

PERTH FREIGHT LINK — ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVALS

584. Ms S.F. McGURK to the Minister for Transport:

As a supplementary question, with so much focus on this project and the high priority the minister has placed on it, how can he consistently fail to be across the most basic of details?

Mr D.C. NALDER replied:

I really do not think the member for Fremantle understands the debate. She said on radio today that she is concerned about the environmental aspects of the outer harbour. She admitted that she has concerns about the outer harbour, yet in the other part of the debate, members opposite are saying that we do not need to worry about the environmental aspects because they have all been done and we can proceed and build the outer harbour tomorrow. I am saying that it will take 10 to 15 years. In the meantime, the freight movement through Fremantle port will continue to grow, and we need to deal with that issue. We are focused on the safety of vehicles, the congestion issue and the issues of freight movement through the Fremantle port and in those southern suburbs. I cannot believe that the Leader of the Opposition can say to the media that he will look at how he can cancel this. We are talking about the safety of people in the southern suburbs, getting freight trucks onto a dedicated route away from traffic and productivity improvements for those trucks.

We are getting into little bits of debate. I am trying to deliver a far better outcome for the state of Western Australia. The former Labor government sold off the Fremantle eastern bypass, and that created the problem down there. We have had to try to find a solution, and that is what we are working through. The former transport minister in the Labor government started the planning for High Street and Leach Highway, which would have impacted on the residents. I am trying to find a better solution for the residents of Palmyra and the southern suburbs, but members opposite are complaining. I am working through that. At the time we find that solution, that is when it is really important for me to have the full narrative to explain exactly what we are doing and why we are doing it, and that is what we will do.