

MANDURAH RAIL AND BUS SERVICES

Statement by Minister for Peel

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Peel) [10.03 am]: On 23 December 2007 the Mandurah train line was opened as the centrepiece of the \$1.66 billion New MetroRail project. It was a great day. This monumental project comprises 72 kilometres of double track railway and 11 stations and is the largest public transport infrastructure project ever undertaken in Western Australia.

To complement the rail line, the City of Mandurah operates the Foreshore Express bus service, which is a free shuttle service that runs every 20 minutes from the city's foreshore through to Mandurah train station. The state government contributed \$60 000 to the shuttle buses through Peel Development Commission's regional development scheme funds in 2007. The shuttle service has exceeded expectations for patronage. On the official arrival day for the rail, the Foreshore Express serviced close to 8 000 passengers. As at 8 February, the Foreshore Express bus service has taken over 107 000 passengers between the Mandurah train station and the city's foreshore.

Foot traffic through Mandurah Visitor Centre has also increased significantly. Latest figures from the City of Mandurah reveal that over 30 000 visitors have stopped by the centre since the train service commenced. This is almost double the number of visitors for the same period last year. The City of Mandurah also estimates that business trading has increased between 15 to 20 per cent since the train line opened. Anecdotal evidence from local business owners, including many I have spoken to, also suggest that there are noticeably more customers since the rail's arrival. One small business owner said the Mandurah rail service was a huge boost for the area's economy and meant local businesses could now begin marketing to the Perth audience with confidence. Another business operator had even extended his trading hours due to an increase in customers using both the train and Foreshore Express bus service.

The Public Transport Authority has recently responded to the demands of Peel residents and visitors by announcing the route 590 service travelling between the foreshore and transit stations between 10.00 am and 3.00 pm daily. The southern suburbs rail line and the Foreshore Express have signalled an exciting new era for Mandurah and the Peel region. This is yet another example of how the Carpenter government is using our booming economy to deliver better services to our regions.