

LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS, USE IN MOTOR VEHICLES

193. Mr BAKER to the Premier:

With the current debate on fuel prices, will the Premier inform the House of the steps being taken within government to promote the use of LPG in motor vehicles?

Mr COURT replied:

A significant initiative was launched today. The Ford Motor Company has launched a gas-powered Falcon. Its cost is very close to that of a normal petrol-powered Falcon, being only \$798 more expensive. With average mileage, the cost difference can be recovered in the first year of the vehicle's operation. The vehicle has an improved design and the gas cylinder is not located in the boot of the car. I believe it will be a very successful vehicle.

Ms MacTiernan: What about our gas-powered buses?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I formally call the member for Armadale to order for the first time.

Mr COURT: The Government took delivery today of the first vehicle on behalf of Homeswest. It will be used in Busselton. Homeswest will purchase a number of these vehicles. The Government is currently reassessing the whole government fleet structure. In the discussions I have had with the manufacturers of cars and the LPG producers and suppliers, it is clear that if a significant number of vehicles become gas-powered, the price of gas can be lowered as it does not attract an excise. The member for Armadale has made her interjection in relation to buses. The Government deliberately entered into a contract that enabled it to purchase either diesel or gas buses.

Ms MacTiernan: But you have not done it.

Mr COURT: We are currently in the process, with a Western Australian company called Advanced Engine Components Ltd, formerly Transcom, and it will supply -

Several members interjected.

Mr COURT: Mr Deputy Speaker, do those opposite want me to answer the question or not?

Ms MacTiernan interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Armadale to order for the second time.

Mr COURT: In relation to compressed natural gas, 25 of the new buses will be fitted by Advanced Engine Components Ltd, a Western Australian company that is very pleased to be working on this technology with DaimlerChrysler internationally. Contrary to what the member for Armadale is saying, she knows we already have a fleet of some 50 -

Ms MacTiernan interjected.

Mr COURT: Is the member interested in hearing about buses?

Mrs Roberts: We heard this story from you four years ago and since that time you have done nothing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members! Interjections are disorderly. I ask members to listen to the Premier and not interject.

Mr COURT: In Western Australia we are presently running about 50 of the old technology buses, but these 25 new buses will be developing new technology with DaimlerChrysler; and if the technology is successful, it will be sold internationally.