

REID HIGHWAY–MIRRABOOKA AVENUE INTERSECTION — UPGRADE

12. Mr I.M. BRITZA to the Minister for Transport:

First of all, I congratulate the new Minister for Transport.

In 2009, the Auditor General highlighted the previous government's failure to deliver road infrastructure, concluding that this government had inherited an \$800 million backlog of maintenance roadwork. I was pleased to see steps being taken by this government to address that, as well as moves to fix road safety black spots. I ask the minister to please inform the house what work is being done at the intersection of Reid Highway and Mirrabooka Avenue, which was ignored by the previous government despite fatalities and dozens of serious injuries?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL replied:

I thank the member for Morley for the question. It is an important question because it is an important intersection, as the member for Nollamara would know. I think it is in her electorate. It is near the member for Balcatta's electorate, and it is near the member for Girrawheen's electorate.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I will talk about the member's performance in a minute.

We are basically spending \$30 million to make sure that Reid Highway goes over the top of Mirrabooka Avenue. It is a woeful intersection. I can advise the member for Morley that it is called a grade-separated interchange. That intersection currently carries around 60 000 motor vehicles a day, and it is projected to grow to carry over 85 000 motor vehicles in about five years.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: It is the bloke who rings my ministerial office and abuses public servants because they will not give him a briefing about train drivers honking their horns in his electorate. That is who he is! I have heard what he said to the person in my office. We have our eye on the member for Cannington, I can tell members right now! That was an outrageous attack on a paid public servant in Western Australia. We know what the member for Cannington's form is like.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Ignoring the citizens of this state. That's what your office is about.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: He wanted me to waste public servants' time to tell him why a train driver honked his horn! That is what he wanted! He wanted us to send a team out to tell him why the train driver honked his horn. We said we would put it in writing, and he rang up and abused a public servant. He is nothing but a bully.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: He is not a member of the Labor Party!

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The intersection in question —

The SPEAKER: Order! That was an interesting moment. Let us return to the intersection.

Mr E.S. Ripper: Let's not forget the women you bullied in your workplace.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr C.J. Barnett: Ordinary!

Mr E.S. Ripper: It is not ordinary! Workplace harassment is not ordinary. We should all take a stand against it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington and member for Albany, I formally call you both to order for the first time today. Leader of the Opposition, I formally call you to order for the first time today as well.

Both sides in this place want some progress during question time. There are some things that you should know by now and should recognise. I am not about to give you a lesson. It is about respect.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Talk about respect! Look at this fellow.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Cannington, I formally call you to order for the second time today.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I thank you, Mr Speaker.

Ms J.M. Freeman: It would show respect, minister, if you told the local members that you were in our area.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Nollamara, I call you for the first time today as well.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! All I want to hear is from the minister.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I formally call you to order for the first time.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

Ms M.M. Quirk: You couldn't even answer a letter.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will call you to order formally for the second time today, member for Albany; likewise, you, member for Girrawheen.

Mr P.B. Watson: What about the blokes over there talking, too?

The SPEAKER: I will call you for the third time today, member for Albany. I might suggest to you that you do not talk back. Minister, I want you to return to the subject of the intersection; that is all I want you to do.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

As I was about to say, it is a very, very dangerous intersection. There are 40 crashes at that intersection every year, and four hospitalisations as a result of those crashes; there is a fatality every two and a half years. I am pleased to report on the innovative way in which Main Roads Western Australia has engaged with Abigroup contractors, who are currently building the Alexander Drive–Reid Highway overpass. It is an innovative arrangement that will save us many millions of dollars on the construction of the Mirrabooka Avenue overpass, simply because the contractors will extend their current job using the same construction workforce, the same design workforce, and a lot of the same design methodology. That offered a lot of savings, and the advice I have had is that the original scope price for this intersection was around \$45 million; it will now end up costing about \$30 million.

I think we need to put that in the context of there being three major intersections that are currently being upgraded around the metropolitan area: Roe Highway–Great Eastern Highway intersection—the Liberal Party is delivering; the Alexander Drive–Reid Highway intersection—the Liberal Party is delivering; and now there is Mirrabooka Avenue–Reid Highway intersection.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Mr Speaker, I inform the house that I went back through some of the local media to find out the extent to which members opposite had been campaigning on this issue. We did a bit of a search—not a lot!

Ms J.M. Freeman: I did as much as the media would let me do!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: But I did find one former local member who was prepared to campaign—Bob Kucera, the former member for Yokine. He campaigned on this when Labor was in government, and he said, “The reason we can't build this intersection is that the feds won't help fund it.” We are funding this intersection entirely from state money, entirely within approved forward estimates, and it is a great outcome.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The sad outcome for Bob Kucera —

The SPEAKER: Take a seat, minister. Member for Nollamara, I formally call you to order for the second time today. The minister has the call.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I cannot understand it; it is a great outcome for the member for Nollamara's electorate. Little wonder she did not come along to the opening—we would not have got a word in edgeways!

The unfortunate reality is that if the new shadow Treasurer were in charge in Western Australia, this would never be built—the new no-debt shadow Treasurer. The new no-debt shadow Treasurer says that the Liberal Party has borrowed too much money, and when the media ask her how much should it be borrowing, she says, “I don't know.” When asked what projects the Liberal Party should be cutting, she says, “I don't know, but they've borrowed too much money.” I will tell the new-look shadow Treasurer what: we look forward to her getting on her feet so that we can talk to her about the Perth Arena project, a project that blew out from \$160 million to \$500 million. They have a fantastic track record when it comes to —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: You're the Berlusconi of Western Australian politics—one scandal to the next!

Point of Order

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I think the overpass at Reid Highway and Mirrabooka Avenue is a very important issue, and, as I understand it, the minister —

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order, member?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: The minister was instructed to keep to the point; I would like to hear about the relevance.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I was merely wrapping up by saying that if the new no-debt shadow Treasurer, the person with a track record that no-one would be proud of in delivering major infrastructure projects, were on this side, this intersection would never have been built. They are the facts.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: What's your track record? Scandal, scandal, scandal! No respect for women, whatsoever.