

GREENBUSHES RAILWAY LINE — PROPOSED REOPENING

165. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the Minister for Transport:

I refer the minister to the Liberal Party's election commitment to reopen the Greenbushes rail line. Is the minister still committed to this project?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for the question and for his interest in the matter. The matter is under active investigation at the moment, and I look forward to making an announcement in due course. One problem that is starting to emerge is that the funding which was initially indicated by the former government as being necessary to reopen the line and which formed the basis of our policy commitment is now starting to appear to be grossly inadequate, on initial indications. This caused me to wonder about the sincerity of the former government's own commitment to open the Greenbushes railway line, which, of course, it had previously closed. I indicate to the member, because he asked me specifically about my own commitment, that I will work very hard to see that we can reopen that line, but I indicate to the member, who I know is keen to see it reopened, that it may prove a highly difficult task to achieve, given the current environment. Nonetheless, we will do our best to deliver on that commitment.