

WESTPORT TASKFORCE

860. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the Minister for Ports:

I refer to the minister's statement this morning concerning the Westport Taskforce shortlist, and in particular her indication of the Stephenson–Hepburn plan as justification for that shortlist.

- (1) Has the minister always been guided by the long-range land use planning of the Stephenson–Hepburn plan in her official decision-making?
- (2) If no to (1), what are the details?
- (3) Has the McGowan government ever deviated from the Stephenson–Hepburn plan in its decision-making?
- (4) If yes to (3), what are the details?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1)–(4) I think this is a trick question! I point out that my reference to the Stephenson–Hepburn plan was simply to make clear how long we have been talking about an outer harbour. I could have probably used 1996 as an example, when Richard Court endorsed the naval base at Kwinana as the preferred site for a new container facility. I could have referenced the decisions that were made by our government. I could have referenced the work that was done by Hon Simon O'Brien when he was transport minister —

Point of Order

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Is the minister reading from a prepared answer to my question or is she ad-libbing?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: There is no obligation —

The PRESIDENT: Minister, can I have a say before you do? Member, I am not too sure, but I know that the minister is perfectly capable of providing an appropriate answer without having to read off a set document. I am sure that she is responding with a warm-up preamble and then she will provide whatever written response she has.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: I know that some people would perhaps struggle to do other than read a pre-prepared text.

The premise of the member's question was incorrect in saying that the Hepburn–Stephenson plan had guided the government. That was merely a reference to the fact that this has long been in the planning. What the member is getting at, and what he thinks is his trick question, is that the Hepburn–Stephenson plan also refers to a thing called the “Fremantle–Midland Junction Highway”, which he might say is now Roe 8 and Roe 9. We addressed this issue some 15 years ago. I note that the Hepburn–Stephenson report states that this route —

... runs largely through virgin country, and the land could be secured now without much difficulty.

In the intervening 16 years, there has been a change in values there. Things that were considered old swamps and great things we could move through are now valued wetlands. We were fully cognisant of the “Fremantle–Midland Junction Highway”, but we know that this is a valuable environmental site and we made a commitment, which was overwhelmingly endorsed by the electorate, that we would not trash it.