

Question on Notice

No. 1310

Asked on 25 October 2023

MR J KRAUSE ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS AND MINISTER FOR DIGITAL SERVICES (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to answers to Questions on Notice No. 851 of 2023 and No. 1627 of 2021—

Will the Minister advise (a) the reason for variation between target and actual Operational Cost per Revenue Train Kilometres - Travel and Tourism in 2022–23 and (b) why the Minister has advised that ‘Queensland Rail does not calculate operational cost per passenger train kilometre as a performance metric’ when the information has been provided in the earlier Question on Notice?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Scenic Rim for the question.

Queensland Rail works closely with the Department and Transport and Main Roads to determine budgets for the forward years as accurately as possible. As with all major service delivery organisations, it is not always possible to project major impacts to operational activity. It should be noted that, in line with annual budgeting, Operational Cost per Revenue Train Kilometre target is refreshed annually to consider changes to the operating environment.

The variation between the budget and actual Travel and Tourism FY2022–23 Operational Cost per Revenue Train Kilometre is attributed to a number of factors that were unforeseen at the time the target was established. These include Queensland Rail running lower than budgeted train kilometres due to major network disruptions including flooding and extreme weather events, third-party derailments and bridge strikes, and increased scheduled corridor access system closures which impacted on Travel services running. These closures are to support the ongoing maintenance of the network to ensure continued access to a safe and reliable network for Queensland Rail’s Travel and Tourism and freight customers. In addition, in FY2022–23 Queensland Rail experienced higher than budgeted operational costs, including higher than planned diesel fuel and a lower level of labour being recovered against capital projects.

With regard to the Member’s question about ‘operational cost per passenger train kilometre as a performance metric’ asked in Question on Notice 851—tabled on 17 July 2023—Queensland Rail can calculate this metric. However, this is not an official metric for Queensland Rail due to variability in annual passenger numbers, which, in turn, could imply improvement or deterioration of operational efficiency regardless of whether there has been any change in operational cost effectiveness.