

FORRESTFIELD–AIRPORT LINK — PROGRESS

888. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Transport:

Before I ask my question I just want to acknowledge the year 8 students and teacher from Austin Cove Baptist College in the member for Murray–Wellington’s electorate, who are in the gallery today. Welcome.

Can the minister please update the house on the Liberal–National government’s progress towards delivering its 2013 election commitment for the very important Forrestfield–Airport Link project?

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr W.R. MARMION replied:

I thank the member for the question. I know that he is a strong advocate for public transport in his electorate. Along with the member for Belmont, the member for Forrestfield has been a strong supporter of the state and federal Liberal governments’ new project to build an underground line all the way from Bayswater station to Forrestfield. That is a great project that Infrastructure Australia rates as one of its priority projects. I know those members were delighted that the Premier, two federal ministers and I officiated at a sod-turning ceremony to mark the start of construction of the project. We all learnt how to use our shovels. We are very delighted that the commonwealth was pleased to support our \$2 billion project with a contribution of \$490 million. Along with the Gateway project, which created nearly 2 000 jobs during construction—which I know both members were strong advocates for as well—this project will create 800 jobs during construction, and 2 000 jobs overall over the life of the project. I am very pleased to provide a bit of an update on what has happened to date since the contract was awarded in April 2016, as the member asked me to do.

As everyone knows, the contract was awarded to Salini Impregilo–NRW joint venture. Since then, the joint venture has been mobilising and progressing the design and construction of the project, placing some equipment orders and undertaking considerable community consultation and stakeholder engagement. Indeed, the joint venture actually set up three community reference groups—one in each of Bayswater, Belmont and Forrestfield—to discuss the project details with the community directly with the residents.

I have a little detail on the construction. It is an innovative project for Western Australia. It is the first time we will be building twin tunnels at eight kilometres long; it is an 8.5-kilometre project. For people who live in Forrestfield, it will mean it will no longer take them over an hour to get to work in peak hour traffic; it will be a 20-minute journey by train. For people who arrive at Perth international airport, it will be about a 17-minute trip to Perth. For people who get on at Belmont, it will be a 15-minute trip. It is a really good project—a great project for Western Australia. In addition, we are ordering \$122 million worth of railcars that will be constructed for the project. I think this transformational project is the start of yet another project that demonstrates that the Liberal–National government gets on with the job and delivers, and provides jobs and economic development for Western Australia.