

STATE BUDGET 2011–12 — BUS SERVICES

310. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Transport:

Minister —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I am formally going to call the member for Albany to order, and I suspect there might be someone else who this afternoon will also be formally called to order on another issue. I formally call the member for Albany to order for the first time.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Minister, constituents in my electorate have frequently raised concerns with me about the level of bus services in their suburbs, the outer growth centres of Perth. Can the minister please advise whether there is any positive news for those people from last week's budget?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: A lot of people, apparently, are anxious to answer your question, member for Swan Hills. While I have the opportunity, I formally call to order for the first time today the member for Willagee.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for hosting me in his electorate this morning, where we announced intersection upgrades at two major intersections—issues that have been hanging around for only 10 years or so—and we also announced that we were fixing a few of the roads and putting in a bus service to Aveley. The question, of course, to the Leader of the Opposition—well might he ask about the train to Ellenbrook!—is: at the time of the next state election, will he commit to building a train line to Ellenbrook?

Mr E.S. Ripper: You wait and see our promises. I keep my promises. I do not break them.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: During the last election campaign, we followed the Leader of the Opposition's lead in relation to a train to Ellenbrook.

Mr E.S. Ripper: That was another Liberal lie, wasn't it?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: On coming to government, we said to the Public Transport Authority that surely there must be some research and studies that justify the train to Ellenbrook because the former government came out and announced it. They looked at us blank-faced. They said that there has been no study. There is justification —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Sorry, what was that, member for Cannington? He was not in the last government; he was the political mastermind overseeing the election campaign. He can come in here every question time and rewrite history, but his hands are all over that loss. I thank the member for Cannington; I hope he gets elevated back to the leadership team for the next election.

Mr E.S. Ripper: You won't be in the leadership team for the next election.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The Leader of the Opposition will not be!

The SPEAKER: I advise the Minister for Transport that when he refers to members on the other side of the chamber, he can expect some response. I am going to give you the opportunity to continue with the answer to the question.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: My apologies, Mr Speaker. I will get back to buses, because there are a lot of them about to drop into the suburbs across Perth.

Mr E.S. Ripper: A whole 20!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Is that what the Leader of the Opposition thinks? I will tell members what the government has committed to. We have committed \$88 million to buy 158 additional buses over the next seven years. That is on top of the ongoing commitment over 10 years to buy 65 new buses to replace the old ones. That is the single biggest investment in bus services in Perth for as far back as I can find. On top of that, over the next four years there will be an \$87 million increase in bus service kilometres.

Mr R.H. Cook: It's called catch-up.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: It is called catch-up. I am glad the member for Kwinana is here today. He has provided his normal incisive lead-in to the good part of the answer. Just to put that into perspective, that will be a 30 per cent increase in the level of bus services provided in Perth over five years. That means that peak service delivery will be improved. I listened to the comments made by the member for Kwinana. I saw the press statement the other day by Hon Ken Travers, the minister for gold taxis. He listed a range of suburbs across the metropolitan

area. He said that we have to improve bus services in these suburbs. I will list a few. They include Ashby, which is done; Tapping, done; Sinagra, done; Carramar, done; Banksia Grove, done; Harrisdale, done; Piara Waters, done; Baldivis, done; Aveley, done; Butler, done; Jindalee, done; Alkimos, done; Henley Brook, done; Ellenbrook, done; Two Rocks, done; and Hocking, done. They were all done in one breath and all done with one great budget announcement. It is probably important that we put that investment into historical perspective. I am glad the member for Kwinana asked me to do so because I am now pleased to do it.

I have a chart. Having moved on from the Treasury portfolio, the chance to use charts does not come up as often so I will make the most of this chart. I have got it up the right way. It is a great chart. I will ask the Minister for Water to hold it up because members need to look at this chart.

Mr W.J. Johnston: You were sacked as Treasurer. You didn't move on.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Can the member for Cannington answer me this question? When the former Premier, Alan Carpenter, unveiled the dream team up in Kings Park, why did they tie up the member for Cannington in the back of the HiAce? Why was he bound up in the back with a gag in his gob? We all know why.

I return to the chart.

Mr W.J. Johnston: How many jobs did you resign from? You resigned as opposition leader and you resigned as Treasurer. What are you going to resign from next?

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I am formally going to call you to order for the first time. I was not going to do that when I came to my feet, but now I am. I formally call you for the first time. There is a lot of interplay with respect to this question. I am hoping that the minister will eventually get very close to the conclusion of it so that question time can progress.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I will just conclude with a quick examination of the historical perspective presented by the chart. Let me take members to the seven or eight years of the Labor government, which is the flat bit at the end of the chart. While the great supporters of public transport were in government, bus service kilometres went from 48 million a year to 50.1 million a year. That is an increase over six years of six per cent in total government investment in bus services. Let me get to the pointy end of the chart. What is happening over the next five years?

Mr D.A. Templeman: You're a thug. You're a fool.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah!

Mr D.A. Templeman: Show us your graph about your indiscretions, mate. It will be off the scale.

The SPEAKER: I formally call you to order for the second time today.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The member for Mandurah got that close to the central area transit bus.

Just to wrap up, over the next five years bus service kilometres will grow by 30 per cent versus six per cent in six years. That is why there were holes in the bus service network. That is why we have invested the money and that is why people in all those suburbs that I outlined earlier, perhaps with the exception of the Mandurah CAT bus, will enjoy the benefits of better bus transport and members on both sides will have an opportunity to celebrate that with their constituents.