

CORONAVIRUS — TRANSPORT PROJECTS

**473. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Premier:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's unprecedented investment in transport infrastructure right across regional Western Australia, which is supporting the economy as it recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Can the Premier update the house on this government's efforts to secure a federal government commitment to its regional road safety program and advise the house how the program will not only improve safety on country roads, but also support jobs?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Murray–Wellington for her excellent commitment to regional Western Australia. She has been a strong supporter of the regional road safety program. This government has driven that program through the Minister for Transport, who has put it on the national agenda. I am pleased to see that the commonwealth government has committed to it across Australia. I raised this project with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Transport raised it repeatedly at national meetings. We did the policy work behind it to show the cost benefits of this program and how it would not only create jobs, but also save lives across regional Australia, especially regional Western Australia. We got it listed on the Infrastructure Australia priority list and I am pleased that we were able to announce it in conjunction with the commonwealth government on Sunday. Initially, it will be \$100 million from both the state and commonwealth governments—that is, \$80 million from the commonwealth and \$20 million a year from the state government.

In the initial part of this program, we will be able to get on and fix 1 400 kilometres of roads across regional Western Australia with low-cost treatments to improve safety, including sealing shoulders and putting in place audible edge lines and wide centre lines. Those are designed to prevent single vehicle accidents, in particular the run-off-road crashes that kill and maim so many people across regional WA. Single vehicle run-off-road crashes are the major cause of trauma in regional WA. Modelling indicates that this program will be able to reduce that trauma by up to 60 per cent across regional Western Australia.

The good thing about these projects is that they are shovel ready; therefore, we can get this project underway very quickly. Obviously, the state has brought our share of funding for this program to the table. As part of this program, roads in every region across Western Australia will obtain improvements. We will see some significant improvements to South West Highway, through the member for Murray–Wellington's electorate; Brookton Highway; Albany Highway; Great Northern Highway; and sections of Vasse Road and Sues Road, in the electorate of Vasse. In fact, it will be in every region. This builds on our commitment to the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, the Tom Price–Karratha road and the Albany ring-road, and all our government's excellent work with the commonwealth to secure commonwealth funding for these projects.

This is a program that I think the Minister for Transport can be justifiably proud of. She is the one who came up with the idea, promoted it nationally, put it on the agenda of the Deputy Prime Minister and ensured that it secured support not only in Western Australia, but also across the entire country. Many people's lives will be saved because of the work of this transport minister in Western Australia.