

Question on Notice

No. 464

Asked on 20 April 2023

MR S BENNETT ASKED MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS (HON M BAILEY)—

QUESTION:

With reference to high school students in my electorate not being eligible for any transport subsidies to travel to their closest TAFE College in Bundaberg to take part in Vocational and Educational activities—

Will the Minister review the lack of transport subsidies and take action to support regional secondary school students who are currently disadvantaged financially due to the cost of transport?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Burnett for the question.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to making public transport accessible for all Queenslanders, and provides assistance through public transport concessions, ticketing products and schemes. A broad range of concessions are available to eligible concession cardholders to ensure the benefits are received by those who need them most. Revenue collected from public transport fares falls well short of the funding required to provide public transport services, with the Queensland Government historically subsidising over 80 per cent of transport operator costs.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is responsible for providing a single, integrated transport network accessible to everyone. TMR offers paper tickets for students travelling in the Bundaberg Region. These tickets can be purchased for a single trip, daily trip, weekly trip or 10-trip validity. A student concession fare is 50 per cent cheaper than an adult fare. Secondary students aged 15 years or older are eligible for a concession fare. Similarly, eligible full-time university, TAFE and post-secondary students in Queensland can apply to receive concession fares.

In January 2023, TMR's Translink Division (Translink) introduced a consistent and simplified fare and zone structure for Bundaberg bus networks. As part of the changes, school transport fares have been aligned to zone-based fares. In Bundaberg, the one-zone fare has decreased slightly, the number of zones has been reduced, and a consistent zonal fare was introduced, meaning the majority of customers can travel further on the urban bus network for less.

With the new Translink fare zone structure coming into effect from January 2023, students travelling on regular urban bus services will continue paying concession fares. Details of the new fare and zone structure are available on Translink's website.

This policy is consistent throughout Queensland. Travelling to other locations, such as TAFE, is not covered by the School Transport Assistance Scheme. Given the broad range of concessions currently available, with consistency in fare and zone structure across the state, I am advised that a review is not currently warranted.