

ROADS AND RAIL — INFRASTRUCTURE

6. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Premier:

I also extend my congratulations to you, Mr Speaker, on your election to this very important position and wish you the best of luck.

I refer to the \$2.3 billion road and rail infrastructure package that this government negotiated and achieved for Western Australians. What does this mean for jobs in this state and in particular the 3 600 people currently out of work in my electorate?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I also acknowledge the member for Armadale's tireless work on the issue of Denny Avenue in his electorate. That road is rated by the RAC as Western Australia's most risky road. Denny Avenue crosses the Armadale rail line and is full of congestion—it is a bottleneck and it is very difficult for commuters to deal with.

The SPEAKER: Can you get on to the answer, please.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have been to see it on a number of occasions. As part of the plans that were announced on Sunday in that \$2.3 billion package, \$62 million has been set aside for the removal of that level crossing. Cars will be able to proceed through there. We intend to commence that project as soon as possible, certainly in the 2018–19 financial year. That will create 350 jobs. While I am at it, it is part of a bigger package that was announced on Sunday; that is, the \$2.3 billion road and rail package across Western Australia. The road component of that package will create 6 000 jobs.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I just want to make one point about the package that I am particularly proud of; that is, it has a component for the regions. Mr Speaker, you will recall that the Perth Freight Link did not have a component for the regions—it was in the heart of the city—but as part of this plan, we have allocated \$12.5 million for planning for the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, \$33 million for the outback highway and \$44 million for a regional road safety program. All those things would not have happened under the old plan.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is getting rowdy in your first session, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, I do not want you to be the first person I call.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This \$2.3 billion package came about because we went to the election with a clear policy that we would not proceed with the Perth Freight Link but would reallocate the funding generated from that to other, better projects across Western Australia. Some people said that that commitment would not happen. Some people were wrong about that issue. I will not go into it at this point in time, but I perhaps will another day. Some people were wrong about that. This means we now have \$1.2 billion of federal and state money for rail projects in Western Australia and we have the remainder of the \$2.3 billion for important road infrastructure programs around the state, including the regions. I add that there will be road projects in Wanneroo, Joondalup, Kalamunda, Armadale Road, Fremantle—you name it. This is a great deal for Western Australia. It is a job-generating deal. It is going to make sure that we not only generate jobs but also solve problems across the metropolitan area and across our great state of Western Australia.