

PUBLIC TRANSPORT — PATRONAGE

654. Hon SAMANTHA ROWE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to a \$20.5 million shortfall in public transport fare revenue based on the 2013–14 budget estimate said to result from lower than expected patronage on metropolitan services.

- (1) Will the minister provide a breakdown of the lower than expected patronage by forms of public transport?
- (2) What factors contributed to a lower than expected patronage and what is being done to encourage the use of public transport?

Hon JIM CHOWN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) In comparison to 2012–13, total boardings in 2013–14 to date are 3.2 per cent down on the rail network; 0.1 per cent up on the bus network; and 4.2 per cent down on the ferry system.
- (2) A number of factors have contributed to the current patronage result such as changes in CBD employment, which is a major component of train patronage in particular, and an increase in people moving to flexible and part-time employment; a significant drop-off in the number of concession, DayRider and Family Rider passengers—many of these passenger trips represent more discretionary or social travel and may indicate a tightening of personal discretionary expenditure; and an increase in CBD–West Perth office vacancy rates suggesting that fewer people are travelling to the city for work.

Transperth continues to encourage public transport in a number of ways including the extension of free travel to include those in receipt of a carers payment; providing community-based programs such as the Get On Board program that educates passengers such as those with a disability, students and migrants how to navigate the Transperth network and teaches them how to become safe and confident travellers; the introduction of the Transperth app that allows passengers from their mobile device to find the next service from any stop, station or jetty or plan their journey and view it on a map and get their SmartRider balance, to name a few; an upgrade of the Transperth website, Transperth journey planner and network signage making it easier for passengers to use and navigate the Transperth network; a continual review of services to ensure that public transport resources are being provided where they are needed most, for example, the introduction of the Bus Route 950 service; and the continued rollout of additional bus service kilometres, a measure of both bus service network coverage and frequency, with over 11.3 million additional bus service kilometres being introduced per annum since 2008, which represents a growth of approximately 22 per cent since this government came to power.