

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE — KIMBERLEY REGION

618. Ms D.G. D'ANNA to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's record \$5.3 billion investment in roads in regional Western Australia. Can the minister please update the house on the work to improve major roads in the Kimberley, including the construction of the new Fitzroy River Bridge, and can the minister outline this government's commitment to regional WA compared with that of those opposite?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for Kimberley for that question. Of course, a lot of work is being undertaken at the moment to cross the Kimberley, in particular in relation to the Fitzroy River and the new bridge that is being built to support the reconnection across the river. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent. In particular, we have seen a major milestone met over the past week for the Fitzroy River. The seven piers have been built and we are now constructing the deck over that river. From the contract commencing in March to being at this point now at which the deck is being constructed with an incremental launch process is a magnificent milestone. We have done it through the cooperation of the local community and industry and through government. We are employing hundreds of workers, including 132 local people being employed on the project, and \$11 million has been spent on Aboriginal owned businesses. The key point I want to make is that there has been cooperation and coordination across industry, whether it be the concrete yards or the steel producers, to get the bridge to this point. We look forward to further progress being made very soon. As I said, it is an incremental launch. The first section has been launched and a second section will be launched through this week.

Of course, we have commenced sealing Tanami Road, work is underway on Great Northern Highway in particular, and further works are happening across the Kimberley, including further works at Cape Leveque Road and other roads in the area.

Members will be appreciative of the work that has been undertaken, but it is always good to see what the opposition priority is on these matters. The opposition member in that area who has been quite critical of the work undertaken in that area is now very much focused on the city in Cottesloe. Members will want to know about this, because it is quite interesting. We have seen the Nationals WA wanting to delve into Liberal Party seats. The National Party wants to chase densely populated areas, but it seems there is a lockout from the seat of Cottesloe—a lockout! On Saturday, there is to be a Cottesloe traffic forum, at which will be the member for Cottesloe, the opposition spokesperson on Metronet—or opposition spokesperson against Metronet—and Hon Neil Thomson, MLC, shadow Minister for Planning; Transport. As I recall, the Leader of the Opposition is the shadow spokesperson on transport. What has happened, Leader of the Opposition? Has he lost the shadow Minister for Transport position? Is there a lockout? What is happening? Not only is the member for Cottesloe locking out the National Party, he has taken their portfolios, too!

Ms J.J. Shaw: Just like Scomo!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Good one. Hon Neil Thomson swore himself in as the shadow Minister for Transport!

I am upset on the Leader of the Opposition's behalf. I am incensed on his behalf that the member for Cottesloe—who I know said, "just ignore it" because I just heard him—is holding a traffic forum in the western suburbs because of density, but it is the Nationals WA members who are going after densely populated areas, so we would think that they would want to be invited. Members, I do not know what is happening! I am incensed and disappointed on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition that the upper house member for the Kimberley is coming down to hold a traffic forum in Cottesloe, pretending to be the opposition's spokesperson for transport. I do not know what is happening over there. There are six of them; we would think that they could sort out who is the opposition's spokesperson for transport—I do not know!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Really? As I said, I am offended on the Leader of the Opposition's behalf. I will give the Leader of the Opposition the flyer. I would like to see him turn up and talk about those traffic issues in the western suburbs and, in particular, make sure to outshine the Liberal Party member for Kimberley who is pretending to be the shadow Minister for Transport.