

Question on Notice

No. 825

Asked on 18 August 2022

MR J LANGBROEK ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Taxi Subsidy Scheme Service—

Will the Minister advise (a) how many wheelchair clients are registered for the Taxi Subsidy Scheme Service (reported separately by TMR regions), (b) how many applications has the department received in the last five years from those in wheelchairs who are deemed not eligible (reported separately by TMR region and financial year) and (c) how many complaints has the department received in the last five years in regards to the Taxi Subsidy Scheme Service (reported separately by TMR region and by financial year)?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Surfers Paradise for the question.

The Queensland Government's Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS) provides an affordable and accessible transport option for people with a disability who experience profound difficulties using other modes of public passenger transport. Under the scheme, the Queensland Government pays half of a TSS member's taxi fare up to a trip-level cap. The Palaszczuk Government increased the cap from \$25 to \$30 per trip from 1 July 2022 for all TSS members.

TSS subsidies for National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants were intended to transition to an NDIS funding arrangement. However, due to concerns about the adequacy of transport supports for people with disabilities under the NDIS, the Palaszczuk Government has moved to ensure NDIS participants continue to have access to the TSS while adequate long-term transport support under the NDIS is finalised.

The Palaszczuk Government is continuing to work to ensure the NDIS delivers proper affordable transport options for Queenslanders in the longer term. The TSS Service (reported separately by Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) regions) are listed below.

Region	Number of Current TSS members in a wheelchair*
Central	1,194
Wide Bay	2,328
Northern	1,499
Southern	837
South East Queensland (SEQ)	8,692
Total	14,550

*As at 24 August 2022, when the data was accessed.

Applications received by the department in the last five years from those in wheelchairs who are deemed not eligible (reported separately by TMR region and financial year) are listed below.

Region	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019–2020	2020–2021	2021–2022	Total*
Central	4	10	10	10	6	40
Wide Bay	7	13	21	15	13	69
Northern	10	10	17	10	5	52
Southern	3	9	6	9	2	29
SEQ	50	56	59	73	49	287
Total	74	98	113	117	75	477

*As at 24 August 2022, when the data was accessed.

In the 2021–2022 financial year, the TSS Unit received one formal written complaint from a member of the scheme in the Wide Bay Region in regard to the administration of the scheme. This was about receiving incorrect information from Translink Contact Centre.

Complaints about taxi services, drivers and wheelchair accessible taxi waiting times are managed by the associated booking entity. Should TMR receive complaints of this nature, they are forwarded to booking entities in a timely manner. Sourcing the amount of complaints that TMR receives regarding these matters is an onerous and resource intensive process, unable to be completed within the time available. Further, TMR is unable to determine the total number of taxi service issue complaints received as I have been advised that complaints are also made directly to the booking entity or taxi company and have therefore not been received by TMR. It is also worth noting that TMR is unable to distinguish whether these complaints about taxi services have been made by a TSS or non-TSS member.

I recently met with the taxi industry to discuss these matters and we are working collaboratively to address driver shortages and wait times for customers. We will continue to work with industry to deliver a reliable personalised transport service for all Queenslanders.