

Question on Notice

No. 696

Asked on 23 June 2022

MR T WATTS ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise (a) what issues have caused the four year delay in undertaking, completing and releasing the strategic business case for the Toowoomba to Brisbane Passenger Rail, (b) under which budget reserve federal government funding of \$15m for the Strategic Business Case for Toowoomba to Brisbane fast rail is being kept until needed in 2025 and (c) what issues have hindered the release of the Toowoomba to Brisbane strategic report, completed by the State Government this year?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Toowoomba North for the question.

There is no four-year delay in undertaking, completing and releasing the strategic business case for the Toowoomba to Brisbane Passenger Rail services. The Queensland Government, through the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), is working with the Australian Government's infrastructure agency to investigate the merit, timing and potential options for improved passenger rail service connections between Toowoomba and Brisbane.

In the 2018–19 Federal Budget, the Australian Government committed \$15 million to progress planning for the Toowoomba to Brisbane Passenger Rail Study, with \$2.5 million allocated towards the initial strategic business case. The remaining project budget is not allocated until mid-2025.

The project is also listed in the *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2022–23 to 2025–26*. As part of its in-kind contribution to the study, TMR has led the technical investigations and engaged with all local governments within the study area to capture local planning, economic, environmental and social insights. TMR has also led multiple targeted engagements with all mayors and councils within the study area to ensure the study is well informed.

The preliminary findings of the strategic business case are with the Australian Government for consideration to inform the next steps for the project, including whether the project proceeds to a detailed business case and whether or not there is any public presentation of preliminary findings.