

WESTPORT TASKFORCE — AUTOMATED OUTER HARBOUR

510. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the government's decision to endorse the recommendation of the independent Westport Taskforce for Kwinana to be the site for a new long-term container port.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house how a new port in Kwinana will ensure Perth has a modern uninterrupted freight corridor that takes trucks away from built-up suburbs like those in my electorate?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house what will be the financial and economic consequences of not planning for a new port at Kwinana?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Bickton for that question, and of course her commitment to the Westport vision and strategy. We took this policy to the last election—a policy to plan for a new outer harbour—and also a number of short-term measures. We welcome the recommendations from the Westport Taskforce report. I would like to put on the record my thanks to Nicole Lockwood and her whole team for the work they undertook, the consultation, and the stakeholder engagement. It was absolutely excellent. Can I thank that team for the work that they did. I heard the member for Vasse questioning the independence of Nicole Lockwood, again willing to criticise everything that this government does. This is a plan for Western Australia's economic future. It will secure our role as Australia's major trading state and will make sure that generations of Western Australians can benefit from the most modern and efficient transport and port infrastructure in Australia. The final report has recommended a land-backed port to be built in the Kwinana industrial area connected to a freight corridor via Anketell and Tonkin Highway. The recommended container port at Kwinana will include upgrading Anketell into a freight route that will connect directly to Tonkin Highway to Muchea in the north and down to the south west. It will also be supported by an enhanced rail network and new intermodal terminals. That is what the community demands and deserves from a government—a government willing to plan for the future and to deliver on its commitments. This report now allows the government to get on with the planning involved and protecting the road and rail corridors, and, of course, the environmental assessments and the further work that needs to be done as part of the business case. In the meantime, we will continue to do the work of getting freight onto rail. As the member for Bickton knows, we have already increased the amount of freight onto rail, which was down to 11 per cent under the previous government, to 20 per cent, and that represents 110 000 truck movements per annum.

What is the Liberal Party's view of it all? Again, it appears that it has a unity ticket with the Maritime Union of Australia on this issue. Let us go back to its policies in government. Its policy in government was to privatise Fremantle port. It now stands up and talks about automation when the plan was to privatise Fremantle port. That is why it wanted to build Roe 8 and 9—to maximise the value of the port. We understand that. I quote the member for Riverton. Dr Nahan said —

... the sale of Fremantle Port would solve the government's future problem of having to expand capacity in 10 to 15 years, which would require a \$2 billion to \$4 billion investment.

“There is a need to build an outer harbour, logically in Kwinana, and a lot of work has been done on that,” he said.

It appears that the former member for Vasse was on board. We know that former Premier Richard Court was on board and former Premier Colin Barnett was on board, and of course the member for Riverton. It is logical—it makes sense—to build an outer harbour. Let us get on with it. Let us be bipartisan on something that had a bipartisan approach for decades until the Liberal Party scrambled together the Perth Freight Link project. This is a project for Western Australia's economic future. I am proud that we have delivered this report to ensure the economic prosperity of generations to come.