PERTH FREIGHT LINK — TUNNEL PROPOSAL

1248. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to a *BusinessNews Western Australia* article of 6 August 2015 titled "Freo river tunnel ruled out".

(1) Was the article correct when it stated that the Minister for Transport had said —

(a) that he intended to indicate the preferred route for stage 2 in about six weeks' time;

(b) that it would take at least 10 years to develop an outer harbour, and in the meantime there would be a doubling of truck movements at Fremantle to 6 000 per day;

(c) "I think we have 15 years of capacity left in the inner harbour";

(d) that the outer harbour was likely to be a "spillover" facility that would add to capacity at the inner harbour;

(e) that the government was still working out how it would handle an expected doubling in truck movements around Fremantle, but has ruled out one option—that is, sinking a tunnel under the Swan River; and

(f) that the government had concluded that a tunnel under the river was not feasible because it would need to be 26 metres deep?

(2) If no to (1), what did the minister say?

(3) Does the minister still believe these comments are correct?

(4) If no to (3), what is different and why?

(5) How deep under the Swan River will the Forrestfield–Airport Link rail tunnel be, and why is that different from Fremantle?

Hon JIM CHOWN replied:

I thank the honourable member for asking his question, and the well-thumbed section of my answer book is now open.

(1)–(4) The government is assessing the container capacity of the inner harbour as part of the due diligence for the proposed Fremantle port divestment. The due diligence is still to be completed and considered by government. Heavy vehicle traffic will grow in line with port throughput. A road tunnel underneath the Swan River servicing Fremantle port is not feasible. Due to the physical landscape and design requirements, particularly gradients, the length of tunnel infrastructure required to return to natural ground level would be excessive.

(5) The depth of the Forrestfield–Airport Link rail tunnel under the Swan River is 26 metres. This is sufficient length to return to ground level at an acceptable gradient.