

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PERFORMANCE

Motion

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.00 pm]: I move —

That this house notes that after one year in office, the Minister for Transport has not progressed any of Labor's Metronet projects, has failed to fully disclose information to the public about the progress of the Forrestfield–Airport Link, has failed to accept \$1.2 billion in federal funding to improve road safety and productivity, and has awarded contracts without going to tender and providing a fair opportunity for businesses to bid for work.

The McGowan government is now more than a year into office. It was elected on a platform of gold-standard transparency, a Metronet platform whereby it would deliver rail projects by 2021, and a platform of cancelling Roe 8 and 9, which it has done. However, the commitment for the cancellation of the Perth Freight Link did not come with a solution for the congestion and road safety issues that are currently being experienced by people in the south metropolitan area. I take members to the 2014–15 Infrastructure Australia assessment of the Perth Freight Link project. The state government capital contribution was \$275.5 million and the private sector capital contribution was \$374.5 million. It was a \$1.742 billion project, with the commonwealth government contributing \$925 million. Infrastructure Australia states about this project —

... there are other significant options for addressing freight accessibility issues in Perth, including the expansion of the Outer Harbour at Cockburn Sound South of Perth and a previous project submitted to Infrastructure Australia (Leach Highway/High Street upgrade, at a cost of \$100 million) that is currently at Threshold on the Priority List. Infrastructure Australia is satisfied that:

- the proposed solution —

That is the Perth Freight Link project —

is preferable to the much lower cost solution currently on the Priority List, as it generates a net benefit of \$2.4 billion compared to \$50 million for the proposal currently on the Priority List; and

- the proposed solution continues to have economic merit if the Outer Harbour is developed, with modelling undertaken by the proponent showing significantly higher benefits in 2031 than in 2021, even though there is a greater share of freight directed to the Outer Harbour.

That was why the former government committed to the Roe 8 and 9 project. I know that the government says that it was elected in a landslide on the basis of the cancellation of that project, but people in the south metropolitan region figured that because the project had been substantially started, it was likely that the government would say, "This is too far advanced now. We're really sorry; we can't cancel it." Most people we speak to in Jandakot, Willetton, Palmyra, Murdoch and other areas say that they did not expect that the government would cancel it.

We have heard the minister say in this place over the last couple of days that the Leach Highway, Fremantle, upgrade is our project. However, the 2012–13 Infrastructure Australia assessment brief estimated that the Leach Highway upgrade through to Stirling Highway would cost approximately \$100 million, with a contribution of \$57 million being sought from the commonwealth government. What it states in this document that is really interesting is that at that time it was a proposal and a business case had not been developed. The minister has said in this place over the past few days that it is based on a business case that was developed by the former government. The former government was actually looking at a scoping study and having conversations with Infrastructure Australia. There was an estimate around the project, but the business case had not been developed at the time, as the minister asserted. Once again, this minister is misleading the people of Western Australia about how she is making her decisions.

There is still \$1.2 billion of the money that was allocated to the Perth Freight Link sitting there, and Infrastructure Australia is still saying that it is its number one priority for a road project in Australia because the business case for it stacks up so well. It would solve the terrible problem of congestion that the commuters along South Street and Leach Highway experience every day. For 80 per cent of the people in that southern corridor, the afternoon commute is 20 per cent longer than the average afternoon commute for anybody else in metropolitan Perth. The congestion cost for every intersection between the Kwinana Freeway and Stirling Highway is significantly higher than the cost for any other intersection throughout the road network. In the crash history for Leach Highway, every intersection is ranked by Main Roads WA and safety experts as being either a red spot or a black spot. There are very few green spots along Leach Highway. The conflict between commuters and the 7 000 or so trucks every day causes significant issues. The government's proposal for the extension of Leach Highway from Carrington Street

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

to Stirling Highway and the construction of a big roundabout is a significantly different project from that proposed by the former government in 2012. Certainly, it is disingenuous of members to come in here and say that it is the same project and that it is our project, because that is quite far from the truth. We are yet to see how this roundabout will work. Container traffic and commuter vehicles negotiating a massive roundabout at a congested intersection will be a very interesting proposition. I put to members in this chamber that that might in fact be a somewhat difficult intersection to navigate.

Going back to the Perth Freight Link, I will once again look at why Infrastructure Australia determined that it was the preferred option of the 12 shortlisted options. The economic appraisal summary states that the benefit–cost ratio for the project is 2.5 to one, which is a very good return on investment. However, the real scandal, and what we are trying to get to the bottom of with this particular project, is how the government has reallocated the funds from this project to other projects.

We saw the great fanfare and hubris in this house when the “Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects”—the Langoulant inquiry—was tabled. Recommendation VI of the Langoulant review states —

Information about Government programs and projects should be open for scrutiny. Based on shared principles, the Government should develop a transparency framework for reporting details of major projects. The framework must require continuous disclosure.

This is an interesting recommendation made by the government’s own inquirer that the government refuses to adhere to. It is actually the easiest recommendation for the government to adhere to. All that it is saying is that reporting details of major project frameworks must require continuous disclosure and report the details of major projects. We have been asking the government for this information for quite some time, and we ask with good reason. The minister’s media release of 21 August 2017 states —

- Business cases for Yanchep and Thornlie METRONET rail projects submitted to Infrastructure Australia
- ...
- Detailed planning for land around new train stations underway
- Further METRONET projects being planned and prepared for tender

Business cases for two key METRONET projects—the Joondalup line extension to Yanchep and the Thornlie Line Extension—have now been submitted to Infrastructure Australia.

That statement was released on 21 August 2017, so we expected that Infrastructure Australia would have business cases, because that is what this media release states. It is headed “METRONET progress on track” and states —

- Business cases for Yanchep and Thornlie METRONET rail projects submitted to Infrastructure Australia

Then we had this bizarre media release on 13 October that states —

- \$700 million committed towards the Morley–Ellenbrook METRONET line
- Planning underway ...

The McGowan government media release welcomes federal Labor’s \$700 million funding commitment towards the Morley–Ellenbrook Metronet rail line. As far as I am aware, opposition leader, Bill Shorten, does not occupy the treasury bench in Canberra. How the government can put out a media release that states that the Morley–Ellenbrook Metronet line is now underway because Labor has made a commitment when it does not have the authority to allocate any funds to any projects at this point in time is bizarre in the extreme. However, no more media releases about Metronet, and the case continues.

We discovered that in October 2017, federal senator Slade Brockman asked Infrastructure Australia questions during Senate estimates hearings. He specifically asked questions about Metronet, and the Ellenbrook, Thornlie and Yanchep lines. The response from the Infrastructure Australia bureaucrats was that they had some information, but not full business cases. They said, “I don’t know when we’re going to receive them. That time frame is up to the state government.” That is what Infrastructure Australia said on 23 and 24 October when the minister said on 21 August that the business cases had been submitted. Naturally, this is somewhat confusing. When Senator Brockman went further in interrogating the officer from Infrastructure Australia, he was told that they had had preliminary discussions on the Thornlie and Yanchep lines, but nothing on the Ellenbrook line. This is in October 2017, yet the minister had been out in the media saying that business cases had been submitted. This is very misleading. The minister went out into the community and said in the media that Metronet is on track when in fact the only rail project currently underway in Western Australia is the Barnett government’s Forrestfield–Airport Link project, which was substantially started by the previous government. It has now been re-branded Metronet, so that the minister has something to hang her hat on, because she has not progressed or developed any business

cases for her flagship Metronet project at this point in time, one year in, despite issuing media release after media release stating that she was on the job and that Metronet is on track. It is absolute rubbish.

In Senate estimates hearings on 26 February 2018, Senator Brockman again asked Infrastructure Australia questions. The Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee transcript of 26 February reads —

Senator BROCKMAN: Mr Davies, I will follow up on some questions I asked last time around on some Western Australian issues. You've probably answered most of this already. So you've got no business cases from Western Australia currently on the books?

Mr Davies: We had a lot of discussion in the last six months with the Western Australian government, and we're looking at a number of proposals, particularly around the METRONET projects and assessing those and working closely with the Western Australian government, but we haven't completed—

Senator BROCKMAN: But you've got no business case in front of you?

Mr Davies: We have early business cases—not the full, final business case but early business cases—which we're working through ...

Senator BROCKMAN: In formal terms, you've not received a business case on the Morley–Ellenbrook line by METRONET.

Mr Davies: No.

Senator BROCKMAN: Do you have an expectation on when the final business case might get to you ...

Mr Davies: I wouldn't like to speculate, because I'd probably be wrong.

Goodness me; what a response. The transcript continues —

Senator BROCKMAN: Do you do a pre-assessment on commercial viability as you're in these early discussions with the state government? Do you look at the business case as you're going? Do you stop state governments putting up business cases that are never going to tick all the boxes?

Mr Davies: It rather depends on how much detailed analysis they've done. Quite often the information available in those early discussions is a bit thin on the ground. So that work is still underway, but we try and get an early insight as we can to make sure that we give the right advice early—give pointers as to where we think the challenges might be ...

Senator BROCKMAN: It's been almost 12 months since the change of government in Western Australia. Do you have any sense of what's taking so long? Is this a particularly complex business case? Is this just how long it takes? Is there a particular sticking issue that they're fighting hard to work through? Do you know why?

Mr Davies: I got some firsthand insights on this one two weeks ago. With the number of METRONET business cases ... I think they're taking the time to make sure they get them right. We look forward to receiving them.

Ms R. Saffioti: You missed out a line there.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The minister can interject if she likes, but she is the one going out to the community and saying that she has submitted business cases when Infrastructure Australia says that she has not. Those are the facts. That is what has been recorded in Canberra. Infrastructure Australia says that it is having good discussions, but that is not submitting a business case. Just tell the truth.

On 21 August 2017, the minister could have said, “We have commenced preliminary discussions and we expect to have our first meeting with Infrastructure Australia in September.” Why did she not say that? It is perfectly reasonable and truthful. The minister could have said, “We are having preliminary discussions and I'm meeting with Infrastructure Australia next month and we will discuss the preliminary business case and find out what they need from us.” That would have been the truth, but that is not what we get from this minister. Where was the money diverted to? A media release of 17 May titled “Roe 8 Alliance redeployed to three new projects” states —

The Roe 8 renegotiation includes the following road projects:

- Wanneroo Road (Joondalup Drive to Flynn Drive)—Constructing Dual Carriageway (Project Costs: \$31 million)
- Fiona Stanley Hospital and Murdoch Activity Centre access from Kwinana Freeway and Roe Highway—(Project Costs: \$100 million)
- Armadale Road dual carriageway upgrade between Anstey Road and Tapper Road (Project Costs: \$145 million).

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[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

We put requests for the business cases to the minister in the Legislative Assembly last year. When in opposition, this minister made a big deal about the former government not being transparent and open, and not submitting business cases. Indeed, recommendation 6 of the Langoulant review states that the government should disclose information about major projects as they progress. We thought it was perfectly reasonable, given that we were advised that the business cases had been developed and the work allocated to contractors—post awarding of contracts there are no commercial-in-confidence issues on the release of documents, and one would think that a business case could be released at that point. Those reports were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 27 June. They were business cases for the Wanneroo Road stage 3 duplication, Joondalup Drive to Flynn Drive. That is actually a good project. I take no issue with the project. I just take issue with the processes, governance and transparency that sit around the minister's disclosure. The other business case was for Armadale Road and the dual carriageway from Anstey Road to Tapper Road.

I was quite astonished when I received those business cases in June from the minister, who pontificated about the lack of transparency of the former government. I received a document entitled "Project Cost Estimate Summary". On the page there are lots of columns—general conditions of contract, general requirements, management requirements, design costs, earthworks, drainage, pavements, traffic facilities, electrical and lighting, structures, and miscellaneous. Down the page it itemises planning design, contract management, project management and a whole range of other items that would be expected to form part of a project cost estimate, and at the bottom is something that is quite important—"Predicted Contractors Tender Sum". After the contract was awarded, what do I get? I get a page with every single number on it blacked out. There is nothing there. That is what I got. When I look at the Wanneroo Road stage 3 duplication, every single indicator of the costs of the project has been redacted. On one of the pages, detailing the Wanneroo Road business case for the duplication from Joondalup to Flynn Drive, it states —

It is proposed to complete construction of the Wanneroo Road Stage 3 duplication by late 2018, at a ...

It is black—redacted. We do not know what follows. The problem is, we know that these projects did not go out to tender. We know that because the minister refuses to provide us with information on when these projects went to tender and we know from the contractors that they were not tendered; they were just awarded. They were awarded to people from the Roe 8 Alliance so that those contractors would not sue the government for cancelling and tearing up their contracts for the Perth Freight Link. They were just given these jobs. Shut-up money is what they call it in some places. We do not know whether taxpayers are getting value for money on these projects. We do not know whether there is some kind of compensatory cost or bonus built into the contracts because the minister will not reveal them. Given the change in economic circumstances in the state and the fact that labour costs and other costs have come down significantly, we do not know whether these have been revalued at current pricing or whether we are paying some inflated price from business cases that were developed three or four years ago, because the minister will not tell us. The minister will not give us the information on these business cases.

These two projects have been awarded. Progress on them is currently underway, with contractors doing their due diligence and their side of the deal. I thought we would ask the question again in the Legislative Council and see whether perhaps the standing orders of the Legislative Council require the minister to be somewhat more transparent. Sometimes we find that the contemptuous answers that the minister provides to members in this house in response to questions seeking information are often refined and rejected by those in the other place who maintain a higher standard of responses from this minister.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: That would not be high.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: No, it is not a very high bar to jump over.

We asked for the business cases to be tabled in the other house and got the same numbers. Disappointingly, further into these projects, where there is definitely no commercial-in-confidence issue now that the projects are underway, we get the same redacted rubbish. I would not mind receiving business cases like this if this minister and this government had not said, "When we're in government, we're not going to do that. We're going to be transparent. We're going to ensure that all business cases will be released so that they can be properly scrutinised. We are going to give \$1.5 million to John Langoulant to come up with a recommendation that absolutely shares our vision for transparency." That was actually a vision; it was not a policy because it has not been put into practice.

Around election cycles, in the hurly-burly of elections, commitments are often made. When parties get into government and those commitments are put to agencies to prosecute, the agency may come back and say, "Actually, this one's a lemon. We suggest you come at this in a different way." One of those projects and commitments is the grade separation of the Wanneroo Road—Joondalup Drive intersection. This has been causing quite a lot of community consternation in Wanneroo. Indeed, a number of people who will have this grade-separated interchange eat into their property lines have complained to me. Their complaint is that the government is just refusing to listen. The only response they get is, "It's an election commitment. We're going to

Extract from Hansard

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p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

achieve it.” The former government invested, I believe, \$3.5 million in that intersection to upgrade the roundabout, put in slip lanes and a range of other things. That upgrade coincided with the extension of the Mitchell Freeway to Hester Avenue. Those two projects need to be viewed in concert, because the extension of the freeway to Hester Avenue took a whole bunch of traffic that was previously forced to go through the Joondalup Drive–Wanneroo Road interchange further up the road to Hester Avenue. In fact, as I understand it, the number of vehicles travelling through that intersection in the afternoon peak time has been reduced on some days by as much as 57 per cent. In the morning peak time, I am advised that the number of vehicles moving through that intersection is down by as much as 45 per cent on some days. We all know that grade-separated intersections are a community killer. This is causing a lot of consternation for people in the Wanneroo district. I will quote an article from the *Weekender*, which states —

A LACK of consultation, access to surrounding roads and the impact on property values are some of the concerns residents have about the Wanneroo Road—Joondalup Drive interchange.

A petition against the \$50 million project is circulating in Wanneroo, Tapping and Carramar as the State Government prepares to start construction in 2018.

It asks the State Government to “immediately halt” the project, re-evaluate it and hold an urgent community forum.

These individuals are concerned that the St Stephens Crescent junction will change to left in, left out only and will push traffic onto other neighbourhood streets. They are concerned about access to Joondalup Drive from Houghton Drive or Cheriton Drive, where wait times will increase considerably. The biggest concern is from residents in Regents Garden, who will have the grade-separated interchange at their back door. Regents Garden is an aged-care independent living facility. At present those residents have to cross the road to get to a bus stop and the solution that is being proposed, which has had them very up in arms, is to build an underpass. I know from my time as police minister that elderly people in particular feel quite vulnerable using underpasses and that underpasses tend to be places that attract antisocial behaviour. People who are engaged in that kind of crime are going to be drawn to a place like that because they know that vulnerable elderly people will be easy pickings. This is causing a lot of concern for the residents at Regents Garden.

Another article in the *Weekender* states that business owners in the area are also concerned. The owner of Wanneroo Botanic Gardens is worried that the \$50 million flyover will significantly affect his business. That includes Leapfrogs café, where the minigolf course is located. He describes it as a pointless exercise now that the freeway extension has opened and is relieving traffic pressure. The article goes on to say —

He said there had been three meetings, but they were simply to tell people about the plans, not discuss whether the upgrades were still needed.

Drovers Market Place owner Ray Jackson said that businesses within the precinct might have to put off staff or close their doors if the \$50 million project went ahead without addressing access issues.

“It seems to me a complete waste of money,” ...

“We have not seen any finalised plans about how the businesses at Drovers can get in or out, or our customers.

“They say it’s going to create 180 jobs—that’s for about 12 months only.

“We employ 300 to 400 people on site here—ours are permanent.

“It is a bit hard on the businesses; it means loss of employment.”

These people are not being heard by this government. They are being forced to take up petitions and bring them into this place. That is because this government has a dogged determination to progress with a project that is no longer required because of the initiatives of the former Barnett Liberal government in improving that intersection and extending Mitchell Freeway north. In fact, that \$50 million would be better spent on dualling Flynn Drive further east to connect Wanneroo Road and Tonkin Highway. A already a brilliant project, which I agree with, is already underway. That is the dualling of Flynn Drive from Joondalup Drive to Wanneroo Road. However, an extension to Tonkin Highway would provide a logical connection to the NorthLink WA project. That would make perfect sense. It would be a good spend of that \$50 million and help calm the people in Tapping, Wanneroo and Carramar, who are up in arms. People who are involved in subdivision developments are generally in favour of these types of road projects. The developer at Banksia Grove is also concerned about this intersection. He believes it is not required and in fact is counterintuitive to the value of his project. Go figure! I do not think this is a good spend of taxpayer money, and I implore the minister to reconsider it.

The other issue that I want to highlight to this house is the government’s failure to disclose full information about problems with the Forrestfield–Airport Link. In the short time the government afforded to us—after avoiding

Extract from Hansard

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p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

a suspension of standing orders to enable the Premier to explain himself—it gave us a lot of different stories and shifting sand about who knew what, and when, about the stopping of the borer, Grace, on the Forrestfield–Airport Link. Yesterday, the minister told us that the borer was stopped on 14 February. That is what the minister has told us, so we think it might be true. Today, the minister said the borer might have been stopped on 13 or 14 February. The minister said yesterday that she was made aware of it on 17 February. On 18 February, the minister went out to the media and talked about the fine job she was doing.

We need to bear in mind that tunnelling projects are complex. The issues to do with the Ascot formation were flagged well in advance. Those problems were expected. The reason contractors employ good engineers is to ensure that when complex problems arise, they have the best people to find a solution. I am not talking about the borer stopping; I am talking about the failure of this government to be transparent with the community about what is happening with this project. That is the heart of it. That is what this minister and this Premier do not get about this. The Premier said that the first he heard that the biggest project that this government has on its books—a project that it inherited from the Barnett Liberal government—had stopped because of issues with the substrate was on the “Rumour File”. The Premier did media on that on 18 February, with the entire entourage of cameras and print media in tow, walking through the tunnel, looking at the progress of the tunnel, checking out a borer in action—the whole works. It is utterly not credible that the Premier had not been briefed prior to that, given the minister knew on 17 February that the project had been stopped because of problems with the substrate. We fail to understand why the Premier thinks that the community of Western Australia is going to suck up his lame, “Well, I didn’t know about that.” This is the way this Premier deals with these matters. The Premier said, “I didn’t know about the Road Safety Commissioner being sacked”, and, “I didn’t know about the head of Lotterywest being sacked.” Now the Premier is saying, “I didn’t know about the borer being stopped.” That is just not credible. Yesterday, the Minister for Transport said that the borer stopped on 14 February. She knew about it on 17 February, and she did the media on 18 February. The Premier maintained his line that the first he heard about it was on the “Rumour File”. Hah, hah, hah! That was a great little laugh he had at the end of that mistruth. I do not believe him, and nobody else does.

Today, in response to another question without notice on this matter, the Minister for Transport said, “I think the borer stopped around 13 or 14 February, and I became aware of it on 15 or 16 February, and the communication teams between my office and the Premier’s office were aware of it.” Why not just come out and say, “I made a mistake”? Why would the Premier not just come out and say, “I was caught in the moment and I made a mistake yesterday. I was actually informed about that”? Why not be transparent at the time? On 18 February, when the minister was out there with her good news media release, beating her chest and talking about how fantastic she is and how well she is managing the Barnett government project, why not say, “We have hit some issues with the Ascot formation, which is what we were expecting. We have had to stop the borer while we work out how to problem-solve this. We will be able to sort this out.” Why did the minister not say that on 18 February when she had all the media there? I can tell members that if the minister had said that, the media would have said, “They are in control. They have got a problem. They have got people working on a solution to the problem. But everything is still on track because we are ahead of schedule.” That is all that would have happened. However, instead we now cannot trust anything this Premier says about project management. The Premier just throws his hands in the air and says, “I didn’t know about that. I was not made aware of that.” That is not credible. We have had media release after media release about this project. In March, we had another media release about this same project. It said that everything is on track and there is nothing to see. However, the borers had not been working for that entire month. Why not update the webpage so that people in the vicinity and workers on the project are not compelled to silence? Why not say, “There is a problem with the tunnel, but we are working on it and we are going to find a solution, and we still expect to finish the project on time”, or, “We expect the project will be delayed”? Those are the problems that we have with the management of this minister and her brief.

Other issues are brewing around this minister’s portfolios that we will not go into today. However, the government went to the election with the clear message to the community that it would not privatise assets. We know that Treasury has awarded a \$400 000 contract to a company to investigate the sale of Landgate. Most people do not have much interaction with Landgate because they might sell a house only once or twice in their lifetime. Landgate holds the names, addresses and mortgage information about the property and strata titles of every individual in this state. Why on earth would anyone pay upwards of \$1 billion for a business that turns over a profit of \$20 a year? The sums do not add up. The government thinks it might even get \$2 billion for that asset. I am flagging with this government that we are watching this. What is the value of our personal data? The data and intellectual property that has been developed by Landgate over time has a value to the taxpayers of Western Australia, who have funded the development of that intellectual property.

We believe that the personal data of individuals in Western Australia needs to be protected and that if the government is proposing to sell that data, it needs to ensure that there are checks and balances around individuals being able to protect their private information from being sold to banks, investors, real estate agents or whoever

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

might be interested in that data. We are also watching the developments in the United Kingdom, which has reversed its position on the sale of its data precisely because of these issues to do with an individual's data being sold for profit to companies that can then use and manipulate that data for their own purposes.

There are a lot of issues in this minister's portfolios. I implore the Premier to look at that workload because it is clear that there is some difficulty trying to keep abreast of it all. I implore the minister and the Premier to come clean about why the Premier did not tell the truth on 6PR when he said that he first heard about this on the "Rumour File".

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The member cannot accuse a member of what she just said. She said that the Premier did not tell the truth. Members cannot say that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sorry, member; I think you cannot accuse someone of lying.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: No, you cannot accuse them of not telling the truth. You can say they misled or were unaware or they need to explain themselves but they cannot actually say that they did not tell the truth. They can say they were wrong.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Personally, I do not have a problem with what was said but I will warn the member not to impeach in any way the integrity or truthfulness of the Premier.

Debate Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you. I find that point of order incredulous coming from that member because when that member stood on this side of the chamber —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, relevance.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: — he used that three-letter word that we are not allowed to use and that I would not demean this place by using.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Excuse me, can we just go back to your public interest issue, please.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Another Liberal lie.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would you like to continue, please, Deputy Leader of the Opposition?

Withdrawal of Remark

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member just said, "Another Liberal lie".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Member, would you please withdraw that.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: With respect, I am happy to get to the precedent that that was a term used by Colin Barnett when he was in this chamber. He used to say, "Another Labor lie." It has been long held that when a member is not accusing an individual —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Excuse me, everyone.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I did not accuse any member of this chamber of anything. I said, "Another Liberal lie." That is entirely in accordance with the standing orders.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, go ahead.

Debate Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is clear that there is some sensitivity around these matters on that side of the chamber and that is what these interjections and points of order are about. As I said, the Premier needs to explain himself because there is an incredibly dysfunctional communication system in this government if the Premier, the leader of the state, goes to the media on the biggest infrastructure project that this state government has in train—the former Barnett government Forrestfield–Airport Link project—and does not know about a major component of that project being stopped because of issues. It is simply not credible that he did not know, unless there is a significant communication deficiency in this government, which should also be of concern to the people of Western Australia. The Premier and the minister need to explain which one it is. Is it a communication deficiency or a forgetful Premier who does not remember when he was advised of a significant issue affecting the government's biggest infrastructure project? He needs to come clean, and so does this minister. We will continue as an opposition to

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p1146c-1173a

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hold those individuals who occupy the government benches to account with their decision-making, tendering processes and information that they provide to the public.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [4.44 pm]: I rise to respond to this motion. I intend to go through some of the claims made by the member for Scarborough in this motion to directly address those issues, and then maybe more broadly go through some of the things that have —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: We have not finished yet. Our members have other issues to canvass.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I thought this was about asking me to explain all these issues. Here I go.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You should listen to all of it; some will follow.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Okay. I am gobsmacked. I am replying to the claims made by the member for Scarborough about what I have done over the past year, and also some specific claims.

Mr P. Papalia: You have 60 minutes.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, I have 60 minutes. The member for Scarborough's initial point was that people were surprised that the Labor government delivered its election commitment on Roe 8. Yes, maybe they were surprised because they are used to governments that did not deliver election commitments. The initial comments on Roe 8 were that people were surprised that we did not build Roe 8, even though that was probably one of the biggest promises we made. On the basis of that—because people should not believe election promises—we should not have delivered our election promise to not build Roe 8. That was the first comment. In response to that, I find it absolutely incredible that a member of Parliament would stand up and say, “How dare you deliver your election commitment”, and that we should not have delivered it because everyone expected us to not deliver election commitments because possibly they are used to the former Liberal government that did not deliver its election commitments. That is number one.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Sometimes you say stupid things in an election year, and you have to change your mind.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Scarborough said that it is okay to change your mind when you get new advice.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: If you make a stupid commitment, it is.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If you make a stupid commitment, it is okay to change your mind. Okay, put that on the record. If the opposition makes a stupid commitment that means at the next election, it has to tell us which ones are its stupid commitments and which ones are its not so stupid commitments so people in the public can understand which ones they are.

Again, I find this quite peculiar and I will address it because I recall the day when I drove to the Cockburn Central area. Does the Treasurer remember that day?

Mr B.S. Wyatt: I remember that day.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We made a bold commitment to renegotiate a contract, stop Roe 8 and redirect funds into other contracts. I think it was on 4 January 2017. We did an analysis and received legal advice. We did an economic analysis of what was possible and our advice was that our plan was possible and able to be implemented. The member for Scarborough is upset that we implemented our election commitment. That was the first issue.

The second issue was that the member for Scarborough stated that the previous government had \$118 million for the project in the budget. This was a project it committed to—a \$118 million Leach Highway extension. Basically, the member for Scarborough said that it did not deliver a business case on that project because it was preliminary. It was not preliminary; it was in the budget and had been committed to in 2009–10 in one of its first budgets. The idea that the previous government did not do a business case because it was preliminary is simply wrong in that it was not preliminary. It was committed to in 2009–10 and scheduled to be completed in 2013–14. Again, I point out that that is wrong.

I want to go through the issue that was made on contingent liabilities—the \$1.2 billion. The member for Scarborough and members opposite are running around saying that the federal government has \$1.2 billion of cash on the table for the Perth Freight Link. The \$1.2 billion is represented as a contingent liability; that is, if someone wanted to build it, the federal government would give us money. Well, we do not want to build it. I am not sure how many times we have to say that. We took it to an election; we do not want to build it. It is actually not in the federal government numbers. It is a contingent liability. The definition of that under accounting standards is that

it is a possible obligation that arises from past events and whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the entity.

Mr W.R. Marmion: So you can activate it? You just convinced us that it is a contingent liability, so if you activate it, we get it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There are enormous contingent liabilities. If we were to do another project, I am sure the federal government would give us funds. The idea that it is on the table —

Mr W.R. Marmion: You just told us it's available.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If we wanted to build Roe 8. I am not sure how many times we can say this.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is the 2017 election campaign all over again.

The member for Scarborough said that the Leach Highway intersections were the most congested across the network. That is simply not true. The member knows that is not the case. I will list them: Leach Highway–Welshpool Road; Collier Road–Tonkin Highway; East Parade Interchange–Graham Farmer Freeway; Manning Road–Leach Highway; Morley Drive–Tonkin Highway; Kwinana Freeway–Beeliar Avenue–Armadale Road; Joondalup Drive–Wanneroo Road; Ocean Reef Road–Wanneroo Road; Brearley Avenue–Great Eastern Highway; Mitchell Freeway–Hutton Street Interchange; Southport Street–Vincent Street—I could keep going. Those are the most congested intersections across the network.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: It said the congestion costs for those intersections is high.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is still not true, and the member is still not right.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is not true. Again, the member for Scarborough is wrong.

I turn to business cases. Members really focused on Infrastructure Australia business cases, and talk about not telling the truth —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: That's the only information I can get because you will not give me any.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member quoted some transcript from a federal parliamentary committee. This is exactly how this member operates. I had the same transcript in front of me. This is what the head of Infrastructure Australia said in relation to, I think, the business cases for Morley–Ellenbrook —

I got some firsthand insights on this one two weeks ago. With the number of METRONET business cases—

And I quote —

—there's a lot of good work going into those business cases—I think they're taking the time to make sure they get them right. We look forward to receiving them.

Which sentence did the member for Scarborough take out of that transcript? She said —

With the number of Metronet business cases —

She skipped —

... there's a lot of good work going into those business cases.

She read a transcript and excluded the sentence that proved it. This is not like a sentence in the next paragraph; this is in the middle of the paragraph that she read out. Did she think that I would not have the transcript in front of me to double-check it? The member for Scarborough stood and excluded the fact that Infrastructure Australia is saying that we are doing a lot of good work. Again —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: So why did you tell the community that you've lodged a business case when you haven't?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Mr Davies said we have early business cases; that is what he said. There are two styles of business case—preliminary and final.

I will alert the member on the process. The final business case used to be the project definition plan. So what was expected in a stage 4 business case is now expected in a stage 2 business case. As a result, we are working with Infrastructure Australia, which was saying we were doing good work and that the process is well established. Again, I am not sure why the member wants to —

Mr P. Papalia: She just doesn't like WA.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: She does not like WA.

So that was wrong. Not only was it wrong, it was completely misleading. The member had the audacity to stand and say, "I'll give you this part of the sentence, I will give you the next part of the sentence, but I won't give you the middle bit which talks about how good you are doing." It just shows what the member for Scarborough is willing to do—the pre-programmed member for Scarborough who comes in saying on instruction what the Leader of the Opposition's office wants her to say.

I turn to the redirection of projects. There was shock and horror about the fact that we wanted to get projects underway and keep people's jobs. Approximately 200 people were working on the Perth Freight Link project, and we wanted to secure their jobs. We went to the commonwealth government through a formal process to see how we could vary the existing contract to secure these contracts. That is what we did. We had a probity auditor and an open-book policy because it is an alliance contract. That is the process. The previous government did it twice. The previous government did it with the Birchley Road interchange and it did not go out to a new tender, and it did it in relation to the Alexander Road–Reid Highway–Mirrabooka Avenue project. That did not go to tender, and an existing contract was varied. That is what it did. The whole idea that this is somehow new to it shows that it has no idea what it did. The member for Scarborough has had to leave because in 10 minutes I have been able to show she has been wrong on about nine occasions. Anyway, I will keep going.

I turn to business cases. The former government refused to release the business case for the Forrestfield–Airport Link.

Mr W.J. Johnston: That's bizarre.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I do not know why. Why would it refuse to release a business case for the Forrestfield airport line? It is not in government anymore. I wrote to the opposition, asking it to release the Forrestfield business case. So whenever the opposition comes in here about business cases and about —

Mr D.C. Nalder: Do you want me to answer that?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes.

Mr D.C. Nalder: Because it was advice from the department and it was in relation to the whole Mandurah line. It was the same arguments that were put up why Labor shouldn't release the business case, because when we were in opposition we actually asked for the business case for the Mandurah line and we were given arguments as to why it couldn't be.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will double-check.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I checked this because I was wondering why we couldn't release it, and the advice I got was that we shouldn't.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, but you can. The issue is that you can. No-one is stopping you. All it takes is the Leader of the Opposition to write a letter saying you can release it.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I am just saying, the Mandurah line —

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, I know; that might have been 20 years ago.

Every time the opposition comes in here cutting up pieces of paper—whatever it does in its bizarre question time activities —

Mr D.C. Nalder: Cutting up pieces of paper?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Today.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I'm sitting here.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, the member for Churchlands cut up—I still can't believe it!

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: It was our questions for question time. Did you really want us to table the questions for question time?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Why not?

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: So you think we should table the questions? We are not ministers. We can lay them on the table. You think we should lay our questions on the table?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we just get back to the subject please, all.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Edward Scissorhands on the other side! The member for Churchlands will now be known as Mr Edward Scissorhands. This is one of those things about which I will wake up in the middle of the night laughing: the member for Churchlands gets up and gets some scissors—I point to exhibit A—to cut out —

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I was trying to be helpful.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — a document. Why would he do that? Maybe because he was not meant to have the document? Maybe because he contravened the State Records Act?

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: Hang on: are you saying that I contravened the State Records Act? Is that what you're saying?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am saying your side did.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I didn't. You just said I did.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! Member for Churchlands and minister, can you please not —

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Point of order—sorry.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: — engage in a debate, and do not call a point of order while I am on my feet.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I apologise.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is the time for you to respond to the motion. Minister, I ask you to go ahead. If you want to a debate, can you make it at question time or something and not now.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sure. I will not —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I ask the minister to withdraw her clearly inaccurate statement in relation to me.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Okay. I withdraw. Maybe it was not the member for Churchlands who contravened the State Records Act. It was possibly somebody else on that side—possibly someone else.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Carry on, minister.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I think an internal briefing note was prepared for the then Treasurer, who, let us go through this, used government resources to get work undertaken one day before caretaker status was called, then tried to use it in the campaign. He got Treasury to do work. We know now that the former government got Treasury to undertake some analysis, using government resources, to submit to the Treasurer, and it was pretty forward analysis because of the scope of the work. The first point is that during the election campaign, during our Metronet costing week, the former government said that Metronet was going to cost \$9 billion or \$10 billion. It was flawed advice. Not only did the former government do that, it kept it and it has used it in the chamber today. That is against the State Records Act. Official advice to government cannot be used. When someone leaves the executive, they cannot take all the notes with them.

Mr D.C. Nalder: This was actually put into the public forum back in February.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, it was not.

Mr D.C. Nalder: That is the advice I have been given.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is the advice the member got, but he has been misled. Who advised the member that it had been put out in the public forum?

Mr W.J. Johnston: Silence is the answer!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am not saying it was the member who —

Mr D.C. Nalder: Can I tell you that the advice is consistent with the advice I got as a minister that by running the Ellenbrook line you will need an upgrade. I am on record in *Hansard* saying that you will need to upgrade Perth central station.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What the member and his side have done today is absolutely incredible—the whole thing. The member asked whether we knew about this advice. First of all, it was internal government advice. It was commissioned by the government for the Treasurer using government resources—using Treasury resources. It was an official note prepared by the Under Treasurer and it was sent to the Treasurer on 31 January 2017. Caretaker mode had kicked in on 1 or 2 February 2017—I cannot remember. Then the Liberal Party members held the

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p1146c-1173a

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document. They took it out of government, took it to Liberal Party headquarters and they tried to use it politically. We had forgotten about it until they walked in today and tried to quote from that official document prepared by the executive.

Mr D.C. Nalder: You have a copy of it there.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, this is my notepad.

The Liberal Party walked in with the document and someone had taken out the section in question and put it on a piece of paper. Who gave it to the member for Bateman, because he was not in the office at the end of 2017? Was it the member for Nedlands? Where did the member get it from?

Mr D.C. Nalder: Can I say that that you made some accusations in question time that I had taken a document that had been prepared for me when I was minister, which is factually incorrect.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It was prepared for the Treasurer.

Mr D.C. Nalder: You now know that because I have seen you with a copy of it, so we know it was not prepared for me. Regarding everything else, I am not going to get into a he-said, she-said around this. I was told it was a public document and public information.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Who told the member?

Mr D.C. Nalder: I have told you that.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: He does not have to disclose to you who told him.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: When a person breaches the records act, they do. I am seeking further advice on this because what the member has done is against the State Records Act. How dare the member use government-commissioned resources not only during election campaign, but also in here.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Who gave you the stolen document?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Who gave the member the stolen document? The member for Nedlands was running around.

Mr D.C. Nalder: So now it's a stolen document.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, it is.

Mr D.C. Nalder: This is not an inquisition hearing.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member started it today. He came in quoting a document —

Mr D.C. Nalder: We said there were a lot of costs associated with Metronet, such as Perth central station, and I will share with you now that it is consistent with the advice I got as minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member asked whether we were aware of this paragraph. I went through my memory quickly—going through it, click, click, click—and I did not remember us receiving that in any formal way. Because the member was claiming that it was a Labor Party election commitment that he had costed, I thought, “Geez, if we had not costed that, how was Treasury commissioned to cost Labor Party policy?” That is completely against the Financial Management Act; it is completely against all existing financial management legislation. The Liberal Party abused its power during the campaign and we knew it at the time. In fact, we wrote a letter to Mr Barnes about this issue, because we were so incensed that the Liberal Party would use Treasury to cost the other side's commitments, which is completely against the Financial Management Act and the Government Financial Responsibility Act. It is completely against that process. Then the member for Bateman came in today with the document. No wonder he would not lay it on the table. What the member released to the media was a subset of that document, which was the table. Even the member would have known not to release the entire document, because it was internal Treasury advice given to the then Treasurer. Like I said, not only did the Liberal Party abuse that power during the campaign, but also, incredibly, the member for Bateman was set up today because he was told the document was one thing when it was another thing. The member for Bateman came in with a document prepared for the executive of government that he should not have. A person cannot walk out of a ministerial office and take files of documents. That is actually against the law. That is what the member for Bateman did. When he left, he took all his documents and used them during the political campaign, and he came in with the document today.

Ms J.J. Shaw: Scissorgate!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Scissorgate!

Like I said, I will pursue further action on that, because it is just a disgrace.

Now I will go to why the member for Scarborough does not like underpasses. Okay, that is fine; she does not like underpasses. She wants people to cross four lanes of road. I accept that from the member for Scarborough. I think bridges and underpasses sometimes create better connectivity. I understand the safety concerns, but I think people want to get from one side of the road to the other without having to cross a significant volume of traffic.

I turn to Wanneroo and Joondalup. I understand some of the community concerns. The member for Wanneroo is working very hard on this issue and has held a number of information sessions. I know the former member for Wanneroo seems to be very concerned about this and I understand he wants to become mayor. I understand that is what has happened on that issue.

I turn to the tunnel boring machine, Grace. The member said the problems were expected. He said the problems were expected because we are going to the Ascot formation. That was a nice pick-up! Now it is as though, oh my goodness, some of those risks have been realised and that has caused everyone to have to stop doing everything. The key issue is that work is still continuing on the Forrestfield–Airport line. Grace has stopped, Sandy is going, the boxes for the stations are being built and that is what is happening in relation to that issue.

As I said, I went through all of the member for Scarborough's points. I think she was wrong on a number of occasions. I think today the member for Bateman broke the State Records Act, just as a minor thing, in relation to this.

The member for Scarborough said I have not been working hard enough this year. I think that is pretty much the point: we have not been working hard on creating jobs and infrastructure throughout the state. In addressing that, I will highlight some of the achievements over the past year and also where we are moving forward. On 30 March 2017 we renegotiated the Roe 8 contract to create more jobs and reduce congestion. Within a number of weeks of winning government in 2017 we got serious on delivering our election commitments. That was a sign that this is a government that delivers its commitments. On 30 March 2017 we endorsed negotiations to begin between the Roe 8 Alliance and Main Roads, delivering our commitment to begin renegotiating the Roe 8 contract. We believe that freed up funds to deliver other projects across the state. We started that process immediately. On 31 March 2017 there was a fresh start for taxi and on-demand transport reforms. We started the process of reforming the taxi industry in WA. Within a number of weeks of being sworn in, Tony Buti was appointed and we started the process of negotiation to develop a model for taxi reform. On 2 April 2017 we pushed for more local jobs on the stadium bridge contract. That was another project we inherited that was going nowhere. Remember, that bridge was meant to be finished, as I recall, at the end of 2015. By March 2017 not one segment had arrived. I kept asking questions but there was no line of sight—no parts of that bridge that I could see. We delivered on our Guildford Road commitment. The member for Maylands is not here, but that was another early commitment that we delivered. We opened the Aubin Grove train station to the public, which was another big project. We made another election commitment about Carter's wetland, which was delivered in April. We committed \$1.5 million for the preservation of Carter's wetland within a couple of months of winning government, as we had promised. We announced grants for the upgrade of boating facilities. On 30 April we made another commitment to reduce congestion in the north east corridor with the New Lord Street project—a seven kilometre dual carriageway to immediately reduce congestion in that corridor. I think we all, when we are listening in the car in the morning about the most congested part of metropolitan area, know that Lord Street and West Swan Road are always up there. That is a big project and it is underway.

Ms J.J. Shaw: It's a great project!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is a great project. I know that the residents of Ellenbrook and Aveley are very much looking forward to that project being completed. It will reduce a significant bottleneck in that north east corridor and ensure that we did not waste infrastructure on a busway because we are going to deliver a rail line. That is another big project. The member for Butler is not here, but Marmion Avenue is another big project that is underway.

On 5 May we presented a relief package for small businesses in Scarborough that had been impacted by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority works.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Did that increase land values around that area?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I saw a report in today's paper stating that land prices were going to double in that area because of government investment. It is incredible. If only I had investment properties in that area! I would like to have that. We presented a small business assistance package because the previous government did not have one. Within a number of months another issue we faced was the struggling small businesses in Scarborough. We presented a small business package, which the City of Stirling matched. We started the process on the reform of the future of the Swan Valley, which was another election commitment. We created the consultation for the review of the Swan Valley and we committed \$89 million to boosting roads.

On 8 May we negotiated a massive package of road and rail commitments with the federal government. The opposition said that it could not be done. As I recall, it was on the sidelines cheering for the federal government

and hoping that it would rip every cent away from WA. Do members recall that? It seems like a decade ago, but it was last year. The opposition said there was no way that the federal government would give us that money. It was encouraging its federal colleagues to rip that money out of WA. If it had got its way, some projects that would not be happening in regional WA are a \$44 million regional road safety program that is currently being rolled out and there would be no funding dedicated to the Albany outer ring-road. The planning for the Albany outer ring-road was one of our projects. The Liberal Party opposed all the other projects then and still oppose them. We delivered a \$2.3 billion boosting jobs and busting congestion package. Let us go through it.

There is \$1.2 billion for Metronet. It is the first time that funding has been allocated to the Yanchep extension and the Thornlie–Cockburn line. I remember that when we were in opposition I used to hear the members of seats in that corridor saying, “In the next budget there will be money for a Yanchep extension. I have a good relationship with the Minister for Transport. It is all going to be okay.” We heard the former government say time and again that it would fund the Yanchep extension but it never did. I feel sorry for the former members in that area because that was the most advanced project. Do members recall that? But in the 2013 election campaign when the opposition tried to gazump us on the railway to the airport, the Thornlie–Cockburn line took a back seat. As a result, some operational issues of the stadium were impacted. Realistically, that link should have been done before the stadium opened. I feel sorry for those people. Was it the former member for Southern River who I recall used to say in 2013, “I don’t need the Thornlie line.”

Mr W.J. Johnston: He said the Liberal Party won’t give it to me because I’m going to win anyway.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is right. The off-again, on-again lobbying by that member resulted in the project never going ahead. Funds were not secured until the election campaign of 2017. That is another project that we got funding for within our first six months of government. With that are all the other projects that we were able to deliver as part of that \$2.3 billion package. In the northern suburbs, our Wanneroo Road packages include the Wanneroo Road dual carriageway, which is underway. This is a project that those on the other side do not want us to do. They said that we should never have varied that contract. Members opposite wanted to put 220 Western Australian workers out of a job because they did not want us to do this project. But we are doing it! I talked about the Wanneroo Road overpass before. In the east is the Reid Highway dual carriageway from Altone Road to West Swan Road, which is another congestion point in the network; the Roe Highway–Kalamunda Road interchange, which is another big project. I know the member for Kalamunda is very keen for us to progress it. It is an area of significant bottleneck, but it is that mixture of commuter and truck traffic. There is also the Hale Road–Woolworths Drive intersection upgrade. Another part of Metronet that was funded was the Denny Avenue level crossing removal. We do not want to pick projects in the infrastructure program because they are all good projects but this is a project that the community has been wanting for many years. I think Denny Avenue is only 200 to 300 metres in length, but it has been described by the RAC as the riskiest road across the network in surveys it has undertaken. It is a very congested area that would have been forgotten by any other government but us. We have committed to it and the planning is underway. Sometimes when I get time to pause and look through the paper I think that what we are doing is really having an impact. I point to an article about a local business developer in that area who said that they were confident with the infrastructure program in that area and as a result are committing to upgrade the shopping centre because there is now a plan that has been worked out between the council and the state government and they have the investment certainty to go ahead. It is a project I am particularly proud of and I am sure the member for Armadale will read this transcript and absolutely agree.

In the southern suburbs is the Mitchell Freeway southbound widening; the Kwinana Freeway southbound on-ramp—the member for South Perth is not here but I know it is one of his particular favourites—and the Murdoch Drive connection is underway. We have the concept plan for the Leach Highway project; Karel Avenue upgrades; the Kwinana Freeway northbound widening; the Armadale Road to North Lake Road bridge; and the Armadale Road dual carriageway. Again, the Armadale Road dual carriageway is something that members opposite would not do. That is why people did not trust them. We saw today that they do not believe in delivering on election commitments. They have a view that if they have a stupid election commitment, they do not need to deliver on it. I do not know how they do that during election campaigns. Do they have the stupid election campaign list and the normal campaign list? I do not know. Again, that was a massive breakthrough in May, and it has created enormous job opportunities and infrastructure certainty across the state. We started lobbying for the \$10 billion national rail program, and we are still lobbying for that because the federal government has created a \$10 billion bucket. I am keen to ensure that Western Australia gets its fair share of that \$10 billion fund. On 12 May, we started negotiations on options for High Street. It is good that we started that in May, and then we finalised it with council. The tunnel boring machines arrived in May. The Waterloo Industrial Park plan was opened for public comment on 18 May.

We committed to strata title reforms. That is another big reform that we hope to progress this year. Again, it is difficult and has taken a lot of parliamentary drafting, but it is very important to the community more generally.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

I spoke to the member for Swan Hills last night and she talked about the renewable energy sector. People in that sector are very keen to see what can be achieved through the community titles and shared infrastructure that come with it. There is a number of possibilities for renewable energy, housing affordability, shared infrastructure and shared access to key facilities. Again, it is a very important process.

We completed the passing lanes along Great Eastern Highway. We started the process for the environmental rehabilitation of the Roe 8 land. I acknowledge the member for Bicton, who has worked on that project. That process is nearly finalised.

We started progressing the medihotels commitment, which we made during the election. I am very happy to work on it with LandCorp and the Minister for Health. Work started on the Shenton Park hospital site. We inherited this LandCorp project, which is delivering more liveable options for people in that suburb. It is also adjacent to very good schools.

We set up the Metronet team in May last year and we appointed a board member of Infrastructure Australia, so they really know the Infrastructure Australia processes. The team will oversee the planning and development of the new rail projects that we commissioned. The Airport Central station also got underway in May last year. We saved the *AvonLink* train service. I understand that the previous government was debating whether to save it. We saved it and returned it to its existing service. Some of the numbers that I have seen for the *MerredinLink* service in particular are pretty strong; they are better numbers.

We completed the Guildford Road process in June. Works began on the central section of NorthLink WA. This project has had bipartisan support. It was initially started by federal Labor and was continued by the federal Liberal Party. It was started by the previous state government. As many people in that area know, it is a massive project that will deliver significant time savings for those in the north east corridor. The first part has involved opening the three overpasses at the intersections of Tonkin Highway–Collier Road, Tonkin Highway–Morley Drive and Tonkin Highway–Benara Road, but work is continuing on the lanes. The Reid Highway–Tonkin Highway interchange is massive.

Ms A. Sanderson: It's huge.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is huge. Stage 2 is well underway. Fortunately, there will be fewer interactions with existing roads, as opposed to the first stage, but there are still some significant congestion points as we work our way up to Muchea.

As part of our election commitment, Minister Paul Papalia committed funding for focusing on the Swan Valley becoming a major tourism precinct.

On 13 June last year, we committed to the new inner-city college at Subiaco Oval and two days ago we turned the first sod for that project. We created a plan for an inner-city school within a few months, but the previous government could not deliver it in eight and a half years. The particular benefit of this school is that it will utilise existing infrastructure, such as the playing surface at Subiaco Oval. I am proud that we are keeping the playing surface. It is a great asset. If I were a young person at school, I would like to be able to kick a ball on Subiaco Oval at lunchtime, but, unfortunately, I have missed that opportunity. At least I will get to kick a ball on it now. It will be a huge school. We are delivering a key commitment to create a school that will address the significant overcrowding at many of the schools in those areas, such as Shenton and Churchlands. This will bring huge relief. It is a good project. It is great to see that we launched the project vision in June and we were able to turn the first sod for that project this week.

The first design for Belmont station happened. There was a joint statement from Hon Paul Fletcher and me. It is a significant station. We went through a community consultation process and we have renamed that station Redcliffe station. That is another good project.

We increased the fees at Port Hedland port to try to help recover some funds, because, as I recall, the fees at Port Hedland port were frozen in 2014–15.

On 25 June, we set out the new plan for the Swan River pedestrian bridge. So much has changed and so much has moved forward on this particular project. We made sure that we had significant local content and had a line of sight for this project. It had been going nowhere for a long time.

Another project that was mocked by some parts of the media was the naming of the tunnel boring machines. This process is normally undertaken across all the TBMs. I was pleased and proud that the TBMs were named Grace and Sandy. TBM Grace was named after beautiful Grace McPhee, who was nominated by members of her class because she was going through a very significant health issue. They said that if the TBM is as tough as Grace, it will be okay. I am happy that she has been able to enjoy that experience. It is a great process. TBM Sandy was named to represent the sandgroper image of WA.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

We started the roadworks for the Middleton Beach, Albany, development, which is another project that we committed to. We committed to stage 1 of the Middleton Beach activity centre.

Tunnelling began on 30 July 2017. Again, it seems like many years ago, but it was only July last year. It is something we did jointly with the federal government. I do not think the federal minister was there on the day, but I think his representative was. It was a very good day.

The member for Perth was appointed as my parliamentary secretary on 3 August 2017.

On 5 August, we announced that local company Civmec Construction and Engineering Pty Ltd would be the lead contractor for the Swan River pedestrian bridge. Another major commitment we made that we delivered on 6 August was the commitment to deliver \$23 million to the City of Wanneroo for a dual carriageway upgrade of Marmion Avenue to Yanchep. It is a \$23 million project that I know the member for Butler was very keen on. I think he did a lot of that “standing by the side of the road” campaigning during that election campaign. I am very, very happy that we were able to fulfil that commitment. The project is now with the City of Wanneroo and it is working on it. Member for Swan Hills, a new bus service between Ellenbrook and Whitfords was delivered in August last year.

Ms J.J. Shaw: Fantastic!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will go through the list. The Greenwood station platform shelter was extended and further cycling facilities are available at the station.

Remember that the Yanchep and Cockburn extension projects had never been anywhere near the federal government. In fact, Infrastructure Australia and the federal government keep saying that they just do not understand the approach taken by the former state government. We want to have a really productive relationship with the federal government, because it has a lot of funds at its disposal. As I said, it has the chequebook and we are keen on the cash. It is as simple as that. I do not understand why the previous government did not engage with the federal government, particularly because it was of the former government’s persuasion, and work with the bureaucracy. Another comment I heard was that there was a cocktail circuit, and previous government members did not think that they had to work with the bureaucracy because they could just meet someone at a function and try to get funds for a particular project. The previous government did not actually do the work. It did not prepare business cases.

Dr M.D. Nahan: What business case have you presented on a single Metronet project?

Mr W.J. Johnston: He wasn’t here for the start of the debate. Go back and skim the first part of your speech again.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Okay. Here it is. Mr Davies, the head of Infrastructure Australia, said that he had early business cases —

Dr M.D. Nahan: An early business case is not a business case; it’s like a scribble on a piece of paper. You don’t have a business case on a single Metronet project, and you know it!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Seriously, you, Leader of the Opposition, have no credibility. You are all over the place. You said that the party was going to get rid of royalties for regions even though you never told your regional members that. We heard his team talking in the corridor. They said, “I don’t know where he got that from.” You walk in —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Who did you hear saying that?

Mr W.J. Johnston: The member for Churchlands said that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Cannington said that it was the member for Churchlands.

Dr M.D. Nahan: The member for Churchlands is not a rural member.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Okay, it is rural and metro members. I will correct that statement: it was rural, regional and metro members.

Dr M.D. Nahan: No-one talks to you. Why would anybody do that?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Maybe we are all on the same team.

When in government, opposition members ran a process in which they did not do any work and did not submit any —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Leader of the Opposition, I have been very tolerant, but now you can stop. Thank you.

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Leader of the Opposition was not here when we disclosed that he stole a document from his office when he was Treasurer.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Dr M.D. Nahan: She referred to me.

The ACTING SPEAKER: That does not give you the option under the standing orders; you are not allowed to interject. If you want to stand up and have your say, you will have the opportunity. Thank you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Today, we had the debacle of a document being referred to that was prepared for the Leader of the Opposition when he was Treasurer. The former Treasurer asked for a document to be prepared to cost an opposition election commitment the week before caretaker period. That is what he did. It was entirely inappropriate. He had that document prepared and then he used it during the election campaign. I cannot remember the date; I think it was the first or second week of February. The former Treasurer asked public servants to prepare a document for him on the basis that he would take it from his Treasury office to Liberal Party headquarters. That is what he did. He took a document from his Treasury office to Liberal Party headquarters to use in an election campaign.

Dr M.D. Nahan: How would you know? She's making that up. Did you say that you got it from the Liberal Party office?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: My claim in this house is that you took it from the Treasurer's office to Liberal Party headquarters and you then tried to use it in the costing debate about Metronet. But because you were so sloppy and so pathetic in your analysis claiming that Metronet would cost \$9 billion and some of the assumptions you had were so ridiculous, nobody bought it. It actually became the turning point of the campaign, because you were so bad at it. Not only did you steal a document from your ministerial office—a government document and a document of the executive—you walked into Parliament today and tried to use that document in this place. When you were caught out, what did you turn to? It was a pair of scissors. That has never been seen before in this place. Leader of the Opposition, you tried to cut a document in quarters to try to lay something on the table. You made the claim that I had seen this document. It was an internal government document prepared for you and you used it politically for a campaign. When I asked what the document was, what did the Leader of the Opposition do? He turned to the stationery cupboard and got a pair of scissors. Again, I have never seen that happen. The opposition comes here and tries to test us on accountability, and on the same day the Leader of the Opposition pulls out a pair of scissors to cut up a document that he should not have in his possession.

Anyway, back to the business of the Yanchep and Thornlie lines. As I said, the stage 2 business cases were submitted and the final business cases will be submitted soon.

The Margaret River Perimeter Road is a project that we inherited. There was some debate about whether to continue funding the project, but we fought for the funding and that project is underway. The Premier created the creative industries consortium to make sure that we bring in industry and acknowledge that job-creation role of the creative industries in Western Australia. There was further progress in August on Middleton Beach. Significant funding was committed to Ocean Reef Marina. Again, this is a process that the previous government did not commit to in any real capacity. It is a project that we are committed to. I know that it was welcomed by the former mayor and that I am sure is welcomed by the current mayor.

Another major election commitment was a major boost to cycling investment across the state, and that is something that has been delivered. It is a record allocation of \$129 million over four years.

Mr D.C. Nalder: That includes NorthLink, doesn't it?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is a record amount.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I know but you incorporated that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: But it is still a record amount.

Dr M.D. Nahan: It was funded and organised by someone other than you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that we did not put any money into cycling? I think that is what the Leader of the Opposition said. I think that is a bit false. I think that is a false impression. Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that we did not put any money into cycling in the last budget? It was a record.

Mr D.C. Nalder: That includes our project.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It includes all the principal shared paths that Main Roads WA and the Department of Transport are doing.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

The member for Balcatta has walked into the chamber at an appropriate time. I will talk about Stephenson Avenue; it was not created that way. I am sorry that I was talking about Ocean Reef Marina, member for Joondalup. The member is very much working on helping to deliver that project.

The Stephenson Avenue project was a key priority for the City of Stirling but I think it has fallen on deaf ears. The Scarborough Beach development did not fall on deaf ears, but this one did.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Did the Scarborough Beach development help the people who owned property around it?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There is a report —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: You seemed pretty happy to open it. You seemed happy to take credit for it and put your brass plaque up there.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Can you see it from your balcony?

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I don't live there anymore.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There was \$60 million contributed for the Stephenson Avenue project. Roads throughout the regions—as I said, we had the new road safety package. Other projects in the 2017–18 budget included \$35 million to contribute to the Albany Ring Road; \$30 million for the South Coast Highway; \$12 million for the Bunbury Outer Ring Road; and \$14 million for the duplication of Great Eastern Highway, Gattaca Drive to Anzac Drive, member for Kalgoorlie. There has been \$50 million to construct the next stage of the Karratha–Tom Price Road and \$8 million for upgrading —

Mr W.J. Johnston: The member for Kalgoorlie is here.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I know; he has generally welcomed that project.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is the other project we committed to.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I was just seeing if the 15 overtaking roads were finished!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There has been \$8 million allocated for upgrading works on the Coolgardie–Esperance Highway, so that is further funding for those projects. In September 2017, there was a commitment to the Westport task force—the new task force to deliver the outer harbour vision for WA. The opposition is obsessed with the Perth Freight Link. Good luck if it wants to run the 2021 campaign based on 2017; that is fine. We have a vision and we are implementing that vision. The upgrades to High Street were part of that vision. Of course, there have been increased subsidies for freight to move from road to rail. We are also developing intermodals. Members might see some development happening very soon on that front. That is a coordinated approach to look at how to improve things. We are working with the Freight and Logistics Council of Western Australia and the port of Fremantle on what can be done to reduce truck movements and what can be done at Fremantle port in the interim.

In September, an upgrade to the Two Rocks marina was announced. The member for Butler, again, took me up to see that. I remember I had a lovely cup of tea that morning at a local resident's house. There has been a commitment for that marina. The staircase is another project that is being delivered as part of our promises. We appointed John Kobelke to head up a review on the Swan Valley. We committed \$17.2 million and other funds for Toodyay Road safety improvements through the Minister for Road Safety and also that process.

As I said, the railcar strategy was commenced to maximise local jobs. Again, something that has not been done in Perth for a very, very long time is the railcar strategy. We are working with industry and that process is well underway to guarantee at least 50 per cent of local content for railcar manufacturing. We are working through those processes and it is going really well. There has been a lot of engagement with and a lot excitement from industry.

The regional road safety package ended up being \$55 million, not \$44 million. We see that as we go through them: Albany–Lake Grace Road and the Amelup curves; Northam–Cranbrook Road; South Western Highway; Railway Road; Brand Highway; Great Northern Highway; Indian Ocean Drive; Goldfields Highway; Coolgardie–Esperance Highway; York–Merredin Road; North Coast Highway; Great Northern Highway; and North West Coastal Highway. That is \$55 million worth of road safety commitments.

The pastoral lands reform process commenced. We did welcome—the member for Scarborough highlighted this in her statement—the \$700 million commitment from federal Labor for Ellenbrook. Of course we would do that. We have to make sure that we are lobbying both sides of politics to get the best deal for WA. We will lobby federal Liberal and Labor governments to get the best deal.

Work is underway on the Swan River pedestrian bridge. It is the first time we have seen any work undertaken on the bridge compared with the previous government. There has been a commitment to the North Perth revitalisation. The new Lord Street project has commenced. I could go on and on through the list. They are just some of the things that have commenced up to October. Maybe we will get another hour in private members' business next time to go through the remainder of our achievements in our first year.

I think that in the past year we have helped get WA back on track. We have delivered some very core election commitments, and they are underway. The message from the member for Scarborough was we should not be delivering our election commitments. That was pretty much the content of her speech. Throughout her whole speech she was saying, "You shouldn't deliver it because people didn't expect you to deliver it." That, of course, was Roe Highway. We are serious about creating jobs in WA, investment certainty, reducing congestion, and of course we are serious about Metronet—a plan that people believe in and that we will deliver. If the opposition wants to fight against this plan, we will welcome a debate on Metronet yet again in another election, because in 2017 the public throughout this state overwhelmingly supported our plan for WA, our plan for jobs and our plan for infrastructure.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [5.46 pm]: I thank the Minister for Transport for standing before she could hear our comments. That is an illustration of her true character. Nonetheless, I would like to make a contribution to this motion. I will outline what I think will be over time—we can see it growing now—the weak link of this minister, which is her decision to pull money from the Perth Freight Link and the way she has handled that change. For many years the Labor Party has had a problem with the Perth Freight Link—or Roe 8 and 9. For those on the other side who are probably not listening, this project had been on the metropolitan region scheme since the 1950s. Land was purchased; in fact, the last purchase was for the Fremantle Eastern Bypass in 1973. It was a major part of planning for roads in Western Australia. It was something on which there was bipartisan support, at least until the Gallop–Carpenter Labor government, which built Roe 6 and 7, and maybe Roe 5—I cannot remember. It also committed to build Roe 8, but due to its desire to play political concerns around Fremantle by-elections and other elections, it decided to excise the Fremantle Eastern Bypass from the road reserve. It did that initially, I believe, in 1992. The Liberal government put it back in in 1994. Then it was excised and sold off for about \$17 million in 2001 or slightly after that. That was an act of planning bastardry, as my former colleague John Day once said. That meant, of course, that in the City of Fremantle and thereabouts—which has a port that we want to retain as a working port—there is a problem with an increasing number of trucks flowing down roads that are meant to be suburban routes, not truck routes. Labor governments have consistently tried to avoid addressing that problem. Willagee and Fremantle are safe seats for the Labor Party and, therefore, it will increasingly suffer the consequences of those decisions. We came into government committed. We have been asked whether we had a mandate. We won the 2008 election on the basis of our commitment to Roe 8

Mr P. Papalia: Thirty-two votes in one seat—whose was that?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It was mine. What was the issue? It was Roe 8. When we brought down our first budget in 2009–10, we immediately committed more than \$500 million to Roe 8. However, unfortunately, Mr Rudd came in federally and even though he personally, as well as the federal member of the area, Garry Gray, before Roe 8 —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Leader of the Opposition, I draw your attention to the motion that is before the house —

That this house notes that after one year in office, the Minister for Transport has not progressed any of Labor's Metronet projects, has failed to fully disclose information to the public about the progress on the Forrestfield–Airport Link, has failed to accept the \$1.2 billion in federal funding to improve road safety and productivity, and has awarded contracts without going to tender and providing a fair opportunity for businesses to bid for work.

The Leader of the Opposition might want to address the motion.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I understand, Madam Acting Speaker. I will go into all those points related to that. Do not worry; I am getting there. I have to put a bit of history and context around this.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We committed to it. The Rudd government would not support it, even though the Prime Minister at the time personally supported it. When Abbott came into government, we immediately started the project again. It has a long history; that is my point. When Rudd came in, he immediately committed to focus on productivity-enhancing infrastructure and picked Roe 8–9 as the optimum route. He committed a substantial amount of the funding for that project—80 per cent. He also encouraged us to develop a freight charge, not just for Roe 8 but all the way along the route. That charge would have funded the state's share and created a multimillion-dollar asset going forward. We developed that and took that to the last election.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

Up until the last minutes of the election campaign, the Leader of the Opposition at the time said that if the Labor Party won government, it would not rip up contracts. However, in the last few weeks of the campaign, the now Minister for Transport decided to follow the line of Victoria and said that a Labor government would rip up the Perth Freight Link contract. A couple of issues arose from that. The first is that the loss of the freight charge will cost this state hundreds of millions of dollars.

Mr P. Papalia: A road toll!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes, which the trucking industry was more than willing to pay.

Mr P. Papalia: So you're disappointed!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The government gave away an asset worth over \$1 billion. The government should not complain about fiscal problems when it squandered an asset worth over \$1 billion. That is the mark of the McGowan government. The government ripped up the contract. The government then threatened to stop all the work on the project. It said to the commonwealth that if it would not allow it to redirect the money, it would stop all the work on the project. Some 3 500 full-time employees were engaged on that project. The firms that had signed the contract had invested in infrastructure and purchased equipment, and they would have been left high and dry. The government's threat, led by the now Minister for Transport, was to say to the commonwealth that if it did not give it its way, it would destroy over 3 500 jobs. A mature commonwealth government, not wanting to see jobs destroyed, agreed to redirect that funding. However, the commonwealth forced the government to redirect that money in a couple of ways, particularly the Murdoch link, the Manning Road off-ramp and High Street. The problem is that when a government rips up a contract and redirects the money, it causes delay. The government may also be sued unless it gives something in exchange. There is also a legal liability. The government told the team that had the contract for the Perth Freight Link that it would give it work somewhere else. The government did not go to tender. When we have asked the government for the tender documents, it redacted the amount of money that it is paying. The problem is also that in many instances, there is no business case. The government then gets itself into real problems, because it has probably given the contract at too high a price, it has wasted state government money and it has to hide from public scrutiny. That is what happens when a government rips up contracts.

I now want to talk about the two projects that the commonwealth forced the government to do. As we have heard over and over again, the Perth Freight Link project, or Roe 8, has been rated the highest priority project by Infrastructure Australia. That is because of the serious congestion problem on High Street. The government made a preliminary business case for that project. The minister is very fond of that business case and makes multibillion-dollar decisions on the basis of it. I have pulled this from Wikipedia. I can give members a copy if they wish. It basically highlights the problem with the High Street area. It states that by 2031, High Street will be severely congested, and the intersection of High Street–Stirling Highway, which is where most trucks will turn, will be at level of service F—completely congested in the morning and evening peaks. Anyone who drives along High Street would know that is almost the case now. The government did not want to do that. The commonwealth government forced it to do it. It redirected the money elsewhere. The government says it has a business plan for that project, based on the work that was done and planned some years ago. The business plan states —

The proposed solution is to create a four-lane divided road with capacity for ultimate expansion to six lanes while retaining the current High Street as a local access road. The intersection with Stirling Highway will also be reconfigured to remove the sharp turns.

As I understand it, the government has not told anybody that it is preparing for a six-lane highway through that area because, by 2031, that is what will be needed. That highway will go past the golf course and the netball facility, and, indeed, be very close to the cemetery. There will also be retaining walls, and a roundabout, which will cause some problems for the government. The real point is this would not be necessary had the government kept the Perth Freight Link and the tunnel. The government said it would cost \$180 million. It was forced on the government. However, it will not solve the problems on Leach Highway. Anybody who goes anywhere near Leach Highway with the increasing truck traffic would know that is a significant gap.

The next project the government was forced to do was the Murdoch link. That project will cost about \$100 million. It will be a link from Kwinana Freeway to enable southern access to the Murdoch Activity Centre. The government did not want to do that project, but it is absolutely necessary. In 18 months, with the expansion in that area, there will be ultimate congestion. The government was forced to do that by the commonwealth, and good on it. The government asked Main Roads WA to look at that project. Main Roads considered four options and came up with its preferred option. However, the Minister for Transport ripped that up and said, "I don't want that. I want something else. I want what my fellow Labor Party members in the area want." There was no business case and no clear route. People were digging dirt there for months before they found the route. All the government did was

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p1146c-1173a

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get a costing. That is how the government is running infrastructure projects in this state. It is ripping up contracts, giving contracts without going to tender, giving contracts without any clear business case, and often giving contracts without a clear route. The government is avoiding addressing real congestion areas like High Street in Murdoch until it is forced to do so, and coming up with inferior routes. It is also not being truthful to the people of the area about the long-term nature of its commitments. But, more importantly, the government has no solution for the congestion on Leach Highway and surrounding areas. I am very confident in sitting back and watching that increase. Of course, the Minister for Transport accused us of trying to, I think, phone in accidents on Leach Highway. That was a stupid comment if ever I heard one.

The real problem the government has is that the commonwealth quite rightly said, “Okay, we redirected the money. We agreed to your reallocation”, and it doubled down and offered \$1.2 billion of additional money if the state government came back and discussed building Perth Freight Link. Any government committed to job creation would have done that. The minister said it is willing to negotiate with the commonwealth of any colour to get money for the state, but the state government is knocking back \$1.2 billion, plus the billion-dollar value of the Perth freight charge. If we put them together, that is an over \$2 billion project and the government is saying no to it. Why? Even worse, if the state government went to the commonwealth and said it wanted the additional \$1.2 billion and freight charge, it would not have to build Murdoch link or do the High Street upgrade—add another \$200 million to the pot. It has refused a project worth in the vicinity of \$2.2 billion. Why? Why would a government refuse a project worth \$2.2 billion which would create, in its own multipliers, 3 000 or 4 000 jobs?

Mr W.R. Marmion: It could fix up Leach Highway.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It could fix up Leach Highway. It would address an issue. The government gets what it wants and fulfils its political election commitments, plus addresses the congestion in the southern suburbs, plus brings in \$2.2 billion to invest in the state.

Mr W.R. Marmion interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It would be huge. Why would a government not do it? Why would it exclude that?

I can conclude only one thing. It does not have the leadership ability to say it is walking away from a commitment it made because it basically has higher priorities. The election commitment was that it did not want Perth Freight Link. The Labor Party has had a lot of problems with it for decades, but it does not have the state leadership required to say it can be flexible. It got what it wanted for those other projects and the funding for Metronet. I am sure the commonwealth will give it some additional money for major expansions and infrastructure, including Metronet, in the next budget or so, and on top of that the state government could pull in \$2.2 billion. Any government interested in job creation, investing in infrastructure and solving the budget problems in this state would immediately grasp onto that.

The state government could go to the commonwealth and say it has some real problems with the other route chosen because of the wetlands, and ask whether it can optimise the route. I am sure the commonwealth would entertain those discussions. But the government has to have discussions with the commonwealth to find out, and it refused. When the Premier was asked about it on the Gareth Parker show the other day, he just kind of laughed and said, “We did away with that. That’s not an issue. That’s in the past.” It is actually not in the past because as we go forward the need for that project will continue. As time goes by the government will squander \$20 million on once more examining the need for a port in the outer harbour. It is well known that we will not need that for a while. Even if it was built in the outer harbour in 15 years, the inner harbour will continue. We know that. That was all rubbish that the Labor Party was uttering; everyone knows that.

This government will rue the day that it did not grasp the opportunity it now has to pull together \$2.2 billion and invest it in those assets. The government has done some backflips—Schools of the Air and Perth Modern—that have not hurt it politically. It can machine this so that it gets what it wants elsewhere, the commonwealth tops up the additional Metronet funding, and the state government has a \$2.2 billion project for Roe 8. Why will the government not do it? I can suggest the reason. It is because the government is more interested in political pointscore than investing in the great state of Western Australia.

[Member’s time extended.]

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The government is more interested in grandstanding, rather than addressing some of the major issues we have.

I would like to talk about the Murdoch link, which is part of this. I indicated earlier that the Murdoch link was and is an absolutely necessary extension to get into the Murdoch precinct. I found it absolutely incredible that a government would not address that, given the importance of the Murdoch precinct—Fiona Stanley Hospital, a rehabilitation centre, an oncology centre, medihotels and a whole range of university facilities. I have been told

that 22 000 people will be living there in 10 to 15 years. There is no southern access to it. Main Roads Western Australia did a plan, communicated that plan all around the affected areas, and the government went out and overruled it.

Ms A. Sanderson: There was an election!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: No; the Murdoch link came after the election. Part of the election commitments was not to build the Murdoch link. This came after, was forced on the government by the commonwealth, and it agreed to do it. The state government told Main Roads to address the issues and do a plan, so it did. Main Roads communicated it to the community around there, particularly in Jandakot. The public would have liked Roe 8—it was overwhelmingly popular in the whole area—but the minister said, no, she wants something else. On what basis was that? On what basis was the minister interfering in the business plan and choice of route for a road to address a precinct? Political priorities. It was to ensure that traffic did not flow into the member for Willagee's area, as opposed to others. That is the only assessment we can come up with. I think the member for Jandakot should just move on from the Leeming area in his campaigning from now on. I do not think he did that well in those booths, but in the future he will get absolutely demolished. Anybody using Farrington Road now is blaming the existing level of congestion and the increased level of congestion on the Labor Party. The model the minister put forward basically puts heavy traffic on Farrington Road. So that is good.

The member for Bicton might as well be looking for a new job. When that High Street intersection goes in and people learn that the government is planning for, ultimately, for a six-lane road trench, beyond what there is now, and the truck traffic continues to escalate and it is eventually proved that the government wanted to back out of the outer harbour, her electorate will look around and say, "We were sold a dud." It will affect other areas like Willagee and Coogee. The Coogee North and Coogee areas are rapidly developing, largely with aspirational younger families, and the congestion in that area, particularly getting access to Kwinana Freeway, is absolutely horrendous, particularly getting into the Murdoch precinct or Fiona Stanley Hospital or even just getting to Kwinana Freeway.

They would have been the greatest beneficiaries of Perth Freight Link. They would have been able to move up Rockingham Road or Stock Road and get on and go non-stop to the south, the north or the east. But the government has stopped that. The Labor Party overwhelmingly got the votes of those communities, but eventually, as the congestion increases and the government is able to and will do nothing about it, they will come back and say, "We were sold a pup." That is what people in that area throughout the community are doing. I give government members a cast-iron guarantee that we in the Liberal Party will be assisting that campaign as vigorously as the Labor Party campaigned for Metronet. It was the Minister for Transport's idea. She came up with the bright idea to rip up the contract—it was not the Premier, it was the minister. She ripped up the contract, because that is what they did in Victoria, and redirected the money to other things, many of which were not project or shovel ready, and in some cases did not have a business plan. She delayed creating jobs and in doing that she created not one new job. She cannot take \$2.3 billion from an existing infrastructure project and put it on additional projects and say she created jobs. She can do that, but that is just complete utter nonsense and rubbish, which is what the government specialises in.

The real issue here is the problem the government gets into with the commonwealth government. The Turnbull government doubled down and said, "We will give you an additional \$1.2 billion. That means you don't have to spend the \$200 million on the High Street and Murdoch link, so that's \$1.4 billion and we'll give you the freight charge on top for your purposes." That is \$2.2 billion that the government knocked back. It does not seek it. It does not ask for it. I tell members what: asking that from the commonwealth government would put the state government in huge stead to get even more money for its other projects from the commonwealth. It wants the projects, quite rightly. It thinks it is absolutely necessary; it is in the top rank with Infrastructure Australia. It wants to invest in urban rail around the place and the government would get both. It could pull in a total investment of \$4 billion, easing its budget deficit problems in time. But the government will not do it. A real government committed to jobs, infrastructure and budget reform would jump at that chance. But the minister will not, because she is not really up to the task of being flexible enough to pursue what the state needs and what is on offer—it is not on offer for very long. Shorten will perhaps come in in a year's time—I do not know, it does not look good—but he will not offer that, no way. The government has a limited time in which it can grasp at \$2.2 billion and if it misses that, the community will hold it to account, with jobs lost, congestion worse and a lack of \$1 billion in income. Those areas that are most congested, as I mentioned, Coogee, Willagee and whatnot, might be safe Labor seats for now, but they are gentrifying, they are congested and the government is providing no solution for them at all. Indeed, when we raise the issue the minister denigrates it and says there is no issue at all. She says there is no problem with Leach Highway or access from Coogee. I guess that is one reason that proves she will be the government's weakest link going forward. She does a lot and talks a lot but she is going to undermine the government and I look forward to the government fomenting that and taking advantage of that over the next three years. She is a disaster.

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [6.13 pm]: I am quite keen to address a couple of points; I will not take too long. It gets a little frustrating hearing the opposition's claims about the Perth Freight Link when we had to endure that debacle. Just before I got the call, the Leader of the Opposition was talking about the weakest link. The weakest link, quite clearly, was the Perth Freight Link. It was an absurd plan from the beginning and that was obvious to anyone who was campaigning around the area. I am not just talking about those in my electorate, in Fremantle, but the more I spoke to people in East Fremantle in the electorate of Bicton and further afield, people understood that spending such a vast amount of money on a road that fell three kilometres short of the port, which is 120 years old and would have limited capacity in the modern economy, was absurd.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Ms S.F. McGURK: Anyone could see that and that is one of the reasons that the opposition lost so resoundingly. Whatever people thought about road versus rail, whatever people thought about congestion in the southern suburbs, anyone could see that this plan was ill conceived. In fact, it was no plan at all. Just then the Leader of the Opposition was saying that the member for Jandakot had reason to be a little afraid. The people in Riverton were concerned about traffic on Leach Highway. I just remind the opposition of the sort of swings that we had in the last election: in Jandakot, 19.4 per cent to Labor; in Riverton—Leader of the Opposition—8.3 per cent; in Willagee, 13 per cent to Labor; and in Bicton, 13.7 per cent. The former member for Alfred Cove was so confident of his position that he scuttled off to now be the member for Bateman. He did not want to contest these issues in his seat.

There are a couple of points I want to clarify. One is the claim by the opposition that Infrastructure Australia rated the Perth Freight Link so highly. It is true that it did end up assessing Perth Freight Link as a high priority from Western Australia's options, but that is because it was given very little alternative. What became clear in August 2015 was that Infrastructure Australia itself conceded that the Perth Freight Link had been hastily conceived and poorly planned.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Ms S.F. McGURK: The assessment was conducted by Infrastructure Australia. I am reading now from a report from the ABC in August 2015 —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members.

Ms S.F. McGURK: —in which Infrastructure Australia states —

...“at the time of the assignment (May 2015), the Perth Freight Link is not directly mentioned” in eight key strategic planning documents, ...

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Ms S.F. McGURK: The then government was so confident about the Perth Freight Link —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Members, I get that you have a different opinion; we get that, but the person you have to think about is Hansard, okay? You have made your point. You do not have to keep going because Hansard needs to listen. Thank you.

Ms S.F. McGURK: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. Just to repeat, by May 2015, in the 2014–15 state budget, there was no mention of Roe 8 or the Perth Freight Link—no mention at all. The assessment that had gone to Infrastructure Australia highlights that so confident was the government of the day in its plan, that there was no reference to the Perth Freight Link in the “State Planning Strategy 2050”, Directions 2031 and Beyond, the “Western Australian Regional Freight Transport Network Plan”, the draft “Perth Freight Transport Network Plan”, the draft state port strategic plan and the Fremantle port “Inner Harbour Port Development Plan”. None of those key strategic documents of the state mentioned Roe 8 or the Perth Freight Link. In fact, the plan was given some priority by Infrastructure Australia but let us remember that it was only given four proposals. The article continues —

The Infrastructure Australia report showed the freight link was selected from a shortlist of four proposals, culled from a list of 12 options.

The report showed the option of an outer harbour was never considered, and that of the 12 options, only the Perth Freight Link was subjected to any detailed assessment.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

p1146c-1173a

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

It is no wonder Infrastructure Australia thought the Perth Freight Link was a good deal; the former government gave it no choice. The former government gave it no detailed assessments at all. The article continues —

“A rapid BCR (Benefit Cost Ratio) was not completed for additional options to determine if the preferred option provided the greatest net benefits,” ...

That is what the Infrastructure Australia report stated. I want to remind people that when the opposition says that Perth Freight Link was considered the highest option for Western Australia by Infrastructure Australia, it is because it was given no other choices. In fact, a Senate committee was told something that is particularly relevant, considering the opposition's claimed frustration at the Minister for Transport's lack of business planning.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Shoosh!

Ms S.F. McGURK: It is quite challenging to keep my train of thought when there is a sort of constant sniping going on from the other side.

The ACTING SPEAKER: She is not having a personal go at you. I get when you have to respond. She is reading from a document. You have different opinions. You have given that different opinion and people are aware of it, so please let the speaker be heard in silence unless she personally has a go at you, then I get it—but shoosh.

Ms S.F. McGURK: As late as February 2017, ABC online reported that the Barnett government had yet to submit its full business case in relation to \$1.9 billion Perth Freight Link. The article states —

Infrastructure Australia still lists the project as one of the nation's high-priority infrastructure projects ...

But senior executives from the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure have told a Senate Estimates hearing in Canberra the full proposal for the project's second stage ... has not yet been received, assessed or approved.

So much for business cases—nothing there at all. There is a reason that the former government was flimsy in the information it gave to Infrastructure Australia—there was nothing to give. There was no business case and there was no solid plan. Remember there was Roe 8, that was one element, but the criticism before Perth Freight Link, Roe 8, was that it was a road to nowhere, so someone came up with a harebrained idea of making it the Perth Freight Link and putting the second stage, perhaps Roe 9, through to Stirling Bridge. We had three iterations of that stage of the project. The first option was along Stock Road, taking out D'Orsogna Smallgoods and homes along Leach Highway, which would have been not only expensive, but also hugely unpopular. The people of Moody Glen, the Smirkes and their neighbours, stood up for themselves very effectively and that option ended up being taken off the table. The second option was the proposal under the then Minister of Transport to look at the possibility of a tunnel along the old Fremantle eastern bypass route that would go through Clontarf Hill. That did not last long. What ended up being proposed was a diagonal tunnel from the end of Roe 8 through to somewhere near the corner of the High Street–Stirling Highway intersection or perhaps through to Stirling Bridge. That tunnel was intended to go under the suburbs of Beaconsfield and White Gum Valley. It was always such a patently absurd proposition, with absolutely no planning, no design and no business case. In fact, the only business case or rationale backing up this proposal was the Matusik Property Insights report, which was done by a property developer from Queensland who had never come over to WA, never looked at the alternatives such as the outer harbour or —

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

Ms S.F. McGURK: When the member has his time to speak, he can speak. I understand this issue very well. We followed it, very, very closely.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Okay, shoosh!

Ms S.F. McGURK: That property prices were allegedly to go up, as outlined in the Matusik report, was absolutely fanciful. It was such a flimsy report that tried to sell the benefits of having those people in White Gum Valley, Beaconsfield and Hilton having a tunnel under their houses. It was embarrassing. Now, of course, we know that tunnelling is not as straightforward as we were previously led to believe. We were still three kilometres from the port. It would have cost nearly \$2 billion and the road was still three kilometres from the port, with a plan that would deliver trucks to an already congested Stirling Bridge. It was no wonder that people in those electorates that I listed before could see the folly of this plan. People want sound planning, firm business cases and a clear alternative with a plan for the next 20, 50 and 100 years to take the growth in our freight network away from the metropolitan area; electorates like Fremantle, Cottesloe, Bicton and further along Leach Highway do not want a growth in freight traffic. We need to transition the growth and invest in a plan for the next 50 to 100 years. All of those reasons were blindingly obvious to the most casual observer, but clearly not to the then government. That is one of the many reasons that the Liberal Party lost government so resoundingly. Its plans for the Perth Freight

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Link and its scrambling for a rationale were too obvious in retrospect. In fact, I was reminded of a view that was reported in *WAtoday* on the eve of the election, 10 March 2017. It states —

An influential Perth businessman has broken ranks to defy government “groupthink” around the Perth Freight Link, ‘betting his career’ on an alternative plan for an Outer Harbour in Kwinana.

Cameron Edwards is director at corporate advisory, strategy and investment firm Mainsheet Capital.

The infrastructure and transport logistics specialist, who has worked with numerous government agencies including the Departments of Transport and Water and Main Roads WA, says consultants’ reports to the government on the PFL have been “compromised” in the effort to “back-engineer” the project for political convenience.

While much of the Roe 8 debate has focused on the Beeliar Wetlands, Mr Edwards says it has ignored WA’s desperate need for a port that can compete with those on the eastern seaboard.

I welcome the planning that is now being undertaken with careful consideration for what the state’s future needs will be in 20, 50 and 100 years. That is the sort of infrastructure planning we need in this state.

Finally, I wanted to address the issue of the intersection between High Street and Stirling Highway in the corner of my electorate. This has been a very contentious issue for a number of years, not because there was any argument that it needed upgrading or in fact any argument that there is a freight issue on Leach Highway. We concede that as well. There is a freight issue throughout the metropolitan area and a good long-term plan involves transitioning the growth out of the metropolitan area to an industrial area such as Kwinana. Under the then transport minister, Troy Buswell, there was finally a plan that involved 50 per cent funding from the state government and 50 per cent from the federal government; however, the scale of the redesign of that intersection between High Street and Stirling Highway could not be agreed between the local community, represented by the City of Fremantle and Main Roads. There was no dispute that the intersection needed improvement. The plan that Hon Troy Buswell ended up promoting involved a capacity for six lanes, but importantly it would allow a curve by which trucks would be able to proceed around that intersection at about 60 kilometres an hour. That was an absurd proposition for the local community. In any case, they would only arrive at the traffic lights on Marmion Street.

Mr D.C. Nalder: Sorry?

Ms S.F. McGURK: If the member for Bateman had been listening and not talking, he would have been able to hear what I was saying—that trucks would proceed along High Street to go into the port and be able to continue at about 60 kilometres an hour around that intersection only to arrive at the lights at Marmion Street. That was why the Fremantle council and the local community rejected the scale of the intersection upgrade proposed by then transport minister Troy Buswell. In any event, this dispute between the state government and the City of Fremantle and the local community was eclipsed by the Perth Freight Link proposal that came with the federal government’s allocation of funds in 2014–15. We welcome the current change of attitude under the now Minister for Transport who worked with the local community’s representatives through the City of Fremantle and other locally elected representatives such as me, the member for Bicton and the federal member for Fremantle, to try to get the balance right between the local amenity and the community that lives around that area. Many people live around that intersection. East Fremantle Primary School is not that far away and, importantly, at the netball centre at Gibson Park Reserve there are 10 000 people—players, volunteers and families—on the weekends during the season.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms S.F. McGURK: It is incredibly dangerous and congested. The proposed upgrade that has been designed, on which feedback is now being sought from the community, gets the scale right between ensuring that traffic flows smoothly around the intersection while understanding that it must accommodate community amenity and people living and recreating around that area. It is not perfect; I understand that some people want some pedestrian access on the Stirling Highway side. We will listen to that feedback and see if any amendments can be accommodated. Perhaps they can, but perhaps they cannot. This is in stark contrast to the freight link, which had a truck superhighway barreling through the suburb and delivering those trucks through to Stirling Bridge in what could only be described as a trucking funnel because there was no proposal or funding for the Stirling Highway. This is Perth Freight Link.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Stop now! You do yourselves a disservice.

Ms S.F. McGURK: I wanted to make those points about the huge flaws in the Perth Freight Link. It has never been popular. People understand the shortcomings. In fact, the kind of nastiness and a vision that has been stirred up by these issues in the local community has led to some very nasty campaigns online, particularly directed at the member for Bicton. A Cockburn councillor was accosted at a funeral with pro-Roe 8 signage. That sort of campaign has been very nasty and it does not serve anyone well. I am not saying that members of the opposition

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are guilty of that or responsible for it, but it has been a very nasty campaign overall. I think that most sensible people understand that the way to resolve truck congestion on Leach Highway and throughout the suburbs is to move freight growth away from the metropolitan area to an industrial area. That will be good for the next 20 years, the next 50 years, and the next 100 years.

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [6.34 pm]: It is a pleasure to speak in private members' business and have an opportunity to comment. Given that discussion tonight has centred around Perth Freight Link, I think it is appropriate that I dispel some of the myths, misinformation and ignorant statements about it that have been made in this chamber tonight. I want to give members a bit of background and a few facts that, maybe, the member for Fremantle could do with listening to.

This project started off as an upgrade to High Street that was initiated by Hon Alannah MacTiernan when she was the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. It was a result of the removal of the Fremantle eastern bypass. The decision was taken that given that the Fremantle eastern bypass was being removed that they needed to do something to attach to something that some people classify as Roe 10. That is the upgrade of Stirling Highway from the river through to High Street. When Labor talks about a road to nowhere, Roe 8 and Roe 9 were a connection of the Roe Highway from the Kwinana Freeway through to Stirling Highway. That is what the connection was. The member for Fremantle just said that this traffic would have stopped at lights at Marmion Street. That was incorrect because the Perth Freight Link included grade separation at Marmion Street. It absolutely did! The member for Fremantle just said that trucks will be stopping at Marmion Street.

When the former Liberal government was in opposition in 2008 it went to the election saying that it wanted to build Roe 8 and made it an election commitment. We needed funding and support from the commonwealth government and that did not come until the second term. I will share with members that the process for the High Street upgrades had got to a point where there was federal funding—funnily, the number was around \$118 million–\$120 million. The government seems to be using the same numbers that were there for me in 2013. We had \$118 million to \$120 million to upgrade High Street through to Carrington Street, then the federal government said that it was prepared to support Roe 8. I had conversations with the federal government and said, “Look, you’re creating this connection across to Stock Road for the movement of freight and we have this upgrade on High Street. If we do that, we’re going to have a pinch point in between. We need to solve for in between.” Main Roads worked on it and that is when it came up with the upgrades for Stock Road. We went to the federal government and told it we needed to look at this. It supported it and offered up funding of \$925 million dollars of a \$1.57 billion project. At that time—this is what members opposite might not understand—I went to the Premier and said, “Look, I want to take the time to go back over this because I feel uncomfortable about certain elements.” The one element that I was really uncomfortable about, for a couple of reasons, was bringing the traffic down through High Street. It would involve a double trench through Royal Fremantle Golf Course and the initial planning material that came from Main Roads to me from Hon Alannah MacTiernan’s plans was that it would eventually be a six-lane highway. I sat there and looked at ripping up Royal Fremantle Golf Course. It also involved the potential removal of graves from the Fremantle cemetery, some of which were less than two generations old. It had the potential to impact on Palmyra residents and the commercial businesses, which were Koala Self Storage, D’Orsogna, Gage Roads Brewing and other commercial premises up Stock Road. I went to Main Roads and said that I wanted to revisit it and wanted it to explore all the options. I told the Premier that I needed 12 months and that I would wear the political heat on it while we worked to see whether there was not a better solution for the state. Main Roads investigated this for 12 months and studied 22 different options. As I said in this house when I was the minister, these options included trying to get under the river all the way into the port to see whether we could remove it altogether. It involved looking at going under the Fremantle eastern bypass. It looked at all sorts of different options. The recommendation that came back from Main Roads was that it believed the best solution was to bring it down Stock Road then tunnel under Winterfold Road through to Stirling Highway. It had costed it and believed that it would cost \$300 million more, which is where the \$1.9 billion came in. So it went from \$1.6 billion to \$1.9 billion. Main Roads looked at the benefit–cost ratios and the benefit–cost ratios were pretty much aligned on the \$1.6 billion and \$1.9 billion. I touched base with the federal government and ran through the economics of the two situations and it supported the state government proceeding with an option that we believed would cost an extra \$300 million. At that time, we knew that within the \$1.6 billion for the project, there were property acquisition costs in the order of \$400 million. What is really interesting is that when we formally tendered the Roe 9 proposal, despite Josh Wilson’s totally ignorant claims in *The Weekend West* a couple of weekends ago about an \$8 billion tunnel, we found that the cost of the tunnel for Roe 9 would have come in at \$550 million under budget. In fact, using the Roe 9 tunnel option would have been cheaper than coming down Stock Road and High Street. That was a new paradigm for Western Australia. For the first time, we had actually proved that it would be cheaper to go underneath than it would be to do the work above ground. Members may not be aware that the most expensive piece of road that has been built in Western Australia to this point is the

upgrade to Great Eastern Highway. It cost over \$80 million a kilometre. It is on the surface. What is the issue? The issue is that it is necessary to acquire properties and relocate services.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Morley!

Mr D.C. NALDER: All of a sudden, we had the potential to redirect vehicles away from the local community and we could do it for a lower price than it would have cost to build it on the surface. I believe that is a lost opportunity for Western Australia at this time.

This leads into a couple of other points. The Labor Party took a scattergun approach to the election. As the then minister, I would try to build these alternatives to see whether we could find a better solution, and the opposition would run an argument on the Beeliar wetlands. The moment we started to respond on environmental issues, the opposition would jump to the outer harbour, and the moment we started to respond on the outer harbour, the opposition would jump to the last mile. From there, the opposition would jump to the Palmyra residents, and it would just keep going around. The opposition used that strategy effectively. It is the same strategy that was used in Victoria. It was used effectively by the opposition.

Let me step through some of these points so that members clearly understand. From an environmental perspective, we know that the majority of the diesel pollutants come from trucks spending time at stoplights. We know that creating a freeway system can keep those trucks moving, because the highest risk incidents on the roads occur at stoplights with the interactions between cars and trucks. We wanted to make it safer and we wanted to improve the environmental outcome. We know that over a 10-year period, it would have saved in the order of 450 000 tonnes of diesel emissions. We would have removed 450 000 tonnes of diesel emissions over a 10-year period. The Environmental Protection Authority went through the environmental process and it had no concerns about the wetlands, because the wetlands area that was being impacted on was less than half a per cent of the Beeliar wetlands. We were not going to dig up that half a per cent; we were going to build a bridge over it. We were going to spend \$35 million upgrading the surrounding areas and removing some of the invasive species that had grown throughout that area. We wanted to improve the local environment. The EPA did not have a concern about the six hectares of wetlands in the 196-hectare Roe 8 reserve. It had concerns about the 30 hectares of pristine virgin bush, not the 60 hectares of degraded bush or the 100 hectares of gutless sand that had nothing on it. The responsibility that was put on the government was that if those 30 hectares were to be knocked down, it needed to set aside another 600 hectares as permanent Bush Forever to ensure that it delivered a far better outcome for the state. I can tell members that the state purchased Ralph Sarich's 1 000-hectare farm at White Cliffs, which backed onto a national park, of which 600 hectares were to be used as a permanent offset for the 30 hectares that were going to be destroyed. They are the environmental aspects. Members also forgot to acknowledge that this was rerouted away from Bibra Lake; it was going to follow the high-voltage powerlines. So, by not doing it, we will be worse off from an environmental aspect than we would be if we had undertaken the project.

What is interesting about the outer harbour is that the desktop environmental assessment that was commissioned by Alannah MacTiernan states that the authors do not see any circumstance in which an outer harbour is even possible. I hope that we can build an outer harbour.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.C. NALDER: They said that it was a desktop assessment, not a full environmental assessment. It still needs to go through that assessment. But there are environmental challenges with the seagrass on the Cockburn shelf. We cannot turn a blind eye to that being a major issue. That assessment was based on three million twenty-foot equivalent units. What the government is talking about in pushing ahead with the outer harbour is a three million container port, while at the same time it is talking about closing the existing capacity of Fremantle port. The current capacity of Fremantle port is estimated to be about two million TEU a year.

Ms S.F. McGurk: It's 1.4 or 1.2.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The 2002 assessment that was commissioned by Alannah MacTiernan suggested that it would be between 1.2 and 1.4 million. That was back in 2002. The advice that I received from Fremantle Ports—I said it in the house when I was the minister—was that the current capacity of the port is around two million TEU and that for about \$300 million, it could potentially expand the port capacity to three million TEU. What I said in this chamber as the minister is that the issue is not the capacity of Fremantle port; the issue is the capacity that we as a community are prepared to accept at Fremantle port.

Sorry, Madam Acting Speaker, I saw you waving.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): I am waving at the scouts.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Hi, scouts. You have thrown me off!

What I have said in this house before is that it is not the current capacity of Fremantle port that is the issue; it is the capacity that we as a community are prepared to accept. Let us be clear: the anticipated cost of three million TEU at the outer harbour, along with all the works that will need to happen onshore, is between \$5 billion and \$6 billion. But here is the key: the Premier said at the election that he would close the Fremantle harbour at today's throughput, which was around 750 000 TEU, but I believe it has gone up by about seven per cent, so it is around the 800 000 TEU mark. The member for Fremantle was talking about a harbour strategy for 50 to 100 years. If we are going to have a harbour strategy for 50 to 100 years but the government is going to cap the current capacity at Fremantle at 800 000 TEU, it means that the outer harbour will run out of room in about 50 years. If the government is going to cap the current capacity of the Fremantle harbour and look at a 50 to 100-year strategy, it will have to look at the capacity to grow to around six million TEU, which is double the size of any consideration that is currently being given to the outer harbour.

Let us also talk about road versus rail. This is another bit of misinformation that continues to be espoused by the government. Currently, WA puts more than double the percentage of containers on rail than does any other capital city in Australia. We currently operate at around 13 or 14 per cent. It moves up and down a little bit depending on what is going in and out. However, we have always had a goal to shift that towards 30 per cent. When I talk to industry experts, they say that if we ever got to 30 per cent, it would be world's best practice. However, a minimum of 70 per cent of freight would still be carried by truck. As I have said previously in this house, Singapore removed the rail and now moves 100 per cent of its freight by truck. That includes what it shifts to Malaysia. Domestically, in Singapore about five million twenty-foot equivalent units is carried by truck. That is the most efficient mode of transport for freight, because it restricts the level of double handling. If freight is shifted by rail to Kenwick or Welshpool, it then has to be put on a truck to go to the next place, so we end up shifting it mostly by truck anyway. One of the challenges we face when we say we want to shift freight by rail is: rail to where? Western Australia does not have the population in regional areas that is the case in other states, which have to shift a high percentage of freight over longer distances. That is one of the challenges with shifting containers by rail.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.C. NALDER: There is another point that I think the government has missed. I have talked about this over and over. I will give members the full story to give some background to what happened. I had a conversation with the federal government, and it said it is prepared to fund Roe 8, but it wants to name it the Perth Freight Link. It said it will put in the majority of the money, because it can see the productivity benefits for heavy vehicles, on the basis that we look at implementing a charge for using the road, and we look at private equity. The private equity I will leave for another day, because, in my view, we could do it a lot better by taking it on ourselves, and I convinced the federal government of that. I am happy to explain that away.

When I saw the Premier about the freight charge, he said that in no way would his government ever be involved in a toll road. I talked to him about looking at the productivity of vehicles leaving the port and whether we could work with the trucking industry to determine whether we could share the productivity gains and use some of those productivity gains to fund the infrastructure. I organised a meeting with the transport industry and Main Roads WA and we talked about it. The initial reaction from the transport industry was totally negative, as we would expect, because we were talking about trying to charge them. I said, "This is the logic. You guys are coming through the city, and you have to stop at traffic lights. You have got the cost of labour and the cost of fuel; so, time, fuel and maintenance." I said, "If we were to look at those three productivity measures, you could put 50 per cent in your own pocket, and we would take the other 50 per cent to fund the infrastructure." I said, "If we could make that work, would you be interested, because, without it, you will continue to have a less effective means of transport through the metropolitan area?" I said also that if we could prove that up, it might become a model that could be rolled out across the metropolitan area to enable vehicles to be shifted in a more efficient and effective manner. I said, "I want you to work with Main Roads on this. I do not want to dictate to you. I want you to be part of it". They agreed to do that.

What is fascinating is that when we first started this work, Main Roads believed that the productivity gain would be around 60c a kilometre. That meant that the initial conversations were around 30c a kilometre for the trucking industry and 30c a kilometre for the government. They spent a good year working on this. I said to Main Roads, "We are just finishing Gateway WA, and we have to do NorthLink. If we are going to have a charge, I want to look across the whole of this infrastructure while it is new." That was the whole 84 kilometres. Main Roads came back to me and said, "You wouldn't believe this. We are discounting it, but we estimate that across those three productivity measures, the overall benefit to the industry will be around \$1.09 a kilometre." I said, "Holy cow! What does that mean?" They said, "Over 30 years, we are talking \$14.8 billion." I said, "If we were to take 50c and leave 59c for the industry, what does that mean?" They said it will be \$6.8 billion to the state government and \$8 billion back to the industry. The net present value of that \$6.8 billion is \$3.5 billion. The total cost of Perth Freight Link, Gateway WA and NorthLink is \$1.35 billion. If we were to take 50c in the dollar, it would have a net present value of \$3.5 billion. This would potentially be the first piece of infrastructure that would pay

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 21 March 2018]

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Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Simone McGurk; Mr Dean Nalder

for itself. This is what I do not understand. Main Roads said to me, just before I left the ministry, this will be one hundred million bucks a year for the state, and the transport industry will not support it. I will share with members that when Colin decided not to proceed with Roe 9, they went out publicly and criticised it and said if we want them to pay a charge, they need to also have Roe 9. They were on board with that. We knew that if we got these projects done, we could work out how to fund the next lot. We could remove the traffic lights from Stock Road to Kwinana. We could look at Tonkin Highway south. We could look at the orange route to get trucks in from Northam. That is an opportunity that has been missed. That is a revenue opportunity that the state has walked away from.

I want to make another point. We talk about the outer harbour, and I have mentioned that before. The advice I was getting was that if we were to start the outer harbour process today, it would be 15 years before we would shift the first container there. In 15 years, this connection into Fremantle would have been paid off. If we were then to shift the whole of Fremantle port out, we would be providing freeway access for the people of the City of Fremantle, which is the second most important city in the metropolitan area. We would provide freeway access to the hospitals, to Kwinana freeway, to the airport and to the hills. If we were to restrict the port, we would be looking at a high density population at Fremantle. Why should the people of Fremantle not have freeway access to connect to the other freeways, to the major hospitals and to the airport? Why is the government restricting the people of Fremantle from having that access, when we had a potential mechanism that would have funded that for those people? The misinformation and the arguments about this project, which would have been fantastic for Western Australia, drive me crazy. That is a huge opportunity that has been forgone.

Ms A. Sanderson: MAX would have been good!

Mr D.C. NALDER: We are talking about the Perth Freight Link. For my last six minutes I will now move to Metronet. I thank the member for Morley for the segue. Can someone in the government tell me which of these Metronet projects is not in the Perth and Peel transport plan developed by the last government? None of them! They are all in there! Strike me dead! Every one of the Metronet projects is in there. So what is the difference here? It is just the label. It is just the badging that we have put on a new transport project. The government is calling it Metronet. Every one of those projects is in the Perth and Peel transport plan, for \$3.5 million. The only difference is how we to get to Ellenbrook, and the timing of when we undertake that project.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.C. NALDER: There is a train line in the Perth and Peel transport plan. Look it up. The only difference is how we get to Ellenbrook, and the timing. I have not said anything wrong. That is a fact. That is all in the Perth and Peel transport plan. Members opposite are forgetting some fundamental planning guidelines for the development of Perth—that is, they are chasing urban sprawl. We are not saying that these projects are not important. However, we need public transport to be more effective.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 7.00 pm
