

Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder; Mr Matt Taylor; Dr Mike Nahan;  
Mr Peter Tinley

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## **PERTH FREIGHT LINK**

### *Matter of Public Interest*

**THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland)** informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Opposition seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition)** [3.03 pm]: I move —

That the house condemns the Barnett government for its chaotic and dysfunctional management of the flawed Perth Freight Link project, and calls on the government not to sign any contracts relating to the project until after the next state election.

This is a fiasco of a capital works project. This is exactly how a minister working on major projects should not conduct himself in public office. The Perth Freight Link project is worth the best part of \$2 billion. That is what this government is committed to spending. It will not fix the problems that the government claims it will fix. What is more, it does not know what it is going to do. Nothing bore that out more than the Premier's answer in question time. I want to quote what he said because I wrote it down. When asked about the Perth Freight Link, he said, "No-one can put an exact time frame on the second stage." We should bear in mind that the second stage is worth about \$1 billion worth of state and federal government spending—taxpayers' money. As I said, the Premier said that no-one can put a time frame on it. Interestingly, I am holding a press release dated 17 December 2014 put out by the Premier and the Honourable Minister for Transport. This press release is headlined "Perth Freight Link construction to start 2016".

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** What date?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is 2016. What is more, just to emphasise the point, the first dot point states, "Construction of Perth Freight Link to begin in early 2016". It is a bit like naming the Perth stadium "Perth Stadium".

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** There is the nastiness coming out again. But I am not a woman, Premier. Normally you are just nasty to women. Our women on this side of the house can handle you any day of the week.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members! We are getting a wall of noise again.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Let me get back to the point. The press release states, "Perth Freight Link construction to start 2016". I will quote from the press release from December of last year, no less. It states —

"The Perth Freight Link will complete the strategic link in Perth's road network by creating an east-west freight connection between Kewdale, Fremantle Port and southern industrial areas," the Premier said.

There is no talk of stage 1 or stage 2—no dividing it into two. That is the Perth Freight Link. That is the Roe project that the Premier says no-one can put an exact time frame on. In other words, he does not know what he is doing. He is playing with billions of dollars of taxpayers' money with this absolutely hopeless process for a road that will not fix the problem. When asked last week whether he supported it, the poker-faced Minister for Planning no less went on with about 200 words and not once did he say whether he supported it. After a supplementary question asking whether he supported it, he did the same again. In other words, it is writ large by the poker-faced planning minister not answering the question. He does not support this project.

It is a huge road project, amounting to nearly \$2 billion worth of taxpayers' money. We have a planning minister who does not like it. We have a Premier who is now saying something different from what he said late last year, yet the federal Minister for Finance chimed in and said, "No, no, no, fellows; it's all going to happen."

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Did the Premier say that that does not matter?

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** The feds don't make the decision. They don't decide. We decide.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The federal government is only putting in nearly \$1 billion but it does not matter. Last week I asked the minister to answer yes or no to whether stages 1 and 2 would happen. He said yes. In other words, we have a different story as we go along from each of the ministers. What makes it serious is that we are talking about nearly \$2 billion worth of taxpayers' money. We are not playing with something small here; we are

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playing with the greatest amount of expenditure on a single road project in the history of Western Australia and the government has absolutely no idea what it is doing.

I will tell the government why we do not support it. I will go through it very briefly. The first point is that a total of 77 homes and properties will potentially be knocked over, affecting people whom the Minister for Transport will not even meet. He will not go to their properties; he will not see their homes. He should have the courage to meet those people. The second point is that there is a 42 per cent leakage of trucks from the highway. As the capacity or the operations of the port expands—up to 1.7 billion twenty-foot equivalent units or containers over the next 10 or so years—there is going to be 42 per cent leakage of trucks from the new road.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** No; that is wrong.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That is the minister's answer in the upper house, my friend. He needs to check his facts. He is not very good with facts, he has to apologise about facts all the time. Facts are not the transport minister's strong point.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The minister might have a good pedigree, but he is not good at facts. The answer that the transport minister gave is 42 per cent leakage.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Carine! I call you to order for the first time. Member for Warnbro, you are going to be fast behind him if you do not keep quiet.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** With 42 per cent of the trucks leaking from the road, that is 1.7 million containers going into the port. In other words, the port is more than doubling in capacity and 42 per cent of the trucks are going to leak from the new highway. The third point is that it is our first toll road, which the Minister for Transport promised he would not do. The fourth point is that the Beeliar wetlands will be damaged. There is no denying that it will be damaged as a consequence of this. I will tell members the two things that I find inexplicable and that the minister has not been able to explain. Firstly, the government is spending more than \$1.7 billion on a truck highway that does not reach the port. It stops at Stirling Highway. We have all been through there a thousand times. I have driven the route from where it stops to the port. It is a long way. It is a couple of kilometres at least and it involves at least a new bridge, and as the minister said the other day, some sort of tunnelling arrangement. That is not part of this project. The government is spending \$2 billion on a road that does not reach the port. It is madness.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** Why?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Why? You are the transport minister! This will create a massive bottleneck there right at that point on Stirling Highway.

**Mr D.C. Nalder** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister for Transport.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** A massive bottleneck right at that point on Stirling Highway, because the road does not reach the port.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Have you been there lately?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I have been there.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Treasurer!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Interestingly, I might have left New South Wales 30 years ago, but I have been down to Fremantle port. Yes, I have.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Treasurer, I call you to order for the first time. I want to hear the Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to hear everybody else.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I know the Treasurer must hate people who come from somewhere else into this Parliament, like everyone else on his side of the house appears to.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

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**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The road does not reach the port. The other point I want to raise is this: the report “Fremantle Integrated Transport Bridge, Draft submission to Infrastructure Australia for Federal funding” identifies it and I think it says some frightening things. It is the government’s report to Infrastructure Australia. It basically states this and I want to quote it —

Several members interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Yes, I would like to quote it. Sorry, for a moment members must have thought I was the member for Joondalup!

On page 10 it states —

Several investigations into the —

Several members interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I note you are smiling, Mr Speaker.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Okay. Thank you. Member for West Swan, the Leader of the Opposition can look after himself.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The report, when discussing the Fremantle Traffic Bridge, states —

Several investigations into the structural integrity and safety of the bridge concluded there are a number of **unacceptably high residual safety risks** arising from the type of structure, and its current condition. These are:

- High risk of bridge collapse associated with lateral impact (>44 tonne river vessel, colliding with the bridge piers—Rottnest Ferry is approximately 150 tonne) when combined with the deteriorating condition of the bridge;

The other day I went down and walked under the bridge to have a look at it. It is an old, fairly dated bridge that was constructed in 1939. It has had work done on it since then, but the government’s own report to Infrastructure Australia states about the bridge what I quoted above. Guess where the government is spending the \$2 billion? Not one cent of it will be spent on the new bridge. The government is building a road that does not reach the port and it is not putting one cent into a new bridge that we all know is needed to get more freight on rail, which is the real solution. When we talk about the Kwinana port, members opposite say, “It can’t be done for 10 or 15 years.” That is this government. It cannot do it for 10 to 15 years. It is spending \$2 billion on this project. How far would that go towards a real long-term solution to this issue? More freight on rail, a new bridge to replace the old bridge, and the commencement of a port in Fremantle. That is the real long-term 50 or 100-year solution. The government is blowing \$2 billion on something that will not fix the problem.

I want to conclude on this point, because there are other people who want to speak. Do not sign contracts before the next state election.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Treasurer! Do you want to speak? You might not be here.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I realise that the government has blown debt in the next financial year to \$36 billion, which is a 900 per cent increase on what it inherited. That is the Liberal–National government’s legacy. All we are saying to the government is: do not blow another \$2 billion of state and commonwealth money on a project that will not fix the problem. Let the people decide at the next state election.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan)** [3.16 pm]: Is there any policy area that the Minister for Transport has not failed in administration? Is there any policy area that this transport minister is not stuffing up as we speak? The Perth Freight Link, the Uber and taxi issue, the public transport plan. The minister could not even tell the member for Bassendean today where an underpass was going to be built. Again and again there is complete chaos and dysfunction in the transport portfolio, and nowhere is that more evident than in this project—the project that came from nowhere and goes nowhere.

Let us look at the 2013 election campaign. Does everyone remember the election promises that were fully funded and fully costed? Notionally! The promises the government made were Metro Area Express light rail and rail to the airport by 2018. The government abandoned MAX light rail and the airport project has been delayed. Why has the government done that? It is because Tony Abbott told them to; because government members are the poodles of Tony Abbott. The Perth Freight Link came from the federal government. It was not on the government’s agenda. That is why there are no plans, that is why the government does not know how the road will get to the port and that

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is why the government is still working out which route it is taking and whether there will or will not be tunnelling. It is all over the place. This project came from the federal government and was not part of the election package that the government provided to Treasury for costing. This was not part of that package.

I want to go through this. Tony Abbott won the federal election. What did he say? He said that public transport was his priority but he needed a project because he wanted to be the infrastructure Prime Minister. Remember when he tried to figure out what he was about? “I want to be the infrastructure Prime Minister”, he said. He came over and members opposite scrambled around wondering what they were going to do. “Let’s pull out this project, blow the dust off it—here it is! Let’s call it Roe Highway 8 and Perth Freight Link”. That is how the project began. That is no way to manage billions of dollars, and still there is massive confusion. On the weekend, Mathias Cormann said, “We’re going to start building it next year”. The Premier today said, “I don’t want to put a time frame on things.” He made the announcement but does not want to put a time frame on things!

It is a project that came from nowhere and goes nowhere. Today, we saw the Infrastructure Australia report, which states all the options that were put forward to Infrastructure Australia and did not include consideration of the outer harbour project, so it could not do a real cost–benefit analysis of the options put forward. It referred to significant risks around the cost estimates. The government is nowhere near ready to go on this project. This is all about the member for Riverton; it is Tony Abbott and the member for Riverton. Geez, I hope those two are worth saving, because the government is putting \$2 billion into this project and it is jeopardising the minister’s seat for this project.

I will go through a couple of other issues. This project extends all the way to Muchea for the NorthLink project. Last week I asked questions about the traffic modelling on NorthLink in relation to this project. Do members know what the answer was? “We haven’t done any yet.” That is what the Minister for Transport said.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** No, I did not.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Oh, I do not know! Today he said that he did not understand that uberX was coming too. I am not sure whether that was the truth either, minister.

**The SPEAKER:** Member! Minister!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Again and again there is complete mismanagement. There is still no clarity about the route or the time frame. The government is all over the place. The Minister for Transport supports it—he thinks. The Minister for Planning is, as we have said, the best straight person in this Parliament, and even he could not keep a straight face on this one. All of us knew what he thought. He was thinking, “Why don’t they follow my lead? I do a bit of work. Why doesn’t the Minister for Transport do his work and do this in a considered way? Boy, we’re spending \$1.7 billion; I don’t really think it will do us any good. I do not think there’s really a good transport solution here, and goodness knows about the planning implications.” I am pretty sure that that is what he was thinking. The Premier is all at sea on this one. He knows that this is not well thought out. He knows that the government jumped into this because of some crazy deal offered by the Abbott government, and now he is there. There have been media releases. He knows he should not be doing it, but he cannot help himself. The Premier cannot help himself because all he wants to do is to try to prove Labor wrong. It is not about the transport priorities or the best outcome for Western Australia; it is all about a bit of political pointscoreing.

We implore the government: stop, have a think about it, work it out; do the work. On another point, last week the Minister for Transport stood up and said that the government has provided the same information that the former Minister for Planning and Infrastructure Alannah MacTiernan did. He is wrong again.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** I’ve got it here. Repeat it for me.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Okay. I will wait, because I can see it and it is not what I have got.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you! I do not want any repeats, thank you.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The minister should table in this place what Alannah MacTiernan purportedly provided and then table all the background to this project. I dare him to do so. This project came from nowhere and the government still does not know where it is going with it. It is going to say that it has entered contracts. It is seriously the worst example of public policy we could ever think of.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Treasurer!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** If the government were trying to sell to the writers of *Utopia*, this would be a great script! They would not believe the government. It is too ridiculous to comprehend how it is at this point. The

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government does not know what it is doing on a project that is worth billions, that is jeopardising people's homes, and that is not delivering the transport solution that it is meant to be delivering.

**MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle)** [3.24 pm]: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak about the Perth Freight Link, which is an issue very much on the minds of people in my electorate. What is becoming clearer as the debate progresses is how many flaws are contained in the proposal and how desperate the state government is to try to sell its plans for \$1.6 billion of infrastructure spending on this road project. It really is desperate, and I will go into some examples of that this afternoon.

There are obvious problems with this proposal, the most staggering being that the road will not reach the port; rather, it will stop short of the river, on the south side. When we talk about this \$1.6 billion proposal, it is incredible that it does not even take the road to the port and does not get trucks across the river through North Fremantle. To even the most casual observer, the Minister for Transport has a bit of problem—just a small problem!

There is already a massive bottleneck at Stirling Bridge; that is well known. We can see by the proposal to increase the amount of freight going in and out of Fremantle port by at least one million containers a year—that is, up to 1.7 million containers to today's figures—that that will have a huge impact on not only my electorate but also the whole metropolitan area because the government's only solution to move freight is trucks. The only solution this government has to deal with freight into the twenty-first century is to build one road into a 120-year-old port and to have a truck-based solution. People know that that is old-fashioned thinking and inadequate, and it is staggering, quite frankly, to anyone I speak to, as I said, not only in my electorate but also further afield.

The Minister for Transport interjected when the Leader of the Opposition talked about the 42 per cent leakage of trucks and vehicles that will not use the Perth Freight Link but will be driven onto Leach Highway and to the northern suburbs and throughout the metropolitan area. It was the head of the Department of Transport, Reece Whitby, who talked about 42 per cent during the upper house estimates.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** Reece Waldoek.

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** Reece Waldoek. Sorry, my mistake. Apologies to Reece Whitby!

The head of the Department of Transport was very clear that the department's modelling is 42 per cent leakage. If we add the huge increase in the amount of freight going in and out of Fremantle port and that leakage, we can only come to the conclusion that Perth Freight Link will not reduce the amount of trucks and traffic on local roads, but will increase it. That is the staggering fact we are faced with when we look at the Perth Freight Link and it is why it needs to be abandoned. We know that communities will be destroyed by this proposal. What is terrible government, which we are seeing put in place at the moment, is that it is pitting one community against the other. Hoping that it will mean that the Treasurer can go to his electors in the seat of Riverton and say, "Look at what I've delivered to you", the government is telling the people in Riverton and Melville that Perth Freight Link will mean fewer trucks on our roads, but in fact I think there is a very good case to say that there will be more. The rough estimates I have done indicate that there are likely to be over 10 000 more trucks on Leach Highway and local roads as a result of Perth Freight Link. If that is wrong, let us see the government's modelling. If the government is so confident of its own modelling and traffic projections, it would have released them. Under the business case, which is a scant piece of underpinning documentation that we have on the Perth Freight Link, the government states that by 2031 the Perth Freight Link will take 500 trucks off Leach Highway each day. At the Melville Cockburn Chamber of Commerce breakfast, the government was saying it will take 2 000 trucks off Leach Highway. What is it to be? Again, if the government is so confident of its figures, it would release the traffic modelling and have some discussion, but it will not do that because it knows that its figures do not stack up.

The incredible thing is that we are now relying on third parties to come up with some pointers to the state government to lift its game when it comes to infrastructure planning. I am referring to the Property Council of Australia and its report released just last week by Urbis. It mentions the need for proper infrastructure planning now we are coming off the mining boom. It states that when large construction projects in the CBD finish up, we will need to look at decent infrastructure planning and the need for the Western Trade Coast to be invested in, which includes the outer harbour. That is what the Property Council of Australia stated.

The people in my electorate, particularly in Palmyra, are not happy. They know this project will destroy their communities. The people in Hamilton Hill and White Gum Valley know that the tunnel option will destroy their communities. They will not put up with that. They will not put up with a government that pits community against community and they look forward to the next state election when they can give the transport minister a real taste of their wrath.

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**MR D.C. NALDER (Alfred Cove — Minister for Transport)** [3.31 pm]: I want to use this time to reiterate exactly what this government is doing, why it is doing the Perth Freight Link and how important that is to Perth. I also want to respond to the issues raised by the opposition. Firstly, I will go to reasons why we are doing this. I will try to simplify it for the opposition. One reason is safety.

A government member: Talk slowly.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** I will have to talk a bit slower.

Safety is a paramount issue for this government, and we know that incidents involving trucks on Leach Highway are twice those of the metropolitan area. We also know that any development of the outer harbour, which we also believe is an important aspect of developing the future of Perth, will not shift one container for at least 10 to 15 years. We should not stick our heads in the sand and do nothing, which is exactly what happened with the doing up of the Coalfields highway when funding was pulled. It took this government to respond and make it happen. It would be totally incorrect and a mistake for a Western Australian government to ignore the growth of Fremantle harbour and the increasing level of trucks that come along there.

The other thing we have talked about is congestion. We know that Perth is transforming and growing rapidly. We have been building solutions to make it easier for everybody to move about the city, including public transport. This government has invested record amounts in public transport. We have seen an over 30 per cent increase in the bus fleet and by the end of next year there will be a 28 per cent increase in the rail fleet. There was the extension of the Joondalup line to Butler with a brand-new station. Next year we start construction of the Forrestfield–Airport Link and we will also build the Aubin Grove train station. However, let me make this point: 42 per cent of all vehicles on our roads are commercial vehicles and therefore public transport cannot be the only solution to a transforming and growing city. That 42 per cent is not only freight; it includes tradies and retail vehicles that are required by businesses to deliver goods to retail stores. Of all vehicles, 42 per cent are commercial vehicles.

The third thing I will talk about is effectiveness for industry and improving productivity, which improves profitability, which creates jobs. On the creation of jobs, we know that the mining sector has had a downturn. This is precisely the time for a responsible government to invest in infrastructure to support jobs. The member for Fremantle keeps crying out about the need for jobs. Phase 1 and phase 2 will create 2 400 jobs in Western Australia, which is roughly 1 200 for each. As the Premier has rightfully said, our focus and priority at this point is to get Roe 8 up and running; that is phase 1. The opposition talks about this road to nowhere, but it is also obviously critical of the Gateway WA project. The Gateway project, which is the biggest road spend the state has ever undertaken —

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey:** And it's beautiful.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** Thank you.

The Gateway project is driving efficiency, but there is not a beginning point and an endpoint; we are connecting things and we are removing lights. The opposition talks about road safety and I heard the member for Midland talking about it. With the Gateway project we have removed the number one blackspot in Western Australia—that is, Horrie Miller Drive and Tonkin Highway. That will get removed—the number one blackspot.

Looking at the Perth Freight Link from the freeway to the port, let us say that in phases 1 and 2 that 12 out of the 16 sets of traffic lights will be removed. Is that a road to nowhere? If I ask the Treasurer whether there is currently a road into the port, is the answer yes or no?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Last time I looked, yes.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** Yes, there is a road into the port, it is just that that road currently has more traffic lights on it. This government is about removing those lights. The opposition is telling me that there is not a route into the port; it is there. We have admitted, and I have acknowledged here, that I have been working with the federal government through my department on that last mile for over a year now. We are talking about three major things. One is improving safety and, as I said, the Transport Workers' Union of Australia backed the government because we are the only ones providing a solution here. The WA state secretary, Tim Dawson said —

“If there is another option, so be it, but no one has put another option on the table, have they,” ...

I want to go on a bit further about the absurdity of the argument the opposition is putting up. Alannah MacTiernan, the planning and infrastructure minister with the former Labor government, said she did not believe in the freight network and sold off the Fremantle Eastern Bypass. Then she immediately put out a press release talking about the need to get going on High Street—here it is—and the importance of that for the people of Western Australia. One minute she said she did not believe in the importance of a freight link, but the

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next minute she started planning. Guess what the planning was for? A freight link. The former Labor government started the planning and here is the press release from April 2008. It states —

The study will commence with a community workshop in May 2008 and will take up to 12 months.

The Labor government started the freight link along High Street and Leach Highway. Now in opposition the Labor Party tries to refute that and tells us we should not be doing it. We talk about the importance of both the Fremantle harbour and the outer harbour, and we need to deal with both; not to do so would be totally irresponsible.

I want to respond to a few things. The member for Fremantle talked about the release of information and so did the member for West Swan. Again, I will talk about what the former planning and infrastructure minister said with regard to the Mandurah rail line. On the weekend, the member for West Swan wanted to use tricky words—that is the way I would put it—because she said the information was put out well in front of the contract, but it was after the tenders were received. In fact, what the then minister actually said was that there was no point engaging in debate attempting to refute unfounded speculation. Funny about that. She said that all the major tenders were in and —

“Tenders for these works are presently undergoing a rigorous process of evaluation and negotiation.

“The Government will not jeopardise the whole process and risk such important outcomes by entering into idle discussion about events that may never happen.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warnbro!

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** I am talking about a planning minister who would not release information when a project was going through a tender process, which is exactly what this government is doing. We have how many months before an election? We will put this information out once we have finished and completed the process and then the community will be able to judge us. At the moment, the opposition is creating idle speculation and absolute misinformation out there.

During question time, the member for Cannington tweeted that the creation of the freight link would put more trucks on Leach Highway. That is untrue. The member for Fremantle talked about 42 per cent leakage and so did the Leader of the Opposition. Let me qualify what this 42 per cent leakage is. We went through the process of seeking private finances, and I have discussed this. I am surprised; I thought more highly of the member for West Swan, because supposedly she came from Treasury and I expected her to be a bit more financially literate. When we were talking about securing private financial equity, we determined that there was a 62 per cent discount on cash flow by private financiers—that is, 20 per cent because of the new project and 42 per cent for leakage. Forty-two per cent leakage is the standard for tollways across Australia. There are two things here that are very important, and this is where the opposition needs to question the department, if it wishes. We can regulate exactly where the trucks coming out of the port go. That is the first thing. We can regulate exactly which roads they can and cannot take —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** We can articulate; we can remove that. We can determine that trucks coming out of the port will not go down Leach Highway, full stop.

The other commitment we have given is that if we are to establish a freight charge, it will be less than the benefit received for creating that freeway. We are talking about a value capture model—a value capture in which we capture some of the benefit to help build the infrastructure that the freight industry itself will benefit from. That freight charge will be less than the benefit that they receive.

The Leader of the Opposition talked about the 77 properties. The 77 properties are only being considered because Alannah MacTiernan, with Jim McGinty, decided to sell off the Fremantle Eastern Bypass. We would not be considering that route if they had not sold off the Fremantle Eastern Bypass. Immediately after selling off the Fremantle Eastern Bypass, they began planning High Street and Leach Highway. I have the press release in which she announces it. I have the time lines of how this progressed from a decision that she made, going through to the commonwealth providing the money for it, and then me questioning whether that is in fact the best possible solution for the people of Western Australia. I acknowledge that I have created disruption in Western Australia because I want to see whether there is a better route so that I can deliver a far superior outcome for Western Australia. That is what I am working on.

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The opposition says it does not reach the port; I say it does. The opposition says it is not an election promise. I will let the Treasurer talk about that because it was the Liberal Party's 2008 election promise but the former federal Labor government would not support it. When there was a change of federal government, it decided to support our original 2008 election promise. The opposition criticised us for not getting on with it; now it is criticising us for getting on with it.

I have talked through the reasons this is an important piece of infrastructure. The planning for Roe 8 has been going on for years. The environmental conditions have been going on for years. From an environmental perspective, we redirected the route north to avoid Dog Swamp. We will build a bridge across the six hectares of wetlands that are affected. We will be following the high-voltage lines —

**Mr C.J. Tallentire** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Gosnells, you have put your name down to speak. I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** We will be following the high-voltage lines. There is 30 hectares of intact vegetation. There are a number of other hectares of degraded vegetation that is on the rest of the horse paddock. As an offset, the environmental process has dictated that the government has to purchase 470 hectares of additional land to set up a Bush Forever site.

**Mr C.J. Tallentire** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Gosnells, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** The modelling for phases 1 and 2 show that by 2031 this will save 450 000 tonnes of carbon emissions. We will finish this project around 2019. We are talking about 12 years. This is for only phases 1 and 2: we will save around 800 tonnes of carbon emissions or diesel particulates —

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** Eight hundred tonnes is very minor. You need to get your figures right!

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** — a week.

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** Get your relativities right!

**The SPEAKER:** Does the member for Gosnells want a rest?

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** I am putting up that this government has been responsible. It has considered the environment and it has considered the social benefits. This is where I had been hoping that the member for Willagee would get up and speak, because if the draft boundary allocations are correct, his electorate will be along South Street. The greatest beneficiary of the freight route will be South Street.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Have you decided which seat you are sitting for?

**The SPEAKER:** You might not be sitting on a seat in here; you might be having a rest!

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** The greatest beneficiary, with a 30 per cent reduction in movement of vehicles, will be South Street. I really want to hear the member for Willagee on the record continuing to complain about this, when his electorate will be the greatest beneficiary of it.

We have talked about social benefits. The south entrance to Fiona Stanley Hospital is on Roe 8. There are so many benefits to this that we have considered not only the environmental aspects but also the social aspects and the economic benefits to not only the industry but also this state. If the opposition looks at the Infrastructure Australia report, it gives it a benefit–cost ratio of 2.5. That means for every dollar that is spent on it, it will generate \$2.50 back to the WA economy. The opposition has failed to say that. It has gone silent. That is in the Infrastructure Australia report. The government has considered it economically and it has considered the social consequences. The government has considered the environmental benefits, as well as safety and a number of other things. I will let other speakers now contribute to this debate.

**MR M.H. TAYLOR (Bateman)** [3.46 pm]: It is a pleasure to talk about this project. It is very important —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale!

**Mr M.H. TAYLOR:** It is a pleasure to talk about this project because at the 2013 state election the Perth Freight Link and Roe 8 was the biggest single issue that I came across during the campaign. Even people from the Labor Party contacted me to say that they were going to vote for me because they want this piece of infrastructure. It is incredibly important. It is important because at the moment a lot of trucks are travelling along Leach Highway—they stop–start, and travel up and down hills six to 10 metres from houses. Clearly this is not a good social outcome and it is not a good environmental outcome. That is why this government is keen to

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deliver a freeway-grade freight link from the Kwinana Freeway, where Roe Highway currently ends, through to the port of Fremantle. I acknowledge that the Minister for Transport and the Treasurer, who have both spoken on this issue, have said that what the government is now doing is getting on with Roe 8. It has been through an extensive environmental approvals process. It has been realigned as a result of community consultation. The design is world leading. It is taking a new route that follows the high-voltage powerlines and comes around Dog Swamp.

The Premier was invited to visit the site, and I went along with him. A lady showed us around the environment at Dog Swamp. When we came back out towards Hope Road, she said, “Roe Highway will destroy this wetland.” I said, “If Roe Highway is going to destroy the wetland, why hasn’t the Hope Road Reserve”—a bunded road reserve that runs right through that area—“already destroyed the wetland?”

**Mr P.C. Tinley:** Because it is not six lanes, mate!

**Mr M.H. TAYLOR:** It is built above the ground.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Willagee!

**Mr M.H. TAYLOR:** Hope Road will be removed, eventually. That is a bunded road along that area. Surely that is a better environmental outcome to have the road built above that, allowing for wildlife to pass under the road and also to have less effect on the hydrology.

Coming back to my electorate, 60 000 vehicles use Leach Highway every day. As the Minister for Transport already mentioned, 72 per cent of crashes on Leach Highway involve rear-end collisions. That is 43.5 per cent of the metro average. Again, the minister mentioned that freight trucks are involved in about 11.1 per cent of the vehicle crashes on Leach Highway, which is more than double the average. I will mention that what I think the member for Fremantle misunderstands is that 500 more trucks are projected to be on Leach Highway per day by 2031. A total of 5 000 trucks will be removed from the southern urban arterial road network as a result of the Perth Freight Link being built, and this involves 2 000 trucks per day being removed from Leach Highway, which will clearly make it a lot safer and a lot more reliable.

The Perth Freight Link will also deliver improved and important access to the Murdoch activity centre, where we have Fiona Stanley Hospital and St John of God Murdoch Hospital, which need emergency access through the southern connection. It will also reduce congestion on Kwinana Freeway and reduce traffic on local roads. From memory, it will be a reduction of about 10 per cent on Leach Highway and about 25 per cent on South Street, which is already a critical intersection and about to be inherited by the member for Willagee.

We hear constantly from the opposition about freight on rail. It is important to note that in 2002, two per cent of freight was on rail. It is now over 14 per cent as a result of previous government initiatives and initiatives of this government. A study called the “Fremantle Port Container Movement Study 2012” has been done, and the opposition would do well to read it. I will quote an excerpt from it because it explains why, as best practice, we can achieve only 30 per cent of freight on rail. It states —

The distribution pattern for containers moving by rail was very restricted with over 96% of imports and 86% of export volume being within a band 20–30km radial distance from the port, showing that the market for rail is tightly centralised around the Forrestfield terminal. Only a small number (3%) of exports came from localities 50km to a maximum of 100km from the port.

Nearly 20% of imports (18.3%) and over 40% of exports ... in the 20 to 30km band travelled by rail. This shows rail’s attractiveness in situations where the intermodal terminal is located close to critical mass customer base locations and where first/final distribution distances are shortest. It provides an indicator that an overall target to have 30% of container freight on rail is not unrealistic provided the appropriate infrastructure is available near the key logistics loading/unloading points.

I also point out that I am supportive of this project because it has triple bottom line benefits. A lot of the opposition that we hear is centralised around environmentalists or conservationists, if you will, but my interest is much more in the triple bottom line. It takes into account the economic and social benefits of having a dedicated freeway for freight. One of the economic benefits that we have spoken about is a \$14 cost saving for freight companies one way between Kwinana Freeway and the port, and that increases to \$22 during peak times. It will create more efficiencies and there will be productivity gains across the economy as a result.

The Transport Workers’ Union of Australia state secretary has acknowledged this in a recent article, as has been pointed out before. Tim Dawson is mentioned in an article in Monday’s *The West Australian*. It states —

“I understand all the concerns about it, the money being spent on it and all the rest of it,” Mr Dawson said. “I know what the party says but at the end of the day I have to think about my members.

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“And my members need an upgraded road network out of Fremantle to the eastern suburbs. Our view is that the road network out of Freo needs to be upgraded.

“If it (Perth Freight Link) is the only option to upgrade it, then that’s the option that will have to be supported.

“The stress that it puts on our members with traffic lights stopping and starting, and the lunatics on the road who keep pulling in front of them every time they see a change of lights, all the rest of it ... something needs to be done.”

I will finish by pointing out the stated total project benefits of the Perth Freight Link, which dwarf any opposition criticisms of the project. They include \$840 million in vehicle operating cost savings, with \$164 million in safety benefits through freer-flowing traffic movement; \$2.5 billion in time travel savings; \$244 million in reliability benefits; the creation of 2 400 jobs; reduced traffic congestion within the regional road network, with a 35 per cent reduction on South Street and 10 per cent on Leach Highway by 2031; and a nine and a half minute travel time reduction. The environmental benefits include saving 450 000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent by 2031; over 400 hectares of environmental offsets, which is 10 times the project’s impact on native vegetation, which, I might add, has been a road reserve since 1955; top-down bridge construction to minimise environmental impacts; and underpasses for flora and fauna to maintain connections. There will be significantly improved access to the important Murdoch activity centre—Fiona Stanley Hospital, St John of God Murdoch Hospital, Murdoch University and Challenger Institute of Technology. The combined benefits of the Perth Freight Link will result in less congestion and noise, improved community amenity, and safer neighbourhoods for families. It will give better access for residents and road users in the Cities of Cockburn and Melville to Kwinana Freeway, Bibra Drive, North Lake Road and Stock Road; improved access to the Fremantle inner harbour; and improved access between the proposed outer harbour and the expanding Kwinana industrial area. The Perth Freight Link and connected Gateway WA and NorthLink projects together will service seven strategic centres.

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Treasurer)** [3.55 pm]: I want to follow up on the comments of the two previous speakers, who made the case very strongly. I will go through some history and other issues. Roe Highway, which is the first stage of the Perth Freight Link, is the most planned, debated and assessed road in Western Australian history. As the member for Bateman indicated, it has been planned since 1955 as a road reserve. During that period, people made all sorts of locational decisions based on Roe Highway being there, including Murdoch University, Challenger Institute of Technology, Fiona Stanley Hospital and the whole Murdoch hub. Indeed, we would not have the metropolitan hub of Murdoch without Roe 8 being planned and completed. As we know, the major job creation strategy of the Leader of the Opposition involves metropolitan hubs, and the one he has identified as a key example is the Murdoch precinct. It would not be an effective metropolitan hub without Roe 8. Roe 8 has been a central part of the whole Roe Highway. We have built Roe 4, 5, 6 and 7, and Roe 8 is the next one.

**Ms S.F. McGurk** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Fremantle!

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** The previous Labor government committed to building Roe 8 when Roe 7 was underway.

Several members interjected.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** She committed to it.

**Mr P. Papalia:** That’s not true.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** I can show members opposite the letter.

Roe 8 was the major issue in the south metropolitan area during the 2008 and 2013 elections. It was widely debated. After we won in 2008, we spent over \$20 million on planning in great detail the road. We did the hard yards of community consultation, planning the road, getting the optimal route and going through the environmental clearances. We did it all and it is ready to go. It has been ready to go for a while. As the Minister for Transport indicated, we could not do it because WA Labor leaned on federal Labor not to fund the extension of Roe 8. Luckily, there was a change of government and bright heads came to Canberra and they committed to building Roe 8. During that period, members opposite had a broken promises website and at the top of it was Roe 8. Now, thankfully, it has gone from the list. We are building Roe 8, as we have committed to do for 15 years and as the planners have planned for 60 years. We have planned it in great detail.

Roe 8 is essential for both the inner harbour and the outer harbour. Once people get to Stock Road, they turn right and go to the inner harbour. Eventually, they will need to turn left to go south and go into the outer harbour when it is being built in 10 to 15, or maybe 20, years. I will make a couple of points about the outer harbour.

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These people have not thought about the outer harbour because they do not have a plan, but the outer harbour was first mentioned by Alannah MacTiernan 10 years ago. Importantly, it was never a replacement for the inner harbour. It was always an overflow port, designed to be built when the inner harbour got to full capacity. When the inner harbour got to full capacity, they would start moving containers out to the outer harbour. In other words, they needed to build the roads to the inner harbour.

As the Minister for Transport said, this whole problem stems from one of the worst acts of planning bastardy in this state—when the Labor Party, for dirty deals to win the seat of Fremantle, excised the Fremantle eastern bypass. Once it did that, it had no other option than to force trucks along Stock Road and High Street and cause congestion. The fact that the member for Fremantle can make complaints about trucks going along that road means that she does not know her electorate. She was even saying in here that we need to rebuild the old traffic bridge so that we can get rail across. I can tell members that if they start to put a railway on that old traffic bridge, they will have some troubles!

The real problem here is that Labor does not have a plan for one of the most important thoroughfares in this state. It has not had a plan and it does not have a plan. The issues that we face are real, and it is Labor that caused them. This is a problem of Labor's making. If there are people in Palmyra whose house will have to be resumed, if we go down to the base case, it is because of Labor. Members opposite should hold their heads in shame.

The member for West Swan said that the government is doing this just to save me. Well, thank you! The 5 000 children who study in schools along Leach Highway, I am looking after them. The thousands of people who are caught in traffic congestion around Fremantle and Fiona Stanley Hospital on a daily basis, and increasing, I am looking after them.

**MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee)** [4.01 pm]: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to make comment and wrap this up. This is the most breathtaking array of half-truths, lies and misrepresentations that I have ever heard in my six years in this Parliament. Some with more experience might be able to reach back and give me a better case, but I certainly cannot find one this week, so this is the one I will centre on. I cannot help myself but to take on some of the key facts underlying the points that members opposite want to raise on this road to nowhere. The Minister for Transport has come into this place time and again and said they have a vision and they have a plan. This is a road to nowhere that stops at Marmion Street, and that has five more sets of lights and a level crossing to go into one gate, and this minister has no plan to redress that in any way except to say, "We're working on it", and we are meant to believe that he is working on it.

Let us also take one example that members opposite keep using—that is, that WA Labor is for some reason the cause or the font of this problem. The biggest victim here is bipartisanship. Ten years ago, the only reason the Minister for Planning had time to pause and cause his colleagues to think twice about this is because bipartisan support for the outer harbour has been a longstanding agreement between these parties. However, what has this government done? I remember working with the tribes in Bougainville. This government is no different. The only thing those tribes saw, in their cargo-cult mentality, was the gifts from the sky. This time, the plane that brought the government's gifts was Mathias Cormann—he flew the finance plane and dropped \$920 million in their lap and said they had to use it for this. Forget the bipartisan idea. Let us go with the politics. Yes, it is about the member for Riverton. This is about saving his skin. The member for Burt and the member for Toohey! They are coming for you, member for Toohey! They have got baseball bats and they are polishing them! They are looking for him and they cannot wait to see him there in 2017. The good comrades of East Fremantle are with us now—and Palmyra. They are aligning against him and they are ready and waiting.

Let us put paid to this idea that the 1955 plan of Stephenson is somehow set in stone and gold. If it was, there would be a road through Nedlands right now. If it was, there would be a Curtin freeway through the Premier's electorate and straight through Wembley Golf Course. What are members opposite saying about that? It is funny how the western suburbs do not have to take the pain. It is funny how it is only the leafy riverside areas of Riverton and Burt and Toohey that have to suffer at the hands of that born-to-rule crowd opposite, who think they can just dictate it. Member for Riverton, since the embargo of 2008 between Shelley Bridge and Leach Highway, how many trucks have been fined? None! It is no wonder that the very same rule that the member for Riverton wanted to apply to the embargo or prohibition of trucks in that area is the same rule that the Minister for Transport wants to apply to stop the 42 per cent. Please! Give me a break!

Minister, the Stirling traffic bridge is a bridge too far. The minister is going to die on it. The member for Cottesloe has sold the Minister for Transport down the river. The people of East Fremantle are waiting for the Minister for Transport, and, Mr Barnett, the people of Western Australia are waiting for you, because of this blatant disregard for people in our communities and the objective that they have for community amenity. They are a joke, and they need to have a good look at themselves.

**Extract from Hansard**  
[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 18 August 2015]  
p5459e-5470a

Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder; Mr Matt Taylor; Dr Mike Nahan;  
Mr Peter Tinley

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*Division*

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr N.W. Morton) casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (19)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr M.P. Murray	Mr P.C. Tinley
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr P. Papalia	Mr P.B. Watson
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr F.M. Logan	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms J. Farrer	Mr M. McGowan	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr D.A. Templeman ( <i>Teller</i> )
Ms J.M. Freeman	Ms S.F. McGurk	Mr C.J. Tallentire	

Noes (35)

Mr P. Abetz	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr A.P. Jacob	Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr F.A. Alban	Ms W.M. Duncan	Dr G.G. Jacobs	Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr C.J. Barnett	Ms E. Evangel	Mr S.K. L'Estrange	Mr J. Norberger
Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr J.M. Francis	Mr R.S. Love	Mr D.T. Redman
Mr I.M. Britza	Mrs G.J. Godfrey	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr G.M. Castrilli	Mr B.J. Grylls	Ms L. Mettam	Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr V.A. Catania	Dr K.D. Hames	Mr P.T. Miles	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr M.J. Cowper	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Ms A.R. Mitchell	Mr A. Krsticevic ( <i>Teller</i> )
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr C.D. Hatton	Mr N.W. Morton	

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Pairs

Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr R.F. Johnson

Question thus negatived.