

INFRASTRUCTURE WESTERN AUSTRALIA — ECONOMIC REFORM

**3. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to delivering well-planned, job-creating infrastructure that attracts private investment and grows the economy. How will Infrastructure Western Australia deliver on this commitment and provide business certainty, and how will it ensure taxpayers' money is spent responsibly to avoid the waste that occurred under the previous Liberal–National government?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Bicton for the question.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, I notice a lot of aggression in the Liberal Party, but do not bring it into the chamber. Just calm down and listen.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I thank the member for Bicton for the question. She is a progressive, small business woman who is an adornment to the chamber. I also acknowledge that, better than anybody, the member for Bicton understands the problems of chaotic management, because she saw it writ large with the Perth Freight Link—dysfunctional management, chopping and changing, and no certainty between state and commonwealth governments. We are a government with an unprecedented focus on jobs in Western Australia. We are very keen to ensure that we return confidence and certainty to business.

Several members interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Mr Speaker, this is the first question time; I would just like to answer my question.

Infrastructure Western Australia is absolutely key, absolutely core to ensuring —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Carine, I call you to order for the first time, and I will keep calling you if you keep interjecting.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the second time—early day.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is important that we restore confidence and certainty to business. Infrastructure Western Australia is something the business community of Western Australia has been calling for, for many years now. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, the Property Council of Australia, the Master Builders Association, the Civil Contractors Federation and every major business group in Western Australia understands the importance of Infrastructure Western Australia, as indeed does the commonwealth government. We are currently consulting a model for Infrastructure Western Australia and seeking feedback from the community. Our view is that it will advise government on infrastructure priorities, evaluate major infrastructure proposals and plans, ensure business cases are robust, improve the quality of business cases, make sure we have a regular pipeline of business cases going to the federal government to seek funding for Western Australia, and develop a 20-year, long-term state infrastructure strategy. It will assess the state's infrastructure needs across all levels of government and provide independent advice. Its board will be independently chaired, and at least half of the membership will be independent of government.

This is an important economic reform. I urge members opposite and members of the upper house to support this important economic reform that the business community of Western Australia is desperately keen for so that we have a wise investment of capital into the future and can secure funding from the federal government.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We have seen at least over the last term of the last government a lack of success in securing important funding commitments nationally. This is an important economic reform. We committed to it at the election. We are determined to drive it through.