

RAILCAR MANUFACTURING — C-SERIES TRAINS

162. Ms E.L. HAMILTON to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the WA Labor government's historic decision to return local railcar manufacturing to WA.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the progress of the WA railcar program, including the rollout of our new locally manufactured Metronet C-series trains?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this job-creating railcar program compares with the record of those opposite?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. We now have a date for when the first locally made train will come onto our public transport network, members. On Monday, 8 April, our first C-series train made here in Bellevue will go onto the network and be part of our public transport services. It has been an incredible journey from when the Liberal Party closed the Midland Workshops many, many decades ago. Since then, ad hoc decisions were made about how to source our trains, but we made an election commitment in 2017 to bring back railcar manufacturing to Western Australia—and we have done it. I remember at the time of the commitment people told us it could not be done. There were comments from the Liberal and National Parties saying, “Why would you bring an industry back from a bygone era? Why would you manufacture locally?” The reason is that it is cheaper, the railcars are better and it creates local jobs and training.

Our new C-series train is 143 metres long. It is a six-car train fitted with 400 seats, capable of carrying more than a thousand passengers, with more doors for quick access. These trains will initially run north and south on the Mandurah–Yanchep rail line managing more than 103 000 daily passenger boardings. This is about supporting local jobs and local manufacturing. As I said, over 50 per cent of the railcar is local content. More than 150 people are employed at Bellevue, plus all the businesses that feed into that manufacturing, including those building bogie frames, the pantographs, the passenger seats and a number of other components all made by local businesses.

There will be a commemorative first journey on Sunday, 7 April with a lottery for 150 places for the community to be on that first train. People can access —

Mr R.S. Love: Aren't there 1 000 seats?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We will be inviting a lot of people, like the people from the Midland Workshops who the opposition sacked, for example. All those workers who have been building it will be on there, because they are local workers, members. So, yes, we will make room for those train enthusiasts, including those the opposition sacked 30 years ago, those who love our public transport system and the workers out there. We are making room for them, members. We are making room for members of the public. People can go to mysaytransport.wa.gov.au to enter the lottery.

As I said, this was a policy that the Liberal and National Parties said could not be achieved. It is one of the proudest achievements to be making our trains in WA to go onto the rail network, and I cannot wait to see those passengers boarding that locally made train on the first normal service on a Monday morning. Western Australians will be proud that we brought back railcar manufacturing to Western Australia.