

## **HEAVY HAULAGE TRUCKS — FORRESTFIELD**

### *Grievance*

**MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield)** [9.50 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, I rise today to speak on the heavy haulage trucks that are transiting through the heart of my electorate. As the minister knows, trucks that travel through Forrestfield with heavy haulage loads generally move from Kewdale along Roe Highway and onto Great Northern Highway using Hale–Hawtin Road. I am sure the minister has seen these loads. They are huge. A total of 141 heavy haulage vehicles have used this route between 1 January 2013 and 24 July 2013. It is quite a spectacle to see those loads moved along these local roads. The loads are pre-empted by the pilots and the police escorts, as well as the Western Power workers who need to prop up the powerlines so that the loads can move through. Invariably as these loads progress along the roads, kerbing is smashed and broken, signs are taken out or damaged and other collateral damage ensues. This part of the journey takes several hours and puts the local area into shutdown. Residents cannot access this area as the entire road on both sides is closed while the loads are moved through. This causes much distress to locals, particularly given that the majority of loads are moved on Saturday and Sunday mornings when people are trying to get to work or get their children to sport or other community activities. I remember being at the Hartfield Park car park one morning and watching some loads go through, and some ladies came up to me and asked whether there was anything I could do to get those loads off the local roads, because these ladies always get stuck behind these “Tonka trucks”, as they call them, and that causes them to run late for the seniors’ group that they attend on a Saturday or Sunday morning.

Over the last 12 months I have done a lot of doorknocking on the issue of the movement of heavy haulage loads through the Hale–Hawtin Road—part of my electorate of Forrestfield. I can safely say that the overwhelming response from residents is that they do not want these trucks on their local roads. This sentiment is shared by the truck drivers themselves. It became clear when speaking to them that they did not want to use this route either. For the drivers, this route is inefficient and adds hours onto their journey. It also comes at a cost, with the need to get Western Power involved. In effect, neither the residents nor the truck drivers want these trucks to use that route. It is also important to note that the damage that is being caused to roads, kerbs and signage by these heavy haulage loads is a cost that is borne by the ratepayers in this area.

We have talked about this issue in the past and this problem is well known to the minister. My strong desire is to reach a sensible outcome to this problem. The ideal outcome would be to take these trucks off local roads and for the drivers to take a more efficient and direct route to their destination, which is often to the north of our state to service our mining and resources sector. Furthermore, the residents of this area should be able to transit their local roads without having to worry about large trucks and the obvious concerns that this raises.

On 5 February this year, the minister issued a media statement on this matter. I will note some of the points that the minister raised in that statement. The font is very small, so excuse me if I have to squint. The minister said in that statement that the first steps have been taken to remove these heavy vehicles from Hale Road and Hawtin Road. The minister said also that an in-principle agreement has been struck with Perth Airport Corporation and Main Roads for a trial to get those trucks onto some roads around the airport. However, I think this is a temporary measure while infrastructure is being built as part of the Gateway WA project. I drive past this area regularly and see that project taking shape; it will be fantastic for the eastern region. But with all this in mind, and with the developments that are taking place at the Gateway WA project, I would ask the minister to please provide an update on this important local issue and the removal of heavy haulage loads from the Hale–Hawtin Road area.

**MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Minister for Transport)** [9.55 am]: I thank the member for Forrestfield for raising this issue. I have to say, member for Forrestfield, that I have spent a lot of time in that particular part of Perth since I have met the member. I have also appreciated the numerous invites to Forrestfield to view a range of matters of concern to the member, both before the election to his potential constituents, and of course now to his existing constituents. I congratulate the member for Forrestfield on what he has achieved for those people in such a short time in this place. It stands in stark contrast to the person whom the member replaced in this Parliament.

**Mr P. Papalia:** You’re a very shallow individual, are you not? That is pretty tacky!

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** We do not normally get interjections during a grievance, of course, Madam Deputy Speaker, but it is a factual statement.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** The member for Forrestfield and I have stood near the Hale–Hawtin Road roundabout three times, and I have also looked at the photos that the member and others have shown me of large vehicles moving along those roads. It is a fact that the economic development of the north west of this state has put enormous pressure on Great Northern Highway in particular, and, as those heavy vehicles move into the city, on Roe Highway. The only way in which a lot of operators—not all of them, but a lot of them—can get heavy vehicles out of Perth is by driving along Tonkin Highway and turning left into Hale and Hawtin Roads and through those suburbs, and then along Military Road. That is an unfortunate by-product of the economic growth of this state. I do not think those heavy haulage movements will slow down, because although the nature of the load might change, the “Tonka trucks”, as the member refers to them, will continue to be there in quite large numbers.

On the back of the member’s representations to us over the last 12 months or so, we have been doing a lot of work in Main Roads with one of the suppliers in particular, Komatsu, and also with Perth Airport. Actually, we have done two things. Firstly, a decision was made to separate the on-ramp between Abernethy Road and Tonkin Highway from the broader Gateway WA project so that that work could be done more quickly, and that work is now almost complete. Secondly, we sat down with Main Roads, Komatsu and Perth Airport and tried to negotiate an alternative route that would take heavy haulage vehicles off Hale Road and Hawtin Road. That would involve the use of Horrie Miller Drive, and then Grogan Road and east towards Abernethy Road. However, where we hit a bit of a hiccup is that obviously Perth Airport has some concerns about the impact of those wide vehicles on Horrie Miller Drive in particular and on users of the airport. It was therefore agreed that those vehicles would operate from midnight through to three or four o’clock in the morning. However, unfortunately we could not get to a landing point with Komatsu and Perth Airport about how this would all fit together.

Subsequent to that, as the member has pointed out, from 1 January to 24 July there were 141 oversize movements through those suburbs. The volume of movements has not let up. In fact, if we divide the volume of movements by the number of weeks in that six or seven-month period, it equates to a lot of movements per week. As the member has pointed out, those movements generally happen on weekends, to minimise the impact on the total road network. We want these heavy haulage loads, which cause roads to be shut down, to take place when there is the least amount of traffic. However, these loads generally need to be moved in daylight hours. Therefore, it is causing a bit of pickle and it is having a huge impact on the member’s suburb.

The best solution will come with the completion of the Abernethy Road on-ramp. I do not have an exact date for when that will be completed but I am advised that it will be completed in September. Given there are not many days left in September, I am assuming it is not far off. I must point out that that is funded jointly by the commonwealth and the state as part of the Gateway WA project. Indeed, I was out there last year with my good mate “Albo”, and every success to him. I am thinking of reactivating my membership so I can vote for “Albo”.

**Mr P. Papalia:** You can’t. You have to have been already enrolled.

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** I do not know how Labor Party membership works.

That happened and that is proceeding. That will mean that those vehicles will basically be heading east now down Tonkin Highway. We will shut the traffic on that on-ramp, and it can dart down the wrong way. It can then get on to Abernethy Road. It will travel down Abernethy Road pretty much to the Great Eastern Highway bypass, do a right turn, do a left turn into Stirling Crescent, and then work through Bushmead and Military Roads and go across that little cut-off that will get it back up onto Roe Highway. Then it will head north. I suspect that within the next few weeks we will be in a circumstance in which those trucks will no longer travel through the member’s suburbs. That is a fantastic outcome because, as the member pointed out, on Saturday and Sunday mornings—Saturday mornings in particular—although the main arterial roads might be quiet, it is when a lot of people go about their business. What I observed as we sat at that roundabout with the member and the president of the Shire of Kalamunda was not only does it impact on local residents, but also it must impact on local business, and it also impacts on the Shire of Kalamunda, because it gets a lot of damage to its infrastructure. This is a fantastic outcome.

Again, I would like to thank the member for his representations on behalf of his constituents in that area. Over the next couple of years when we look at what else we will be delivering on top of this, including those sound walls on Roe Highway that we talked about when we met with those residents that day, the upgrade of the intersection of Berkshire Road and Roe Highway, and the Kenwick train station, I think that the member will be delivering a fantastic suite of better transport outcomes to all the residents, and they should be, in my humble view, very thankful for the member’s representations on their behalf.