

NORTH GREENBUSHES–BUNBURY RAIL LINE

8314. Mr M.P. Murray to the Minister for Transport

In relation to the North Greenbushes to Bunbury rail line and the election promise of \$20 million to upgrade this line, I ask:

- (a) does the Government have a plan to upgrade this rail line within the next 2 years; and
 - (i) if yes, what monies have been set aside in the budget for this upgrade;
 - (ii) if yes, when will works start on the rail line and what is the expected completion date;
 - (iii) if no, have promised funds been allocated to another source;
 - (iv) if no, will the works on the rail line ever be in the Governments forward planning to be completed as per their election promise; and
 - (v) if no, what care and maintenance is carried out on this line;
- (b) what are the future plans for this rail line; and
- (c) have freight users of this line been consulted regarding future plans and their expectations and benefits to this line being reopened for use?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL replied:

The Department of Transport advises:

- (a) The State Government is continually reviewing plans around the viability of the North Greenbushes to Bunbury rail line.
 - (i)–(ii) Not applicable
 - (iii) As the woodchip industry at the time agreed a commercially viable rail service was not achievable and in view of the then uncertainty regarding the supply of timber, funds were allocated to the Avon to Albany rail re-sleepering project.
 - (iv) The State Government does not rule out considering future investment in the rail line should the service become financially viable.
 - (v) Brookfield Rail carries responsibility for the upkeep of the line and corridor.
- (b) Brookfield Rail will continue to operate the railway under its lease agreement with the Public Transport Authority and will be guided by commercial principles.
- (c) Future plans and freight activity on this line depends on commercial arrangements made between Brookfield Rail and any potential customers seeking to operate a rail service.