is serious about providing a safe work environment for bus drivers and other frontline transport workers. We are well underway with rolling out a five-point safety package for bus drivers statewide, including \$3.93 million for grants for driver safety barriers funded 50-50 with operators in high risk areas and \$1.54 million for anti-shatter film for buses under South East Queensland urban contracts and *qconnect* regional urban contracts.

Gold Coast Surfside Buses operated 913,236 scheduled bus services in 2016–2017 and 936,181 in 2017–2018.

(a) The number of assaults on Surfside' bus drivers is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Driver assaults

Type	Total financial year 2016–17	Total financial year 2017–18
Physical	11	6
Verbal	6	47
Objects thrown	2	11
Total	19	64

A driver assault is defined as an event that occurs en-route, where a driver is subject to physical assault, which includes any physical contact or spitting, serious verbal assault where violence is threatened, or where an object is thrown at the driver, by any person/s.

Although physical assaults have reduced, both verbal assaults and objects thrown have increased from 2016–17 to 2017–18.

(b) The number of reported assaults on passengers using Surfside bus services is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Passenger assaults

Type	Total financial year 2017–18
Physical	2
Verbal	15
Objects thrown	4
Total	21

A passenger assault is defined as an event that occurs en-route, where a passenger is subject to physical assault, which includes any physical contact, or spitting, serious verbal assault where violence is threatened, or where an object is thrown at a passenger, by any person/s.

During the 2017–18 financial year, verbal abuse contributed 71 per cent of the total number of assaults.

Passenger assaults were not reported by Surfside Buses to TransLink in 2016–17.

(c) The number of additional crimes on Surfside buses is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Other crimes

Type	Total 2016–17	Total 2017–18
Vehicle assault/vandalism	56	37
Theft	8	15
Total	64	52

A vehicle assault/vandalism is defined as an event that occurs en-route, where a vehicle is subject to vandalism/intentional damage by any person/s.

The total number of incidents reduced from 19 per cent between 2016–17 to 2017–18.

Vehicle assaults and vandalism reduced by 34 per cent, however theft on buses increased by 88 per cent.

The 'objects thrown' category mentioned in both Tables 1 and 2 does not include rocks/missiles thrown at buses.

TransLink does not record accidents/incidents by location or by route.