

FREMANTLE — NEW ROAD AND RAIL BRIDGE

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

I refer to documents produced by the government in 2012 for Infrastructure Australia that call for a new Fremantle road and rail bridge.

- (1) Do these documents not show that the Fremantle port cannot expand without a new road and rail bridge?
- (2) Is building the Perth Freight Link without a new traffic bridge not a waste of time?
- (3) Is the minister convinced that the Fremantle Traffic Bridge is safe?

Mr D.C. NALDER replied:

(1)–(3) I really find this debate amazing because I keep looking at the comments in the former press releases put out by Alannah MacTiernan when she was the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure in the former Labor government. When it comes to —

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany! Minister, can you address the question, please.

Mr D.C. NALDER: We will talk about the Fremantle Traffic Bridge and then we will talk about Stirling Bridge—there are two of them there. When it comes to the Fremantle Traffic Bridge, there is a life expectancy of another 10 to 15 years. With regard to the safety of that bridge, one of the areas that we were concerned about was the two incidents in which boats veered into the railway bridge. Some support work is being undertaken right now to ensure that both the rail bridge and the old Fremantle Traffic Bridge are safe from further collisions involving vessels. Ten to 15 years is the time line being put on the old traffic bridge. It is a similar time line that has been put on Stirling Bridge. The capacity of the port can continue to grow and the Stirling Bridge can handle that. However, we know that in creating a freight corridor, there are two things that occur. The first—I reiterate this point—is improved safety on our roads. I do not know whether the member for Fremantle, the shadow transport minister, or even the Leader of the Opposition, has a truck licence, but I have had a truck licence for over 30 years. Anyone who has driven a heavy vehicle down a road —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members for Willagee and Warnbro!

Mr D.C. NALDER: Mr Speaker —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Willagee, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I would like to make one additional point. My wife's first cousin, a professional truck driver, had a young lady pull up and then stop at an orange traffic light right in front of him. He went over the top and killed her. He was exonerated, but he has had to live with that for the rest of his life. We are talking about thousands of trucks coming out of Fremantle port. This is a serious matter, as much as the member for Cannington might like to laugh about it. Every set of lights that we take away —

Mr W.J. Johnston: How many traffic lights will they have to use?

The SPEAKER: Member for Cannington, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Willagee, I call you for the second time.

Mr W.J. Johnston: The minister is unbelievably stupid!

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

Mr D.C. NALDER: Every set of lights that we take out from trucks having to pull up all of a sudden will make those roads safer. I shared with members last week that incidents on Leach Highway are more than double the rest of the metropolitan average. Thousands of trucks are coming out of that port on a daily basis. If we want to do something about the outer harbour, that will take 10 to 15 years. I have always said that this is not about inner versus outer; this is about both. But we cannot do anything there. The port will continue to grow and the activity will continue to grow. Every set of lights, all the way through from the freeway to the port, that we take out will make those roads safer. Guess what? The Transport Workers' Union agrees! The opposition wants to go on and on about this not being a good project. I quote *The West Australian* from Monday, 17 August —

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

Dr M.D. Nahan: No!

Mr D.C. NALDER: No. They complain. They are telling us not to do this project, yet here is the press release from Alannah MacTiernan back on Friday, 4 April 2008. The member for Cannington might like to listen to this seeing I am so stupid! The press release is headed “Freight network reform continues on High Street” and states —

The Minister said High Street was part of the major east-west transport route linking the Kewdale freight terminal with the Fremantle Inner Harbour and carried a high rate of heavy vehicles daily.

That press release was put out after she sold off the Fremantle Eastern Bypass, when she said she could not justify the investment in infrastructure but immediately began planning to put heavy traffic through High Street. This is a disgrace from the Labor Party. It should be ashamed of it.