

# Making a line call



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NOT a week passes by without comment about the state of the Ipswich Motorway, but while drivers are sitting in air-conditioned comfort, public transport users are jam-packed on a train.

Local web-based organisation RAIL - Back on Track has called on Queensland Rail to increase its services to ease congestion on trains in order to encourage more people to jump on board.

Member Robert Dow said an active program needed to be undertaken to encourage commuters to leave their cars behind and relax on the train.

"It is time that something was done to address the congestion and confusion being directed at passengers," Mr Dow said.

"In order to encourage commuters some timetable improvements are needed today."

Mr Dow is not a rail expert, but rather an ordinary citizen who regularly uses public transport.

The medical scientist said he had always been interested in the rail network and after repeatedly trying to get his message across to the authorities decided the voice of many was better than one.

RAIL - Back on Track was born and in less than a year there are 37 members and a readership of hundreds of disgruntled public transport users who wish to convey their opinion in the 'ebsite's forum.

Mr Dow said through feedback from people who used the rail

network daily, the organisation had influenced some important decisions regarding Brisbane's rail network and he hoped their concerns with the Ipswich line would also be heard.

"In a morning there is too big a gap between the 5.41am and 6.14am services from Ipswich to Caboolture," he said.

"The 6.14am service is often overloaded by the time it reaches Oxley and rarely runs on time as a result. An additional service leaving Ipswich at 5.59am to Bowen Hills would be a major improvement."

Mr Dow has researched QR's timetables and the possibilities of extra services and his suggestions are not grumbings from a disgruntled commuter. He said the afternoon service on the Ipswich line also needed to be addressed with extra services added to ease the congestion.

"Also in the afternoon there is presently a service from Central to Redbank that leaves Central at 4.12pm," he said. "This train has a light passenger loading as it follows the 4.06pm Central to Ipswich."

"The next service is a 4.21pm Central to Ipswich, which is then followed by the 4.38pm Central to Ipswich. The 4.38pm Central to Ipswich is experiencing chronic heavy passenger loadings, it would help if the 4.12pm Central to Redbank service was re-timed to leave Central at 4.30pm."

"This would allow for more passengers to use the 4.38pm service to Ipswich in reasonable comfort."

Mr Dow said an increase in the frequency of trains during peak and off-peak times and more



Robert Dow believes the Ipswich train line could be better serviced.

Photo: Desleigh Daniel JL0407DA

trains were also needed.

Mr Dow said plans for the triplication of the line from Corinda to Darra and then Darra to Redbank as well as the planned Springfield line were a step in the right direction, but a simple timetable change would help enormously.

Mr Dow encouraged commuters with both positive and negative feedback about Brisbane's rail network should visit RAIL - Back on Track's website <http://backontrack.org> to participate in a forum or leave a message.

A QR spokesperson said QR recently updated its timetables

and the Ipswich line gained five upgraded and eight altered services per week.

"QR released an updated timetable on Monday, June 18 which meant more seats and better services for QR Citytrain Ipswich line passengers."

"Where it was operationally feasible, we added more services or upgraded three-car trains to six-cars, improving reliability, comfort and providing customers with better travel times."

The spokesperson said highlights for the Ipswich line included an altered service that left Rosewood at 4.17am (previously 4.20am), arriving at

Central at 5.31am and an upgraded service (from three to six cars) that departs Sherwood at 8.09am arriving at Central at 8.28am.

In the afternoon and evening and an altered service departs Central at 4.12pm arriving at Redbank at 4.48pm, an altered service departs Central at 4.38pm arriving at Ipswich at 5.32pm and an altered service departs Ipswich at 9.40pm arriving at Central at 10.33pm.

The spokesperson said additional services and a new timetable would be updated again in March after the South East Queensland infrastructure projects were completed.