

METRONET — PROJECTS

**783. Ms H.M. BEAZLEY to the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the Cook Labor government's record investment in public transport infrastructure that will benefit generations to come.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the government's signature Metronet program, including its support for local jobs and businesses in WA?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house the overwhelming level of support for accessible public transport in our WA community?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

I thank the member for Victoria Park for that question. I just have to start by commenting on that extraordinary supplementary question from the member for Vasse. We saw Zak Kirkup give up seven days before the last election—not 17 months, which is what the member for Vasse just did!

- (1)–(2) In relation to Metronet, we saw the extraordinarily good employment figures that came out today, which shows the state unemployment rate to have fallen to 3.3 per cent in September. The big contributors to the strong employment activity across the state are not only strong private sector investment activity, but, of course, government investment activity. Thousands of people are employed on our projects across the state. When we look at the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, we see local businesses and local Aboriginal people being employed. In respect of Metronet, more than 10 000 people are employed on our Metronet projects. These include the Forrestfield–Airport Link project and the Thornlie–Cockburn Link project. The Thornlie–Cockburn Link project is very much well underway; we have seen a lot of activity in that area recently. Of course, there is also the Ellenbrook and Yanchep lines.

The member for Vic Park knows that hundreds of workers are getting ready for work on level crossing removals in Victoria Park and Cannington, offsite and onsite. Western Power is involved in the relocation of transmission lines and 532 pre-cast concrete beams have been completed. There is work around the state supporting employment and supporting families. Every time I meet people on those sites—I visited one just recently—they come up and say, “We just love these projects. We want more projects.” That is the view of everyone employed in those projects.

Yesterday I unfortunately missed question time, but we saw a couple of things from the opposition. We had the first question on Metronet in 68 question times, and it had to be on the first day I was not here! That is why I had to stand up and talk about this, because I missed out yesterday!

In relation to the question of disruption, I again state that we apologise for the disruption caused by these projects, but disruption is part of getting things done. What was the former Liberal–National government's approach to disruption as a result of building public transport? It did not disrupt anything, because it did not do anything! If it does not do anything, it will not disrupt anyone. It did not disrupt the people of Ellenbrook because it never built them a rail line. It did not disrupt the people of Mirrabooka because it never built MAX light rail. It never built anything.

There will be some impacts on the Mandurah line this weekend as we do further works for the Thornlie–Cockburn Link. We are also continually trying to provide information for those impacted by the Armadale line transformation. We will be holding more community days and providing more information so that people are aware of what is coming.

Again, the disruption is something that we apologise for, but it is part of getting projects done. We are proud of transforming the state with our record infrastructure spend, and we are proud of our record employment.