



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2021-2022 Supplementary Questions

Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and Customer Service

REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS

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Answers due by: 22 November 2021

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REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS

Questions from Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC (on behalf of the Opposition)

Lower Hunter Freight Corridor

1. Why has the Government released this at a time when face-to-face consultations can't be held due to COVID when the construction timeline shows the project is 10-20 years away?
 - (a) How many people have registered for the MS Teams approach?
 - (b) Why does the Government use the Zoom platform which is much more user friendly?
2. Why isn't there a discussion about costings for noise mitigation now, particularly as the area is high residential growth area?
 - (a) Noise impact summary at section 7.5.2 concludes that: "The strategic review of noise and vibration found that protection of the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor would not impact on existing noise and vibration levels." What review has been done in relation to building a train line rather than reserving a rail corridor?
 - i. Isn't this just kicking the can down the road?
 - ii. Why not do a proper quantitative noise assessment on the project now, before the corridor is locked in?
 - (b) The report proposes bushland as a buffer for noise. Where is the technical support for this?
3. What modelling has been done to address the significant mining history in the area – and the substantial risk of mine subsidence in the area?
 - (a) The presence of mining voids is likely to be impossible to fully identify – what risk mitigation is in place to deal with this?
4. What environmental impacts of the route passing through coastal wetlands and threatened lower Hunter spotted gums to the southwest of Holmesville and Barnsley have been assessed?
5. How will you be dealing with the proposed crossing of the corridor of the M1 north of Cameron Park?
 - (a) It appears to be at a very skewed angle, that could create the need for a bridge of 100m to cross it?
 - i. Has there been consideration of a perpendicular crossing?
6. Why does the line cross west and east of the M1 Motorway?
 - (a) Wouldn't it be better to run to the west for the majority of the time?

7. What impact would the proposed route have on the future of the Federal Government's reservation of a long-term corridor for a "faster rail" passenger service along the NSW East Coast?
 - (a) Past studies have indicated a station to connect Newcastle and the Hunter to the east of the M1?

Great Western Highway Upgrade, Katoomba to Lithgow

8. What analysis/analyses has the government carried out to determine the costing of the Great Western Highway (GWH) upgrade from Katoomba to Lithgow?
 - (a) What is the cost of the upgrade from:
 - i. Katoomba to Blackheath
 - ii. Blackheath to Little Hartley
 - iii. Hartley to Lithgow
 - (b) Do the above costs represent the total cost of the upgrade of the GWH from Katoomba to Lithgow?
 - i. What funding has been allocated to this project?
9. In numerical form, what is the cost comparison of the current surface and tunnel option from Katoomba to Little Hartley compared with the cost of a 19km tunnel from Katoomba to Little Hartley?
10. What Cost Benefit Analysis/analyses (CBA) has the Government conducted on the GWH Upgrade?
 - (a) In numerical form, what is the BCR of the current GWH Upgrade Design compared with the BCR, including a 19km tunnel from Katoomba to Lithgow?
11. What is the total area of land to be cleared of vegetation from Katoomba to Blackheath in the GWH upgrade?
 - (a) How, specifically, will Transport for NSW (TfNSW) offset the loss of vegetation?
 - (b) What studies were carried out to determine the loss of critical, threatened and endangered species (both flora and fauna) from Katoomba to Blackheath, including the receiving environment of the GWH?
 - i. When will TfNSW make all these studies available to the public?
12. As the water runoff from the duplicated GWH will be draining into two drinking water catchments between Katoomba and Medlow Bath:
 - (a) What studies have been carried out to determine the ecological impacts of this project and by whom/what organisations?

- (b) When will the NSW Government make all ecological impact studies available to the public?
- (c) What will be the estimated volume of water runoff into the water catchments from the duplicated GWH?
- (d) What infrastructure will be required for water treatment before it flows into the catchments?
- (e) What will be the annual cost of this water treatment and has this cost been included in the total cost of the project?

Dapto M1 Princes Highway Upgrade

- 13. Will the Government ensure that the residents of Dapto and West Dapto have access to the M1 motorway by building off ramps from Kanahooka Road and Emerson road?
 - (a) What consultation has been conducted to date?
 - i. When were the dates of the consultations?
- 14. Are there any plans for the construction of on-off ramps on the M1 Motorway in the Dapto area?
 - (a) If not, why not?
- 15. Investigations into the upgrade of the M1 Princes Motorway have been in the 'preliminary stage' since 2013. When will Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime, finally complete these 'preliminary investigations' in order to progress planning for improvements to the M1 Princes Motorway between Figtree and Dapto?
 - (a) What is the scope for these investigations?
- 16. When will the study into upgrades on the M1 Princes Motorway between Figtree and Dapto be finalised?
 - (a) Will these findings be publically available?
- 17. As part of the study, is the Government investigating the inclusion of;
 - (a) A southbound on ramp and northbound off ramp at Kanahooka Road?
 - (b) A southbound on ramp and northbound off ramp at Fowlers Road?
 - (c) On and off ramps, both directions at Emerson Road?
- 18. What are the estimated costs associated with the construction of on-off ramps along a highway in NSW?

Dapto Station Upgrade

- 19. When is the planned upgrade of Dapto Station scheduled to commence?

- (a) What will these works entail?
20. Will the Government commit to expanding the Dapto station commuter carpark, alongside the upgrade?
- (a) If not, why not?
- (b) If so, how many spaces will the carpark be expanded by?
21. How much money will be allocated to the upgrade of Dapto Station?
22. Why was the decision made to not provide lifts at Dapto Station, despite The NSW Auditor-General's report into the Transport Access Program released in February 2019, which identified Dapto station as having the highest needs ranking for an upgrade, out of all 44 intercity train stations under consideration for TAP 3?
23. What would be the projected cost of this project, with the inclusion of the lifts that were initially part of the artist's impression for this upgrade, when it was first announced on 1 February 2019?
24. Why has the Government made the decision to proceed with an upgrade to the level crossings at Dapto Station, despite Transport for NSW (TfNSW) Level Crossing Closures Policy that recommends that level crossings "should be closed wherever it is practical and cost-effective"?
25. What plans does the Government currently have to ensure public transport is made easily accessible through the West Dapto area?
26. Does the Government admit that the current bus services catering to West Dapto are inadequate? (Bus services catering to residents in West Dapto do not run on Saturdays, Sundays or public holidays effectively forcing local residents to walk up to 45 minutes to Dapto shops).
27. Are there plans to provide additional bus services in the Dapto and West Dapto Areas?
28. Koonawarra Public School currently does not have a dedicated school bus route. Will the Government commit to establishing a bus route for this school?
- (a) If not, why not?
- (b) If so, when will this project be delivered?

Regional Road Classification

29. What is the total quantum of the projects recommended by the Independent Panel for a Priority Round of Transfers and reclassifications?
- (a) What is the total quantum for the five recommended council applications?
- i. Please disaggregate by Council
- (b) What is the total quantum for TfNSW recommended applications?

30. The report makes a note that TfNSW reclassification applications were not subject to steps A, B and C given they had previously been assessed as Category 1. When were these applications assessed?
- (a) Who assessed these applications?
31. How were members of the Independent Panel selected?
- (a) When did their employment commence?
 - (b) What are the terms of their contract/employment engagement?
 - i. Does their contract/employment engagement have an expiry date?
 - ii. If so, what is the expiry date?
 - (c) How much remuneration does each panel member receive?
 - (d) What other allowances are payable to panel members?
 - (e) What is the total quantum of payments to panel members since the panel was first appointed?
 - (f) How many of the Councils has the Independent Panel consulted with?
 - i. How many were conducted online?
 - ii. How many were conducted face to face?
 - (g) Why weren't all Councils consulted with?
32. When will the first transfer take place?
33. When will Councils be advised of the phased implementation approach to the program?
34. When will the phased implementation approach be taken to Cabinet?
35. How much funding is remaining for the full round?
36. What is the quantum of the reclassification in the Liverpool LGA?
- (a) What program is this project funded under?
37. What is the quantum of the classification in the Blacktown LGA?
- (a) What program is this project funded under?
38. What is the quantum of the classification in the Parramatta LGA?
- (a) What program is this project funded under?

Level Crossings

39. Minister, you are the leader of the Nationals in NSW, your WA counterpart has backed the changes that are being called for by Madeline Bott and all the families who have lost loved ones, there's a 20,000 signature petition that will be debated in the Parliament in the next sitting week, when will you announce real action to improve level crossings?
40. On the Transport for NSW website, it states: An evaluation of the LCIP [Level Crossing Improvement Program] conducted in 2014-15 found that it delivers a positive economic benefit and plays a substantial role in fulfilling the objectives and targets of the Level Crossing Strategy Council's Strategic Plan for NSW Level Crossings 2021-30 (PDF, 514.66 KB). How can a 2014/15 review of the Level Crossing Improvement Planning assess its performance against a strategy that hasn't been published before July 2021?
 - (a) Has there been a review of the Level Crossing Improvement Plan since 2014-15?
 - i. If so, when was it conducted?
 - ii. If not, why not?
41. How much funding has been allocated to remove and/or upgrade level crossing in NSW this financial year?
42. What is the exact number of level crossings on public roads in NSW?
43. What is the exact number of level crossings on private roads in NSW?
 - (a) What maintenance does the State Government do at Public level crossings?
 - i. How much funding was allocated for the 2020-2021 financial year to providing maintenance at level crossings?
44. Has the Minister attended the Grenfell site where Ethan Hunter and Mark Fenton tragically lost their lives in February 2021?
 - (a) If no, when will you visit the site?
45. What action has the Minister undertaken to address the level crossing where Ethan Hunter and Mark Fenton died in February this year?
46. How many times has the Minister met with the following stakeholders since February 2021 in person or via phone or video conference?
 - (a) Australian Rail Track Corporation
 - (b) Australian Transport Safety Bureau
 - (c) Council of Australian Governments (COAG)
 - (d) Office of Transport Safety Investigations (OTSI)

- (e) Level Crossing Strategy Council
 - (f) Local Government NSW
 - (g) National Level Crossing Safety Committee
 - (h) The Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator
47. Why did the Minister wait five months before writing to the Deputy Prime Minister seeking support for an acceleration in the NSW and Australian Governments' shared commitment to improving level crossing safety?
- (a) What has the Minister done since then?
48. How many times has the Minister written to the Federal Government to raise concerns about level crossings?
49. When will level crossings be upgraded?
50. Have level crossings been prioritised for upgrades?
- (a) Which level crossing will be upgraded?
 - i. What will the upgrade include?
51. Has the reduction in the speed limit from 100km/h to 80km/hr occurred at all levelling crossings?
- (a) If not, why not?
 - (b) If not, when will all speed limit changes be completed?
 - (c) If so, how many level crossings have had a reduction of the speed limit approach?
52. On the Transport for NSW website it advises that *'The initial change to speed zones will take effect from late April 2021 and continue through to 2022/2023'*. Why does it take so long to change the speed limits?
53. What work has been undertaken with NSW Rail Infrastructure to jointly assess new technologies which may be used to improve safety at public and private level crossings?

Fixing Country Roads

54. During this week's Budget Estimates hearing, the Minister said *'I did announce a smaller round of funding for some councils across the State in relation to that project.'* Which Councils were eligible to apply?
- (a) How was the opening of Tranche 2 communicated to Councils?
 - (b) Were all Councils advised of the opening of Tranche 2?
 - i. If not, how were Councils selected?

- ii. Why weren't all Councils informed that \$20 million had been made available?
55. When were the successful LGA's for Fixing Country Roads 2019 – Tranche 2 announced?
- (a) Was there a media release issued by transport for NSW?
56. Why is the latest Fixing Country Roads related media releases on the Transport for NSW website dated 11 December 2017?
- (a) Have media releases from Transport NSW relating to the Fixing Country Roads been issued since then?
 - i. If not, why not?
57. When will the review of the guidelines for this program be finalised?
- (a) When will they be published?
58. In relation to the \$80.3 million that was diverted from the Fixing Country Roads program to Restart NSW, what is the name of the project or projects that received the diverted funds?
- (a) Has the funding been allocated out of Restart NSW?
 - (b) Where was each project located?
 - (c) What was the quantum of funding for each project?
 - (d) Has the total quantum for each project been expended?
 - i. If not, when will it be?

Taxis

59. When will the Government release the work done by Transport for NSW, which will reveal which towns will lose taxis due to the reforms of the point to point industry?
60. Why has only \$42 million from the \$142 million industry assistance package been spent?
61. Of the 1258 applications made under the fund, 727 operators received no assistance. Why is that?