

Mr Eric Ripper; Acting Speaker; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr A.P. O'gorman; Edgewater Train Station Was; Mr A.P. O'gorman.; Mr David Templeman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Bill Johnston

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT — POPULATION GROWTH

Motion

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont — Leader of the Opposition) [4.14 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Barnett government for its failure to invest in basic infrastructure across Western Australia, in particular its failure to purchase additional trains and buses or to construct new roadworks to keep up with population growth.

There is a basic comparison that underscores the importance of this motion; namely, in this current four-year period, based on the government's own budget papers, the government will spend \$1 billion less on road and rail than the previous Labor government spent in this area in its last four years. There is \$1 billion missing from the necessary investment program in road and rail in Western Australia. This missing investment has consequences every day for our people.

On Monday this week I went to rail stations on the Joondalup line. We had petitions for commuters to sign urging the Barnett government to order immediately 30 additional railcars. I must say that the petitions were very enthusiastically received. Despite the fact that the government, after sitting on them for five months, had put 12 additional railcars onto that line, there was still crowding on the trains. There was still great enthusiasm from commuters for signing our petitions, and why would there not be? They know that those 12 additional railcars are only a stopgap, a bandaid, measure. It is appalling that the Minister for Transport was so out of touch with his own portfolio and the needs of the citizens of Western Australia that he did not know that those trains were in the warehouse. How appalling is it that the minister is not on top of his own portfolio and just did not know? It begs the question about the conversation that obviously did not occur between the former failed transport minister, Hon Simon O'Brien, and the new transport minister, the member for Vasse. Surely, the former failed transport minister would have been advised that these railcars were arriving. Surely, when he took over the portfolio there would have been an incoming briefing to tell him about the order for these new railcars. Surely!

Mr F.M. Logan: Member, he's not even here!

Mr E.S. RIPPER: The member for Vasse is not even in the house to answer this question or to explain this situation. Perhaps he will come into the chamber later in the debate. Actually, we do not have a single minister of the government concerned enough about congestion on our trains —

Several members interjected.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: Sorry, we do have one minister; we have the Minister for Culture and the Arts! He is sitting in the second row. There is not a single government minister on the front bench who is prepared to listen to and debate these issues.

I am amazed that the Minister for Transport did not know about those railcars. I am amazed at the lack of communication between the minister and his own agency. I am amazed at the lack of communication on this particular question between the two Ministers for Transport that this government has had. Nevertheless, the government opened the warehouse, noticed the railcars and put them onto the system, but it is only a bandaid. Quite clearly, the railcars were crowded despite the additional railcars on the system at peak hour, and it will only get worse and worse. As I stood on the platform, I looked at the congestion on the Mitchell Freeway. I am a member for the eastern suburbs, I am the member for Belmont, and so I do not often get on the Mitchell Freeway at peak hour. The level of congestion on that freeway is staggering. Naturally, people will want to move off that freeway and onto the trains if they can, and they will particularly want to do that if the price of petrol rises. Is there a chance that the price of petrol will rise quite significantly? If the value of the Australian dollar changes and there is more trouble in the Middle East, there could quite easily be a significant spike in the price of petrol. That will bring a big spike in demand for public transport and that will compound the situation in which the government has already been caught out. We made an election promise in September 2008 to order 30 new railcars if we were elected. The government did not match that promise. The government should have matched that promise. I am sure that when the government came in, it would have had advice from the Public Transport Authority that such an order was absolutely vital. I will be interested to see whether the government will deny it got advice from the Public Transport Authority straight after the election that an order for 30 new railcars was absolutely urgent.

Commuters have been experiencing increasing difficulty for the last two and a half years as a result of the government's failure to order those 30 new railcars, and commuters will continue to experience more difficulty

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into the future. This will be an albatross around the government’s neck. Every day for the next two years and more, the government is going to wear the pain of its failure to meet the need of commuters on our urban rail network. It takes two years from when the government places the order until the first trains arrive, and the government has not yet placed the order! Members on the back bench should know that they have at least two more years of pain from the urban rail network congestion if the government places an order this afternoon. Judging from the Premier’s response, and the Premier’s and the minister’s absence from this chamber, the government has nothing constructive to say in this debate, so I doubt that we will see an early announcement of the government ordering those 30 new railcars.

The member for Wanneroo has been absolutely weak and spineless. He has not stood up for his constituents. He has let his constituents down. He has not been able to get his government to deliver for the northern suburbs with the order of 30 new railcars.

At last the Minister for Transport arrives! I ask the minister to reflect, and when he responds he might like to tell us what advice the government got from the PTA on the government taking office. I have asserted, on the basis of my experience in government, that the government would have had advice from the PTA to order those 30 new railcars. I would like to know why the government rejected that advice. The minister was certainly in a position to know about this. Even though he was not the Minister for Transport at the time, he was the Treasurer. The minister might like to reflect on that and perhaps even check his records and be prepared to answer that question when he rises to his feet.

The government has also failed on the issue of buses. When the Minister for Transport brought down his first budget as Treasurer, it was remarkable, looking into the forward estimates, to find that the government had completely cut the bus replacement program. We had a dishonest budget with the government pretending that there would be no need in the forward estimate years to purchase replacement buses. I raised that in my reply speech to the 2009 budget—this complete fudge; this completely misleading dishonesty in the budget papers, with the government pretending there would be no need to purchase replacement buses. Later on the government announced with great fanfare that it had signed a 650-bus contract for 10-year delivery of replacement buses. When we deconstructed all the fanfare, we found this was the restoration of the traditional bus replacement program at 65 buses a year that the government had taken out of its financial plan in its very first budget. The plain fact is that 65 buses a year will not do the job. They are simply replacement buses; they are not additional buses. We have suburb after suburb on the outer fringes of the metropolitan area now without any bus service or with inadequate bus services. To the extent that new suburbs are getting bus services —

Mr T.R. Buswell: How much did you expand the bus network by?

Mr E.S. RIPPER: To the extent that new suburbs are getting bus services —

Mr T.R. Buswell: You didn’t spend a cent on buses.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): Minister, you have the opportunity to reply.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: You are a failed minister, make a speech! Let me advocate on behalf of the citizens of the outer metropolitan area and do not interrupt me as I put their case.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I will interrupt you because you’re wrong!

Mr E.S. RIPPER: If you have something to say, you can say it later!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, I call you to order for the first time. I warned you.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: If the minister has something to say, he can say it later and not prevent me from speaking or harass me as I try to present the case for the people of Western Australia who deserve a decent public transport system. The minister insults them and their concerns if he interrupts and interjects in that way.

New or expanding suburbs will get additional bus services only at the expense of existing bus services in other suburbs. The government will rob Peter to pay Paul as the metropolitan area’s population grows and as new suburbs come into existence. That is the meaning of 65 buses a year. They are replacement buses. As a result of the government’s lack of investment, there will be no effective expansion of the public transport system. People will not only face congestion on the trains, they will face a complete absence or deterioration of bus services where those are the public transport services available to them.

We have significant population growth. We have growth in service kilometres on the buses, which is much less than that population growth, and we have a decline in service kilometres on the rail system. The situation is plain: population growth is outstripping growth and service kilometres on the buses; meanwhile, there is a

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decline in service kilometres on the trains. This is part of a pattern. The pattern is that this government is much more interested in investing in the headline pet projects of the Premier and the Minister for Regional Development than it is in investing in the basic core infrastructure that provides the services that the people of Western Australia need. We have a focus on Oakajee. We have the Premier's self-indulgence of the "palace on the hill" for the Premier's office, at the same time as we have lack of investment in new railcars, lack of investment in additional buses and lack of investment in roads. The pattern does not apply only to transport. We have lack of investment in our electricity network.

Members can compare the three-year program in the government's budget papers with the three-year program of efficient investment approved by the Economic Regulation Authority. Quite frankly, there is a \$500 million gap between the level of investment that the Economic Regulation Authority says is efficient for the network and the level of investment that the government is actually funding. If members go to the budget papers and to the ERA's draft decision, they will find a similar situation with Horizon Power, which has a prospective \$300 million gap between the efficient level of investment recommended by the ERA in its draft report and what is in the budget papers.

The ACTING SPEAKER: If members want to have a conversation, can they please go outside.

Mr E.S. RIPPER: We have that lack of investment in public transport, lack of investment in roads and lack of investment in the electricity system. I believe that the government is trying to avoid massive investment in the water system. I think that the government is facing an urgent submission from the Water Corporation, quite possibly with regard to two summers: how to deliver sufficient water in the next summer and the summer immediately before the election. I believe that the government will receive submissions from the Water Corporation for emergency measures to deliver more water in the next summer period and to fund an expansion of the Southern Seawater Desalination Plant at Binningup. It will be interesting to see how the government responds to these issues. Will the government face up to its responsibility to fund basic core infrastructure or will it reserve its scarce financial capacity for the Premier's pet projects and for the pet projects of the leader of the National Party? This is what has been going on. The Premier has been focused on those pet projects, while ignoring basic core infrastructure. The other way that the Premier has been funding his pet projects is by quadrupling state debt, and he is now projecting state debt to grow to \$20 billion and beyond.

Mr Speaker, there is a real problem here. The government has not faced up to its basic responsibilities in funding core infrastructure, and pain is now being borne by commuters on the urban rail network. It is likely that if the government continues to adopt this pattern of behaviour, the pain will be faced by electricity customers, by people in danger from a fire caused by the electricity system, by people who want to use the water supply to have nice-looking gardens in Perth and by people who seek to get about the metropolitan area by car but face congestion at unexpected places at unexpected times of the day as a result of government's failure to invest in the road network.

The public transport issue is bad enough in itself. It is causing serious concern among people who ride on the trains. It is an example of government lack of foresight, government lack of commitment and government lack of planning for the future, but it is also the tip of the iceberg; it is an example of a broader problem of a government that has tried to focus on sexy headline pet projects while ignoring its responsibilities to fund basic core infrastructure that the people of Western Australia need so that they can go about their lives with amenity and with convenience.

The opposition will have a lot of speakers on this motion, because a lot of our members are getting complaints from their constituents about the government's lack of investment in the public transport system. I want to go back to the statement I made at the beginning of my speech. There is one set of figures that really underlie the problem. In this four-year period this government is spending \$1 billion less on road and rail than Labor spent on this infrastructure in its last four years of government. That gap in funding will be a serious issue for the commuters of Perth, for the drivers of Perth and for the citizens generally as they deal with the impact of population growth and economic growth in the context of a government that has simply failed to face up to its responsibilities and has simply failed to plan for the future.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.32 pm]: I rise to support this important motion for the people in my electorate. Kwinana is a very good example of all that is going wrong with our transport system. On a daily basis I see a congested freeway, I see congested railcars, and I see commuters who are quite frankly fed up with the system which has been totally underinvested in. When I talk about a congested freeway, I am not talking about those sections of the freeway approaching the city. As members would know, the Kwinana Freeway is fairly well south on the freeway network. We are not talking about a section of the freeway that is approaching the city, where some early morning congestion would be expected. In areas such as the

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Russell Road and Gibbs Road exits and entry points, and of course up towards the member for Cockburn's area at Cockburn Gateway exit and entrance points, there is morning congestion day after day. Frankly, in a city that is looking to expand and to grow and to prosper into the future, it is unacceptable to have a freeway system that is so inadequate and is failing to cope.

We are not talking simply about the commuter traffic that might impact the roadways at about 7.30 am—that is, those people who are making their way to Perth. If members watch that section of the freeway at 6.15 am, they will see it is chock-a-block with utes, trucks, tradies and people working in the transport industry trying to get to and from jobs or to and from worksites. It is not simply a question of commuter inconvenience; it is a matter of economic infrastructure and the capacity of our freeway network to carry businesspeople to and from their point of trade.

I was approached by a number of people in my electorate; namely, one Mr David Johnson, who was absolutely irate about the amount of time he spends in his truck trying to get from worksite to worksite. Mr David Johnson is a tradie. He is a man whose livelihood depends on getting to and from jobs in a speedy and timely manner, and he is frankly fed up to the back teeth with a freeway system that is unable to cope.

I called some time ago for the government to examine the expansion of the freeway. We might not be looking at expansion from two lanes to three lanes in the immediate term, but we need to look, as a matter of urgency, at expanding the freeway at those bottleneck points, particularly around the Roe Highway exit and entrances. It is pleasing to see the government has responded in some way to the calls from me and from others and will undertake some work to at least expand the freeway at these bottleneck points. The fact of the matter is that this part of the freeway will continue to be busy into the future, and it will continue to carry a lot of local traffic. The fact of the matter is the government has to invest now to make sure that it can cope with the expansion into the future.

By far the greatest concern, I think, of people in my area is the manner in which the Mandurah railway line has become so quickly clogged, even though it was opened in quite recent times. I think it is telling that the minister was not even aware of the problem when it was raised in the media recently. In fact, the minister's immediate response was to say that people should get further down the carriage. That was his answer to the congestion in our public transport system. People moving down the carriage would somehow resolve a lot of the public transport issues that beset our community. That shows a complete lack of understanding but it also shows simply what a Liberal government is about—that is, a Liberal government is incapable of investing in this sort of transport infrastructure

Mr T.R. Buswell: What particular station is under stress at the moment on the Mandurah line? If I go out with you tomorrow, at which station will people be under stress? You told me you were experiencing it everywhere.

Mr R.H. COOK: I am happy to go into that, minister. If the minister could be a bit patient, I will come to that particular point.

The point I wanted to make is that Liberal governments do not lay rail. They do not lay rail; they never have. My earliest political memories growing up in Western Australia was the decision by the Court government to stop the Fremantle–Perth railway line. They are some of my earliest possible memories of politics in the state. It was closed by the Court government. The closure of the commuter public rail system was just part of its overall plan for closing railway lines right across the state. This government is no different. It is closing wheatbelt railway lines, which will have an immediate impact upon the road system in my electorate. I am told that up to 57 000 truck movements a year take wheat through my electorate to the Co-operative Bulk Handling site in Kwinana.

This government does not get rail infrastructure. It never has; it never will. It is coming into a bit of a new-age renaissance in its attitudes to rail infrastructure with the development of the Butler section of the rail line. But it is telling that it had to —

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: This is the same railway line that the Premier privatised.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It needed investment, and this government put money into it. You didn't. You ignored the problem for eight years.

Mr R.H. COOK: The Premier privatised it, and in addition to that he is closing other railway lines. It will be interesting to see what the net impact is. This government is begrudgingly extending the public transport rail system to Butler only after pressure from Labor members in the northern suburbs. Of course, as usual, the member for Wanneroo was completely silent on these matters.

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We see a complete lack of planning in relation to the public transport system. As we heard in question time today, the congestion on our public transport system at the moment is not due to the booming economy, as the Premier claimed yesterday; it is simply part of the ongoing increase in our public transport system. Growth is currently tracking at three per cent. During the former Labor government’s time, we had four per cent growth in commuter numbers on the rail system. It is not a sudden expansion, it is not a sudden awakening and it is not a sudden congestion. This is just steady growth of commuter use of our train system. The congestion we see today is a failure by this government to invest properly.

Coming back to the position in Kwinana, as I said earlier, Kwinana is fairly early on in the commute from Mandurah to Perth. In my electorate I am lucky enough to have three train stations. I have the Rockingham, Wellard and Kwinana train stations. As I get on the train at Wellard station to come to Parliament, on a regular basis I am astounded to find—even at that particular point, anywhere from about 7.30 am onwards—I struggle to get a seat.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You should stand for old ladies; that is what a young fella like you should do!

Mr R.H. COOK: Old ladies are standing, Premier. That is the problem—they are standing from Wellard onwards. By the time people get on the train at Murdoch and Bull Creek, people are pushing each other and scrambling to get onto the trains.

Mr M. McGowan: You took Deidre’s seat anyway!

Mr T.R. Buswell: We are very pleased about that.

Mr C.J. Barnett: She will get a chance; I will give it back one day!

Mr R.H. COOK: Not soon enough, Premier! This government has grossly underestimated —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Which station have people been left behind at?

Mr R.H. COOK: They have been left behind at Murdoch and Bull Creek. People have to stand, I assume, from Rockingham —

Mr T.R. Buswell interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: To answer the question from the Minister for Transport, Premier, he asked: at what point have they been left behind? I am telling the Premier they have been left behind from Murdoch and Bull Creek onwards. People are standing from Rockingham onwards because they have to get onto trains that are already congested. At that point the train has only been through the Mandurah and Wambro train stations. We have a new rail network that should be operating at optimum efficiency. We have a new rail network built by a Labor government that has now been underinvested in by a Liberal government. This government should have continued the investment process begun by Labor in expanding the number of railcars on call; expanding the number of railcars so we can expand the capacity of the rail system. This government talks about its plans to increase the capacity of the system to Butler. That is to be welcomed, but it has to come in concert with an expansion of the railcar capacity to make sure we have high-frequency trains delivering people to the city.

This government needs to get cars off the freeway. The only way we will get cars off the freeway, so we have a chance to meet the traffic demands on the freeway, is to make sure we have a public transport rail system capable of taking the increase in passenger numbers. We have a new rail system on the Perth–Mandurah line that is already struggling through underinvestment. It will continue to struggle for the next two years at least because that is how long it will take to bring extra trains back into the system. The question on everyone’s lips, as we move to the final stages of this budget process, is: will the government put in the order? We know the government balked at that order two years ago. We know it cut investment in our transport system two years ago. We now have an absolute crisis; a crisis in terms of expanding our public transport system and our rail networks. The question remains: will the government be up to the challenge? Will it accept the criticism from the public and now put that order in for extra railcars? Will the government understand? Will it hear the message from Perth commuters that it now has to put the order in, or will the government continue to underinvest in our public transport system?

I have a lot of tradies in my electorate who are screaming out for an expansion of our freeway network. I have a lot of commuters in my electorate who, when getting on the rail network in the morning, early in the piece, want a rail network that meets their needs, particularly during peak times. This government has let them down. It is important the government hears the message from commuters in Western Australia and starts to invest in our public transport system.

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MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [4.45 pm]: I rise to speak to this motion about key infrastructure in our suburbs. This motion particularly relates to public transport and roads in our suburbs. As I have stated a number of times in this place, the north east corridor is a growing corridor with residents moving into the area every day. The Lord Street corridor, over the next five to 10 years, will be home to 33 000 new residents. Of course there is Ellenbrook to the north of my electorate which is currently home to 17 000 people. The wider area has about 25 000 people. It is a growing area that needs better public transport and better roads. It is an emerging issue that is being raised with me on a weekly basis. On Sunday, we saw the RAC survey on the most dangerous roads in the metropolitan area. Reid Highway and Gngara Road, two key east–west connecting roads in my electorate, were two of the three most dangerous roads as surveyed by the WA public.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Was that the survey of roads that people do not like?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes.

Mr T.R. Buswell: So it is not necessarily the most dangerous.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: One of the reasons people do not like them is because they are dangerous.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I am not disputing it. I just wanted to clarify that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Roads and public transport are key issues. Minister for Transport, one of the key questions we are asking is: where is the public transport master plan? That plan was promised by the minister’s predecessor. For two and a half years we heard from Hon Simon O’Brien, the former Minister for Transport, that “it is coming”. We still have not seen it. Minister for Transport, I would hate to be picking up a portfolio after him, but that plan is essential for the public to know where public transport is heading over the next 10 to 20 years. What we should see in that is the growth and capacity on our rail line and our bus system. We have spent one and a half years waiting. I think it was promised a year after the election. There has been delay after delay. We need to know what that plan is.

There are two key projects that I would like to know the future of: the first is the Ellenbrook rail line, a key election commitment given by the Barnett government; and the second is the Alexander Drive bus way, which I understand is a key project the government is looking at. I understand a feasibility study is being undertaken now. A feasibility study was done, but this is now the next stage—the detailed feasibility study to determine the route and key stops of the Alexander Drive bus way. We have not seen that public transport master plan. I know Hon Ken Travers, the shadow Minister for Transport, has been asking and asking about where this plan is. Like I said, minister, I would not want to be taking over from Simon O’Brien, as he hides train sets in sheds and things like that! We need to know where the public transport plan is. Maybe it is in the shed with the trains!

In the Minister for Transport’s response, we need to know where the public transport plan is. Seriously, on the trains, I cannot believe that no-one raised, since December, that a few trains were sitting in the shed. I cannot believe that.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The busiest month of the year is March, according to the Public Transport Authority. The issue came to light in March, which is the busiest month, and we dealt with it.

Mr T.G. Stephens: When you were Treasurer, you made them put them in the bloody shed.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, I didn’t.

Mr T.G. Stephens: You did when you ordered them.

Withdrawal of Remark

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): Excuse me; you will withdraw one of your comments, and you will stand when you withdraw.

Mr T.G. STEPHENS: I will stand and withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I cannot believe how it was missed in his briefings and that when he took over the portfolio no-one said, “By the way, we’ve got a few spare trains in the shed.”

Mr P. Papalia: Get Frankie onto it; he’s got some friends in public transport.

Mr P. Abetz interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: They do not service Aveley.

Several members interjected.

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Mr F.A. Alban: What did your government do for the previous eight years? I inherited a bus system that was the most disgraceful in the metropolitan area.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, can we get back to the motion please?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Swan Hills said in August last year that the service was “equal to the best available in the Perth metropolitan area”. He did not realise that half the area—the suburb of Aveley—did not have a bus service. It took the local government member three months to realise that Aveley did not have a bus service.

Mr F.A. Alban interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! I call the member for Swan Hills to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member said in August that it was the best bus service ever.

He had not realised that Aveley did not have a bus service. A few months later he said, “Oh, well, look, if the community wants a bus service, we’ll try to get one.” Please—he cannot say it is a world-class service and three months later realise that half his electorate does not have a bus service.

I want to put on the record my thanks to the Minister for Transport for the reinstatement of the Orchid Park bus stop.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Where’s Mabel? I thought you were going to bring her to lunch. You were happy to bring her in until I said it would be your shout. You, I and Mabel were very close to a date!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Let us get back to the motion, please.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Get Mabel in.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will bring in Mabel and we will have a lovely lunch; she is a lovely woman.

Back to public transport throughout the area.

Mr D.A. Templeman: How old is she?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will not pass any comment. As we have said, there is no funding in the budget to increase the number of buses. The budget is the key. There is a replacement bus program but there is no provision in the budget for additional buses. As we grow and more people move into the outer suburbs, we need extra capacity. Currently, a lot of areas throughout the outer suburbs are poorly serviced. We need additional services. As we have noted, we talked about the buses throughout the suburbs, particularly the suburbs in my electorate of Ballajura and Henley Brook and, of course, West Swan Road, on which currently no off-peak buses run. Basically, the connection between Ellenbrook and West Swan Road to Midland is not good enough. Older people living on West Swan Road who need to go to a doctor or to access government services are not able to do it by public transport. To do so means they have to spend the whole day in Midland because there are no off-peak buses. We have lobbied for an improved service on West Swan Road.

Mr F.A. Alban: That’s not true; they can go to Bassendean train station and travel back to Midland. Every 10 minutes they can go from Ellenbrook to Midland and back.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills, if you want to make a statement, you can get up after and make a comment. I call you to order for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If the member for Swan Hills believes that the bus service on West Swan Road is sufficient, that is his view, but it is not the view of people who live on West Swan Road.

The issue of east–west connecting services is raised with me constantly. It is about how we can connect our suburbs to the train line, and through Hepburn Avenue–Gnangara Road systems. As I meet people in Landsdale in particular, I hear stories of people whose sons and daughters live in Malaga and are unable to access those roads by public transport. I believe there is a strong need for an east–west connection through that area for people in Landsdale, for example, who want to connect to Kingsway Shopping Centre or to the train line. It is an issue some of my colleagues will raise. We need east–west connecting bus services to give people the option to use public transport. As petrol prices continue to increase, people need an affordable way to move around the suburbs and into the city, and public transport is the best way.

As I said, two major public transport initiatives have been talked about by the current government: The Alexander Drive bus way, which would benefit greatly my electorate, particularly the people in Ballajura. It would give them a fast, direct connection. I understand that that is currently being looked at. Of course, there is

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also the Ellenbrook rail line. A time frame for the government’s commitment needs to be shown in this budget. It was a key election commitment. If the government wants to say it will not build that rail line, this is the place to do so. It is no use saying, “We did not commit to this time frame” or “We did commit to this time frame” or whatever. Just make it clear to constituents.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You be clear: is Labor committed to it?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Is the government going to build it? When is the government going to build it? It is the Premier’s commitment to begin construction in 2012. He is in government. “We’re in government”, as he says all the time. He should start building it in 2012.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Who said that?

Mr C.J. Barnett: No-one has ever said that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, you did.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, we didn’t.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Premier should look at the financial plan released during the election campaign.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I wrote it, and guess what? It all added up.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Minister for Transport should have seen the look the Premier just gave him! Hansard must record “Dirty look by Premier to Minister for Transport” for mentioning the financial plan.

Mr C.J. Barnett: The commitment we gave in the election campaign was that we would look at that as a second-term option.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, he did not. He matched our election commitment.

Mr C.J. Barnett: That is exactly what I said repeatedly on television.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Liberal Party said it would match our election commitment.

Mr C.J. Barnett: The question now is: does the Labor Party commit to an Ellenbrook rail line?

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. Barnett: You won’t

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If we look at the government’s financial plan, \$52 million was dedicated in 2011–12 to commence construction of the Ellenbrook railway line. That is there.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Can you build it for \$52 million? I don’t think so.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was one year’s funding. Jesus! I mean, really.

Mr C.J. Barnett: How unparliamentary was that?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member, be careful with the language you use, please.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I mean jeepers. Is \$52 million in 2011–12 enough to put in a railway? No. It is a one-year funding commitment for it.

I want to talk briefly about the roads in the area. As I have outlined, surveyed RAC members rated Gngangara Road and Reid Highway as two of the worst roads in the metropolitan area. I will briefly talk about some of the key intersections and key issues surrounding these major east–west connecting routes. Firstly, there is talk about Reid Highway. As I put on the agenda from day one, the two key projects along Reid Highway—sorry, three —

Mr T.R. Buswell: You thought of a third one after you said the first two.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No. The minister must listen to what I have to say. I am talking about the Reid Highway–Malaga Drive intersection.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Is that the number one priority?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The duplication of part of Reid Highway is the number one priority, including improvement to the Reid Highway–Lord Street intersection.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What is number two?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, you will have the opportunity to speak.

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Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is the duplication of Reid Highway and improvement of the Lord Street–Reid Highway intersection, which is part of that duplication, so it is a subset of one, if the minister would like to take notes.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Okay, is that (1)(b)?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, (1)(b), and then (2), which is Reid Highway–Malaga Drive.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): Can you address the Chair? Otherwise, you will get interjections all the time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Okay, I said there are two—and one with two parts. As I said there are three priorities on Reid Highway. The completion of Reid Highway duplication; the Lord Street–Reid Highway intersection and, of course, the Reid–Malaga intersection, too.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What’s three?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I said three.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What about Reid–Alexander?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is being undertaken.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Oh. You said you have always had three priorities.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We committed \$72 million to it and it will cost \$42 million.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What happened to Reid–Mirrabooka?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The amount of \$72 million was allocated by the previous Labor government.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, there wasn’t.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, there was.

Mr T.R. Buswell: It must have been in a very hot pot and evaporated quickly.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There was \$72 million allocated and the cost came in at about \$42 million. There was money left over and the overpass at Mirrabooka is being built.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What about the 50 per cent from the commonwealth?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, there was \$10 million from the commonwealth for Reid–Alexander.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): Minister, you will have the opportunity to speak later.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The government received \$10 million from the commonwealth. It did—yes, it did—for Reid–Alexander.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member, do I have to remind you again to speak through the Chair?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sorry, Mr Acting Speaker.

Gnangara Road, highlighted in the survey, was mentioned in the media again on the weekend. Gnangara Road is a local government road. I wrote to the relevant councils asking that it be upgraded to a state road because it is a major east–west connecting road. Ellenbrook is growing, as is the Wangara industrial estate; new suburbs north of Gnangara are planned; and the development of East Landsdale is already underway. The status of Gnangara Road, a major east–west connecting road, needs to be elevated from that of a local road to that of a state government road, and it needs to be a dual carriageway road. The Gnangara Road–Beechboro Road intersection, which has been rated the worst intersection in the metropolitan area by Reid Highway users, also needs to be fixed.

I believe that a coordinated plan or strategy for the roads in this growing area is needed. The growth in the number of people who will soon live in the Lord Street corridor will put pressure on both Lord Street and West Swan Road. Lord Street, a local government road, is a major regional connecting road that services Ellenbrook. As the member for Swan Hills knows, many people use Lord Street to get to Ellenbrook; therefore, we need to improve not only the safety on that road, but also the amenity for the people who live in the area and the people of Ellenbrook who use that road.

West Swan Road is a major tourist road that carries a lot of residential traffic in addition to the truck traffic trying to avoid Great Northern Highway. There have been some major accidents in recent weeks. West Swan Road is becoming a very dangerous road as the trucks servicing the residential developments continue to use it. I have asked the government to put in place a plan for this corridor. Because hundreds of homes are being built

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now, and 33 000 more are on their way—not to mention the growing Ellenbrook area—a coordinated commitment from government is needed to improve the road network in the area. The corridor I refer to is not serviced by a freeway and it is not serviced by any direct link to the city; therefore the government needs to do something to improve the roads in the area. I have said that I believe a plan is needed—in particular for the Lord Street area—to pre-fund the development of Henley Brook Avenue to take some of the residential traffic away from Lord Street. Transport is a big issue in my electorate, and I am glad to speak on this issue today.

We have heard a lot about congestion on trains. Many of my constituents use the Midland train line and the congestion experienced is significant on not only the train service, but also the bus service. This government needs to commit to increase the capacity of our bus network and to improve and extend or build rail lines. I believe —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Member, can I ask a question?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes.

Mr T.R. Buswell: If you had enough to do one, which would you do?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Of all those?

Mr T.R. Buswell: If you had enough money to fund a significant upgrade to bus service kilometres or rail service kilometres, which would you choose?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Rail.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Rail. That is interesting.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes. It costs more, so it is not really a valid question. I believe people prefer rail because it is a pre-determined route and people know that if they get on a certain train they will end up at a certain place. I believe people like rail better. During discussions about the Mandurah rail line it was debated whether to service Mandurah with buses—there was a rapid busway—or trains. That was a huge debate over a number of years. All the studies showed, and, I think, the outcome has shown, that people like rail better because there is a clear destination and a certainty about when the train will arrive and where it will go. People like that. It is my view that rail is the most effective way of —

Mr T.R. Buswell: What about people who need a bus to get to the railway line?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Again, I think it has been demonstrated to work if the feeder services operate properly and throughout the area in question.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes, but surely you need the money to fund the feeder services before you fund the rail or people have no way of getting to the railway line.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What does the minister mean? If there is no rail, what are we funding feeder services for?

Mr T.R. Buswell: To get to the train.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I do not know what the minister is saying. Mandurah was supplied by bus services. The former Labor government built a rail line and changed the Mandurah bus service to a feeder service for the train line. The number of buses needed to service Mandurah reduced, which freed up buses to service other areas. That was a win–win for both the bus network and the train network.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If the member for Riverton is arguing that the Mandurah rail line is not a net positive service to the community, he can stand and argue that.

In my view, rail is better. It is very popular. We have seen that popularity with every rail connection built over the past two decades. After all, this motion is about overflowing carriages. Rail provides a definite and permanent route that people can plan their lives and lifestyles around.

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Balcatta) [5.05 pm]: I rise to support the motion —

That this house condemns the Barnett government for its failure to invest in basic infrastructure across Western Australia, in particular its failure to purchase additional trains and buses or to construct new roadworks to keep up with population growth.

Having been in this place a while, I am aware of the inadequacies in our transport system. Roads and intersections always need upgrading. Bus services are always inadequate. There is always the need for a train service. There is nothing new in saying that the government needs to do more. However, this government has totally dropped the ball in terms of proper planning and the commitment of funds to make sure that our

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metropolitan transport system works. That has been clearly driven home by the people of my electorate, Balcatta, and surrounding electorates not being able to get on to a train at Stirling station. I have been there on a couple of days and have noticed that people just have to wait for the next train. The trains are packed. That might happen once in a while because something else changes and there is a huge influx in patronage. However, if that happens regularly, people expect the government to take the matter seriously and address the problem. This government is not even interested. We get half-truths, misleading statements and jokes. We do not get a serious approach to something as important as public transport. In the past week I have spoken to my constituents in Balcatta and to constituents of the members for Scarborough and Carine on the other side of the freeway, who all tell me that the system needs major attention from the government. While gathering signatures on a petition that requests the additional railcars needed, I received very strong support from people at the Stirling station to indicate that the government simply has to act and put in the order for additional railcars. As we know, it takes some time to purchase railcars.

I will make some more general comments before I return to the particulars of this motion, the northern rail and the problems for my constituents, predominantly at Stirling station, although some of them use Glendalough station. Public transport is incredibly important. As a former minister involved in promoting Western Australia, my colleagues and I saw the benefit of having the high-end market services, such as engineering, medical and research, wanting to relocate to Perth, Western Australia. People will come to an area with a very good environment, a wonderful climate, health services that are better than most around the world, and with reasonably good education services, and law and order services. People want to live in a city that works. They want to be able to commute. They want to be able to get to where they have to go for work. Until recently—I am not referring to the change of government; it started when we were in government—growth was causing real pressure on the system. We have had quite incredible growth, which I will turn to later. Rapid growth means the government has to prioritise where it puts its money, because there will not be enough money to fix all the problems. The attention of government is needed to decide where to invest and what mixture of buses, rail and roads will be invested in. We can argue about priorities, but the plan mentioned by an earlier speaker is needed. This government does not have a plan. Governments need a plan to ensure the city will work and that people can get around. Labor did that. People knew then, and they know now, that Labor governments are committed to public transport, Labor governments deliver good rail services, and Labor governments invest in bus services. We did not invest as much as we would have liked, but we did invest. We did a lot more than this government has done. This government cancelled the contract for buses. That was this government’s commitment. This government had its own priorities—building palaces on the hill, creating new government departments, and constructing musical toilets and plastic cows. They were the priorities of this government. Its priorities were not about public transport. As I have said, this government has totally dropped the ball.

Under the previous Labor government, the Mandurah railway was built. The attack from the Liberals over that railway was that it was ahead of its time, there was no demand and we were doing it too early. We now find that the patronage on that line is above the projected level. It is a fantastic success. The extension from Joondalup north and the Kenwick link were done in less than eight years of a Labor government. There were also major upgrades to the bus fleet. When this government came to power, it cancelled the contract to purchase even replacement buses, let alone additions to the bus fleet.

It is very clear that the Barnett Liberal government has no interest in public transport. It basically does not care about it. It avoids public transport; it does not want to deal with it. The images on the television news of crowded trains and the many people who are left behind at train stations impacted on the government’s political standing. The Minister for Transport had to respond, but what did he do? The Minister for Transport blamed the passengers: “They need to be smaller so we can fit more on the train. We need to squeeze them down the carriages.” It is the passengers’ problem; it is not the fact that the government has failed to take the advice it would have received to order extra train carriages. The minister just blamed the passengers. That did not look too good. The passengers knew that that was not true and they did not like being made the culprits for the government’s incompetence and lack of interest in public transport. The government then looked around and found that there were four trains in a shed. That really shows how competent this government is! It did not even know that it had four trains—12 carriages—stored in a shed. That is immaterial to these people, because public transport does not matter. The government does not know how many sheds have trains in them. Why worry about it? Public transport is not something that this government wants to take an interest in.

The Minister for Transport’s excuses did not go down too well, so he thought he would blame the Labor government. He did not quite say it, but I thought he was suggesting that the Labor government built too good a train system and that too many people want to use it; therefore, he blamed the Labor government for building

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such a wonderful train system. He put out a media statement on Thursday, 31 March claiming credit for adding 12 carriages to the Joondalup rail line. I will read the second paragraph of that media release. It states —

Transport Minister Troy Buswell said the rail cars were purchased by the former Labor government which reserved their use until the completion of the Butler extension in 2014, ...

He is correct: those railcars were purchased by Labor, but the idea that they were reserved is a total fabrication—a concoction by the minister to try to blame someone else. There was no reservation on them. Talk about being free and loose with the truth! Labor ordered a number of new rail carriages at the end of 2006. Those carriages were delivered from 2008 to 2010. They were to meet the need of the growing patronage, because that is what the figures were showing, and the fact that we were committing to the Butler line and would need extra trains. That is why they were ordered.

Mr T.R. Buswell: That is not true.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: What is not true?

Mr T.R. Buswell: That is not consistent with the advice I have from the Public Transport Authority.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Which aspect is not true?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Almost the totality of that statement, with the exception of when they were ordered.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: So I got it right when I said that they were ordered. They were ordered to be put in a shed; is that the reason?

Mr T.R. Buswell: No. I said that almost the totality of the statement you have just made is not consistent with the advice I have had from the PTA.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: In which way is it different?

Mr T.R. Buswell: In nearly every aspect, except the fact that they were ordered.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I take it from the minister that he thought that the train carriages would go into a shed. That shows how little interest this Minister for Transport has in public transport. He cannot give me any specifics about the facts as I know them. The train carriages were ordered in 2006 because in the early days of the start-up of the Joondalup to Mandurah line, it was seen that there was increased patronage and we had to cope with that. The minister knows that it takes two years or more from the time these rail carriages are ordered before they arrive here to be put into service. Because Labor was committed to public transport and an improved rail service, we took the steps necessary to try to meet that need, but when this government came to power, it was not interested in doing that. It would have been told that the growth in demand was even greater than predicted and that it needed to put in another order. The last order was made in 2006, so in 2008 the government could have predicted that another order was needed. It might not have ordered the 30 carriages that we said were needed, but it should have ordered some because the demand was there. In 2011, there is still no order. Even if the government ordered them now, it would be 2013 before the extra carriages that are needed started to roll in.

The Minister for Transport also suggested in that media statement that the Butler extension would be completed in 2014. Under Labor it was to be completed in 2012. The incoming Barnett Liberal government was not going to do the extension. Again, it shows a lack of commitment to public transport. A campaign was run by the member for Mindarie, the member for Joondalup and others that the northern suburbs needed this extension. I do not know where the member for Wanneroo and the other Liberals in the northern suburbs were; they seemed to be in hiding. It was the pressure from those Labor members in the northern suburbs, particularly the member for Mindarie, that caused the government to realise that, even though it does not believe in public transport—everyone knows that—for political purposes it needed to extend the rail line to Butler. But the government was going to delay that extension for a couple of years. It was not going to worry about railcars; it was going to leave a couple of them in a shed for several years so that it would look good when it brought them out of the shed. In that way, it might look as though it was doing something. Clearly, there is no commitment to public transport. The Minister for Transport tried to shift the blame. Everyone saw through that. He is relatively new to the portfolio. He certainly made a mess of some of the other portfolios he has had. Let us hope that in time he comes to grip with the importance of public transport and improving our road system and becomes more competent in this area.

Yesterday during question time the Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier a question about the need for new railcars for our metropolitan rail system. The response from the Premier was absolutely astounding. According to *Hansard*, he said —

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The reality is that there is an increase in congestion on our roads; there is an increase in congestion on public transport. Why? Has the population soared? No, so why could it be? What has suddenly changed?

The Premier says that there has not been an impact on demand because of an increase in population. I do not know what rock this Premier lives under. I simply had to go to the Australian Bureau of Statistics website to find the most recent figures for the September 2010 quarter. The 12-month growth in Western Australia’s population at that time was 2.1 per cent. Clearly, it was the highest growth rate of any state in Australia. We are the growth state with 2.1 per cent. I then clicked a few more items to find another statistic and I found the figures for the June quarter in 2009. In that 12-month period, Western Australia’s population grew by three per cent—way ahead of any other state. Yet this Premier says that population growth is not a factor in the increase in demand on our public transport system. I thought that might have been a bit of an aberration, just a couple of figures; in fact, Western Australia has had the highest population growth rate of any state since the 2007 calendar year. In 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010—which is as far as the figures are available—we were the growth state in population. This Premier, emphasising his lack of any interest in public transport, says that it is not because of population growth—it cannot be that. The Premier does not want to acknowledge that it is not only population growth, but also the extra taxes that this government has loaded onto people that have helped make public transport much more attractive.

The state does not control petrol prices. Petrol prices going up is perhaps the biggest factor, but when people have been hit by a 46 per cent increase in the price of electricity, a 30 per cent increase in the price of gas and a 30 per cent increase in the price of water, just in two years, it is hard for people to find the extra dollars for their petrol. The government’s new tax on central city parking also hurts the commuters who have to come into the city. Therefore, in addition to all the cost increases that are outside the control of the state government, this government has loaded extra costs onto ordinary householders, onto working men and women and onto pensioners, which has clearly made using a good public transport system look attractive! As the roads clog up, that is another disincentive to drive because people do not want to be parked on the freeway for an hour trying to get into the city. There are very good reasons that we have seen an increased patronage of public transport. As I said earlier, one such reason is that the last Labor government radically improved our rail system; it doubled it in size and improved the quality, and more people want to use it.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What about buses? What did you do for buses?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The Minister for Transport asked: what about buses? This is the game playing of the party freak from the government, the man who is great in the party; he is a real freak at it; he gets everyone laughing and he is great entertainment. The minister should hire himself out as a clown because he would do a better job of that than he does as a minister, quite honestly. The minister might not make quite as much money—or, because he is so good at clowning about, he might actually make more money as a clown than he does as a minister. The minister wants to talk about buses when I am talking about a range of things. The minister does not want to consider the fact that rail was the central issue that I was talking about. When the minister interjected on me, I asked him to give me some facts and he would not, reflecting again that he has no interest in public transport and he is not across the detail.

I drive home the fact that the Premier’s statement that increased rail patronage is not to do with population increase is simply the Premier talking absolute nonsense. All I can take from that statement is that the Premier and his government really do not give a fig for public transport. They are not interested in it; it is an irrelevance to them.

The Premier went on in that statement to say that the increased patronage is the result of economic growth. We can measure economic growth in all sorts of ways, but one way to look at it, of course, is to consider the unemployment rate. We have a very low unemployment rate, which is great. In fact, in the most recent figures for Western Australia, for February 2011, using seasonally adjusted figures, we find an unemployment rate of 4.2 per cent. Was there less economic activity per person under the last Labor government? Unemployment would be one reasonable indicator of that. If members go back to the last several months of the Labor government, unemployment was well below 4.2 per cent. In fact, in October 2008—this was the legacy of the Labor government—unemployment in this state fell to 2.3 per cent, which is well below the unemployment rate now; and it is good now. Therefore, for the Premier to suggest in an arrogant way that he is somehow responsible for economic growth, and economic growth is why people want to catch the train, is an argument that a primary school teacher would not accept from a student. It is absolute rubbish! But the Premier can stand in this place with a straight face and use that as an excuse for his lack of interest in public transport. It is absolutely astounding that a man of his ability can think that he can get away with statements of such absolute nonsense.

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As I said earlier, there will always be demands for public transport and roads, and governments have to do the balancing act. We know that this government, over its four-year period projected forward, will spend \$1 billion less on roads and public transport than was spent in the last four years of the Labor government. It is not as though the government has a different set of priorities in the area of transport; it simply has a different set of priorities generally, and the trouble is that transport has gone to the bottom. Transport is not a priority for the government. Whether it is roads in the metropolitan area, rail or buses, those matters are a very low priority for this government. It has taken money out of that area and is not willing to commit to it. That is reflected by the \$1 billion less that it will put into the area of transport.

I return to our earlier discussion about Reid Highway, an area, again, that does not affect my constituents so much but certainly blocks the roads on which traffic is coming through. Reid Highway, particularly now with the bridges at Alexander Drive and Mirrabooka Avenue—which is great, and I congratulate the government for being able to do that with the help of the federal government—will bring more traffic down —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Member, just so you know, Mirrabooka is 100 per cent state-funded.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Yes.

[Member's time expired.]

MR A.P. O'GORMAN (Joondalup) [5.25 pm]: I will start my contribution to the debate on this motion by giving a bit of a history lesson, because since I have been in this place I have heard members opposite manipulate and rewrite history time and again. I will start this history of public rail transport in this state at about 1979. What happened in 1979 that was so significant? The Court Liberal government closed the Fremantle railway line. It closed a very well used, high-patronage line. In July 1983, Labor was in government and it reopened the Fremantle line, thus heralding its mantra or catchcry of that election—putting the state back on the rails. That is exactly what that Labor government did. In November 1987, Labor committed to the northern suburbs rail line, which is the rail line that comes out to my electorate, through the member for Balcatta's electorate and the electorates of a number of members on the other side. Again, if I remember, at the time the then opposition criticised it and said that it would not work, it was not needed and that it was silly to put it up the middle of a freeway. I remember all those things from back then. It was also in 1987 that the Labor Party introduced the new *Australind* service. In September 1991, Labor introduced electric trains to MetroRail—I also remember that fairly well, or very well—all the way to Fremantle.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Fairly well or very well?

Mr A.P. O'GORMAN: Very well. My memory is pretty good. Does the minister remember last Saturday night?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes, I do.

Mr A.P. O'GORMAN: Unfortunately, I did not get to ride on the first train because I made a trip to visit my parents in Ireland, but in December 1992, Labor opened the northern suburbs railway line. The expected patronage—I will stand corrected but I am pretty sure I have it right—was 25 000 passenger trips a day. In its first year, the northern suburbs line achieved well over 40 000 passenger trips a day. It was a great day that line opened. Again, the Liberal Party tried to stop it, saying that it was not a good thing. The Liberal Party wanted to run more buses up the freeway and all those sorts of things.

Mr R.F. Johnson: I think we did the official opening of that, didn't we, when we got into government in February 1993?

Mr A.P. O'GORMAN: No, the Liberal government did not; the official opening was December 1992. I think the Leader of the House might remember Carmen Lawrence riding to Joondalup.

Mr R.F. Johnson: That's when I didn't get an invitation to the opening, when I was the Mayor of Wanneroo.

Mr A.P. O'GORMAN: The Liberal government might have done something else.

In 1998, the Liberal Party was back in power. What did it do? The Liberal government sold Westrail Freight. That was its commitment to rail; it sold Westrail Freight at a huge loss to our rural people. In October 2004, the Labor Party opened the Clarkson extension, and, again, the Clarkson extension was full as soon as it was open. Not only the rail carriages, but also the car parks were full within a matter of months. Again, that was another great effort by the Labor Party in terms of rail. In August 2005, the Labor Party under Dr Geoff Gallop opened the Thornlie spur line. That was a further advancement for rail. The Labor Party has a great history in this state for rail. In December 2007, we had another great opening: the train line to the beachside City of Mandurah, 70 kilometres to our south, was opened by the Labor Party. The Mandurah train line cost, I think, \$1.6 billion—I will be told by someone opposite if that is wrong; it might be \$1.5 billion or \$1.7 billion—and was paid for

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completely by the government, with no interest charged to the taxpayers of Western Australia. What a great Treasurer we had at that time to put that sort of money into that rail line!

Let us briefly recap. The Liberal government closed the Perth–Fremantle line, wanted a bus way instead of the northern train line, and promised a Clarkson extension and new Greenwood station, but did the Liberal government deliver? No. The Liberals wanted a Kenwick deviation, which would have taken 15 minutes longer to get to Perth from Mandurah. The Liberals opposed a rail line to the Murdoch train station, which is now the busiest train station on the Mandurah line.

There is the history, and it is a truthful history; I challenge anyone to say it is not. The Labor Party has put all this in place over time. Every time the Labor Party is in government, it not only builds more kilometres of rail, but also puts on more carriages, and it continues to plan for the future. The words that are being used by the government—I think the member for Balcatta referred to the words earlier—are that the four trains, 12 carriages, that this current Minister for Transport found are not on the network because the Labor Party reserved them until 2014 for the Butler–Brighton extension. The Butler–Brighton extension under the Labor Party would have been developed and up and running in 2012. Our history tells us that it would have happened, and no-one can deny that.

What happened in 2008? The Barnett Liberal government stopped everything dead in its tracks and put everything back on the drawing board until the member for Mindarie and a number of members from the northern suburbs kicked up a fuss.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Have you heard of the global financial crisis?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Do not tell us that it is the global financial crisis. The Liberals came into power with a \$2.5 billion surplus, but all it did when it was in opposition was to criticise the surplus.

Mr T.R. Buswell: “I’ll just pretend it did not happen!”

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: This state had a hiccup; we did not have a global financial crisis.

Mr T.R. Buswell: You are a GFC denier!

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: We had a hiccup. This state had a setback but it continued to move constantly. The Minister for Transport over there has been shouting across the chamber, “What have you done for buses?” I will tell members what the Labor government did for buses in my electorate. We put the central area transit bus on. The patronage is 40 000-odd trips a month.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Who pays for that CAT bus?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: The state government, the City of Joondalup and Edith Cowan University pay for it.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What percentage?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Roughly one-third each.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Very good.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: The Labor government also extended the CAT bus system on a trial basis to run into other parts of the City of Joondalup. It was much needed. It serviced people with mental health illnesses and people who wanted to get to the Winton Road business park and Arena Joondalup. It also serviced people coming back from areas such as Arena Joondalup and the city north area of Joondalup, and transported them back into the city and the train station. Path Transit was able to run a figure of eight with four buses on that route so that we had a guaranteed 15-minute service right around the City of Joondalup, including the business park, Arena Joondalup, the health campus, the university, the CBD and the council offices. It was an excellent service that ran on time every 15 minutes and had plenty of capacity. What do we see now? As soon as the Liberal Party got in government, it cut the extended CAT service. It just chopped it, with no notice—nothing. The service was gone on Monday morning. I happened to walk over to the train station, and young students from Lake Joondalup Baptist College were stranded because they used to get to their school on the CAT service from the Joondalup train station. They would come in from the various suburbs, north and south, into the train station and jump on the CAT bus, and at that time of the morning it did not go through the business park as it went straight to their school. What was done by the Minister for Transport and the former Minister for Transport in the upper house, who is sitting at the back of the chamber? Instead of giving the service the chance and the opportunity, they cut the extended CAT bus service straightaway. What do we see now? We see complaints about the CAT bus service because it is not running on time and it is overcrowded on a daily basis. We are down to two buses

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because those ministers did not have the foresight to ensure that public transport was well serviced in the City of Joondalup and the northern suburbs.

At the moment, we have a crisis with parking at our train stations. Yes, the government has put on 3 000 bays, but 2 500 of those bays were already in the budget and some of them were already under construction when the Liberal Party came to power.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Which budget? They were not yours.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Yes, they were in the budget.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Rubbish! Which ones?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Edgewater train station was already under construction when we went to the last election. What has the government done? Does it have plans for any future expansions? No. Has the government figured out a way to get more buses to get people into the train stations? People in the electorate of Wanneroo are very poorly serviced by buses to bring them in to the north–south train link. The same can be said for the member for Mindarie’s electorate. Mindarie is very poorly serviced by buses to come in to the Clarkson, Currambine or Joondalup train stations.

I will also give a bit of a history about the road infrastructure in the northern suburbs, because I have been up there 30 years now. I refer to freeway construction. I have been travelling up and down the freeway for a long time. I worked at Curtin University for a long time and I worked in Osborne Park for a long time. During my initial travels from Belden, Joondalup and Craigie—when I lived in Craigie—I used to get off the freeway at Hutton Street, and work my way through Osborne Park and the various suburbs and up to Craigie. The freeway has been extended and widened bit by bit by both sides of Parliament. Who funded the most recent expansion of the freeway—the Ocean Reef Road to Hodges Drive extension? The Howard federal government funded it. Not one penny came from the Court Liberal government that was in power at the time. The extension was completely funded by the federal government. That extension was the Court Liberal government’s contribution, a government in which the now Premier was a senior minister. I will give the former Liberal government credit for one thing: it widened the freeway from two lanes to three lanes between Warwick and Hepburn. That is the only thing I can think of in the northern suburbs that the Liberal government did. What did the Labor Party do in our time? We invested \$170-odd million in the extension north from Hodges Drive. We applied for money to the Howard federal government at the time, but we got knocked back. Therefore, it was totally funded by the Gallop–Carpenter Labor government. The extension runs all the way to Burns Beach Road, where it stops at the moment.

I have not got the material, but my memory is that coming into the last election the Liberal Party was going to fund the extension to Hester Avenue. That is nowhere to be seen at the moment.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What material was that in?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: I said as far as I can remember.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I think you’ve made a blue.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: I put it through many months ago that we should be widening the freeway. I submitted that to the Treasurer, even though I knew it would be a waste of time, so that he would know what we are looking for. What do we get? We get a response from other Liberal members who had barely opened their mouths about it. All of a sudden I read in the newspaper that the member for Wanneroo has actually nominated me as the person who put it forward and he is agreeing with me. In last week’s *Wanneroo Times* the headline is, “Widen freeway - MPs”, and the article reads —

More MPs have joined a fresh call to expand the Mitchell Freeway, after reports neither the State nor federal governments had plans in place.

Mr A.P. Jacob interjected.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Members opposite jumped onto this. They are afraid to say it themselves. They are told, “Guys, we don’t have the money. We’ll look after you, but we don’t want to make it an issue, so just stay quiet.” Members opposite just stayed quiet about it. It is really fun watching the way the truth is twisted continually in this place by members opposite. The expansion of Burns Beach Road, again, is one of the projects that was initiated and started while Labor was in government. The extension and dualling of Connolly Drive was funded when we were in government. It was completed —

Mr A.P. Jacob interjected

Mr Eric Ripper; Acting Speaker; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Tony O’Gorman; Mr A.P. O’gorman; Edgewater Train Station Was; Mr A.P. O’gorman.; Mr David Templeman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Bill Johnston

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Do members see what I mean? Members opposite always have to twist the truth; they could not lie straight in bed. We saw it again this week with the Premier and his comments about the trains and the expansion of rail. The Premier takes credit for a great economic boost to the state, and tries to claim that overcrowding on trains is because of his great economic credentials. What economic credentials? He is running up a debt of \$20 billion. Why is that? It is not to build the vital infrastructure that people need; it is not to widen or to extend the freeway; it is not to boost our road services; and it is not to add to our train carriages or to add to our rail network at all. Where are this government’s future plans at? The government keeps announcing plans, but it has not delivered. In nearly 30 years that I can count, they have not delivered one metre of track. I will guarantee that, by the next election, members opposite will not have delivered even one metre of track. That is what their record shows. That is why the member for Ocean Reef is mouthing off. He knows the government’s record is crap—is disgraceful. He knows the government will not extend the line out to Butler. He knows it will not add extra carriages or put the freeway out to Hester Avenue.

I do apologise. I withdraw that word. I did correct myself. I just got a bit passionate because members opposite are telling me I am wrong, when I know I am not because I have been in the northern suburbs all that time watching this. I have watched every time Labor comes into government and we get better public infrastructure out to the northern corridor, and then members opposite have come into power and they cut buses, they do not order trains, they do not put any tracks on the ground, and then they try to claim that they are a party of —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Have a breath! Seriously, take a breath!

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: I will have a breath. Did the Minister for Transport have a breath on Saturday night?

Mr D.A. Templeman: Ask for an extension; you’re on a roll!

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: No, I do not think I will need an extension.

In this place the other day, we had the Premier saying trains were crowded because of economic activity and not because of a population explosion. We do not have to go to the Australian Bureau of Statistics to know that we have a population explosion. We can go out to the northern suburbs and look at the houses that are being built there, or to the electorate of the Acting Speaker (Mr J.M. Francis) in the southern suburbs; it is about population expansion. The Labor government was preparing for it; our government was adding the services. This Liberal government is not! It is not putting tracks down. It is not making plans to add extra buses. It is leaving the poor member for Wanneroo out on a limb! What an election campaign we are going to have against him! We will drive our buses out there and bring our people to the polling booths, but he will not be able to. It will be the same for the member for Ocean Reef. That member will not be able to get people to park their cars along the northern line. Why? Because there is not enough parking there. There are not enough buses going to our suburbs, let alone the suburbs to the north and the east. The member for Ocean Reef supported cutting the CAT buses in Joondalup. He said to me in here, “What about the passenger numbers?”

Mr A.P. Jacob interjected.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: The member for Ocean Reef asked me about the passenger numbers. I said to give it time.

Mr A.P. Jacob: No.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: Yes, the member did! He can go back and check it because it is in *Hansard*. What we are looking at here is a Liberal government that has no record of providing the basic services that people in the northern suburbs need, want and, by right, should have. They would have them if there were a Labor government in power today because we would not be squandering it on building the “Premier’s palace”, creating more departments and making it more comfortable for ministers. It is about the public. It is not about the Minister for Transport and his white car—his chauffeur-driven limousine. The government should be delivering the basic services of public transport, road infrastructure, good policing, good health and good education. This government is not doing that.

If members opposite read the front page of today’s *The West Australian*—I know it is a bit off the subject of transport—the headline is “4000 calls to police go unheard”. How outrageous is that? That proves that the government is not delivering the basic services that the people of this state put it in power to deliver. Members opposite lied to them! As a group, they lied to the people before the last election about what they were going to do. They were going to do great things. They have not delivered and they will not deliver! They will not deliver by the next election because they are claiming now that they do not have the money.

I will go for an extension, Mr Acting Speaker.

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Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: I am sorry, member, but the bell did go—you did have the opportunity—I am sorry; I am advised. The extension is granted.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: We know what this government is about. We know what all Liberal governments are about. Do members remember when Richard Court came to power? He added \$50 to the transport costs of every person in this state who owned a car, and he blamed it on WA Inc. We do not have WA Inc now, but this government is going to knock up our cost of transport by putting up the cost of our licence and registration fees—again. How outrageous is that? It was not good enough to take it off us in increased charges for power and gas. It was not good enough to take it of us in the many, many other ways that they do; they now have to hit the average motorist. What do we get for it? What do motorists in the northern and suburbs get? Motorists in the northern suburbs get a 26-kilometre-long car park every morning and a 26-kilometre-long car park in the evening. I happened to be out this afternoon at the Motor Industry Training Association’s opening of its new facility, so I was driving back into Perth just before five o’clock. Looking on the other side of the freeway, the traffic was moving at probably five to 10 kilometres an hour for most of the way. It will take those people nearly an hour to get to their homes tonight. Is that right? They come and do their eight or nine hours of work a day; they spend an hour on the road to get here and another hour to get home. That is up to 11 hours a day! How great is that for a young family out there in the northern suburbs, where their mum or their dad has to keep them in child care or they do not see them because by the time dad or mum gets home their child is in bed asleep? How is that for building communities and looking after families? At the same time, the government has its hand in their pockets taking the money out for the bloody electricity! Then the government charges them an extra \$10, \$20 or \$50 a year just to register a car.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What are you talking about—\$50 week to register their car?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: It is a year.

Mr T.R. Buswell: What are you talking about?

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: It will be going up; I guarantee it!

I referred to the time when the Court government did it. That was another rip-off. It was a way of robbing every motorist in this state of \$50 a year. The Liberal government used it; it did not go back into the road infrastructure.

Mr I.C. Blayney: WA Inc debt!

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: What debt? We left government with \$3.6 billion worth of debt. This government will have \$20 billion worth of debt! The member for Geraldton comes into this place; he is another man who does not support rail! What did a Labor government do for his constituents in Geraldton? We put the southern transport corridor in and took the rail line off the seafront. We opened Geraldton up for the member! What has the government done? What has happened in Geraldton in the past two years? Nothing. Not one kilometre of track has been laid, and it will not be laid.

Several members interjected.

Mr A.P. O’GORMAN: It is not because the member for Geraldton is so good, but because of a redistribution! We will see a bigger debt at the end of this term of government than ever seen before. It will be the member’s kids’ and grandkids’ responsibility to pay that debt. My grandkids will have to pay that, not this Premier and not this cabinet. Our children and grandchildren will be the ones paying for it. Why? This government wants to build monuments to itself instead of delivering public services to the community! It is about time this lot got off their backsides and got out into the community to find out what services are needed. They should stop trying to beat themselves on the chest saying that this government is bringing all the economic benefits to this state. The Premier said the reason more people are on the trains is that the economy is performing better. My eye! It is because we are expanding as a population. We have been growing faster than anywhere else in the country. That is why. It is about time this Premier stopped misleading the people of this state and the people in this house.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [5.50 pm]: I am very keen to make a contribution to the motion before the house this evening. I congratulate the member for Joondalup for his very passionate contribution. I concur with everything he said. New members, particularly on the other side of this place, need to perhaps remind themselves of the history of public transport infrastructure and indeed the investment into public transport infrastructure in Western Australia. The member for Ocean Reef was probably only a small boy when a former Labor government committed to extend the rail link through to the northern suburbs, which of course he now

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calls home. That also included the electrification of the northern line. It was, and continues to be, since that major extension of the metropolitan public transport rail infrastructure, only Labor governments that have made significant investments in public transport in Western Australia, particularly in the metropolitan area and extending to the regional city of Mandurah.

I remember very well during the lead-up debates to the extension of the southern suburbs railway, both before and after I entered Parliament in 2001, the contributions by members from the opposite side of politics, some of whom no longer grace the seats of this chamber. We remember the commitments by the former government, including the Court government. I was very interested to hear one of our previous speakers remind the house about what the Liberals would have delivered to Mandurah. If we had had a succession of Liberal governments, we would have had the train service finishing at Rockingham and a designated bus service operate the Mandurah extension. That was promised. Then they came up with the idea that if the line to Mandurah were extended, only a single rail line could be afforded. It would not be a double rail line; it would be a single! I can remember the debate very well in the 1990s because I was not only a member of the Mandurah city council, and later deputy mayor, but also, of course, I followed the debate right through until the 2001 state general election. What did the people of Peel, and particularly the people of Mandurah, and indeed the people of the southern corridor from the southern suburbs of Perth through to the regional city of Mandurah, do? They recognised that only one party would deliver quality public transport and had a track record in doing so. That was the Labor Party.

I was pleased that the Premier and cabinet, when they visited Mandurah recently for a regional cabinet visit, utilised the train service. That was excellent. That service was completed despite the absolute venom displayed by members opposite against then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. Absolute venom was hurled at her almost daily in this place about her vision for southern suburbs rail. I can remember comments from members of the Liberal Party and members of the National Party highlighting the issue as a “waste of money”, “totally before its time”, “should never be built for another 10 years” —

Mr C.J. Barnett: Don’t rewrite history.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: No. If the Premier looks through *Hansard*—I will dig out stuff that the Premier said as member for Cottesloe, supported by the Willy Packers of the world from his constituency, who claimed the only thing that was south of Fremantle was cow paddocks! I have to tell the Premier this —

Mr C.J. Barnett: No; don’t rewrite history.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I have to tell the Premier this because he was one of those who railed against the southern suburbs extension, and certainly attacked the minister of the day, in the Gallop government and the subsequent Carpenter government, with regard to the southern suburbs rail. The Premier jumped on the bandwagon with his mates from Peppermint Grove, who did not want to see a major doubling of the system of the metropolitan electrified rail system. The Premier should be condemned for that, and because he suddenly flips over and says, “What a wonderful thing it is” or “What a wonderful thing it was.” Even today in question time, the Premier’s comment about the former member for Armadale was “at least she had a go” or “at least she had a crack”, or something like that. Thank goodness for the people of Western Australia that a Labor government was elected in 2001 and that the minister overseeing the biggest expansion of the metropolitan rail system in Western Australia’s history was Alannah MacTiernan! Thank goodness we had someone of that calibre.

I remember very well that when the Gallop government was elected, one of the first things that the former member for Armadale did was look at the route. The Liberal Party had of course, once again, demonstrated that its version of public transport investment is to do it on the cheap. The Liberal Party was arguing that its option was to deviate the southern suburbs rail link through to Kenwick, and not of course a direct route, which Hon Alannah MacTiernan argued was the best route for the southern suburbs rail. That is what the current Premier put on the record as his proposal.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No, no.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, it was! The Premier wanted the Kenwick deviation. He constantly argued for public transport investment on the cheap. That is the Liberal Party’s history when in government. The facts are, and history shows, that whenever the Liberal Party is in government, it closes public transport services, as Hon Tom Dadour argued so strongly against when he was part of the team back in the 1980s. The Premier does not like it, so he leaves the chamber! It is a wonder the member for Bunbury has not left the chamber after my contribution this morning. I have something else for the member for Bunbury, because this issue is about population growth. It is about the two great regional cities of Mandurah and Bunbury, but I will come back to that.

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The Liberal Party in government has always demonstrated that it cuts services, reduces services, rationalises services or does them on the cheap. It has demonstrated that approach time and again in the history of the Liberal Party in government—its investment in public transport infrastructure is on the cheap. The history is there. The member for Joondalup was absolutely spot-on when he highlighted that in the eight years of the Richard Court government not one millimetre of rail was laid by that government, and no commitment was made for major investment in our system. They were going backwards. Western Australia, as highlighted by the Leader of the Opposition and a number of speakers on this side of the house, is now experiencing, as expected, dramatic population growth. With that comes the stresses and strains on our public transport systems, particularly in the Perth metro area. It is not a case of, as the Premier mentioned earlier, “We’ve got a good economy; that’s why we have problems.” Our population growth has caused the stresses and strains on the system.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Before I was very rudely interrupted by the dinner break, I was railing against the government about the history of its terms in government, particularly in recent decades. I think the key theme that I have been very eloquently highlighting is that the Liberal–National government in power is always dragged, almost reluctantly, to make any investment in public infrastructure, and, when it does, it tries to do it on the cheap. That has been demonstrated, of course, by the archiving of carriages in sheds and the massive swollen crowds that are experiencing the overcrowding on the rail system.

Mr R.F. Johnson: We didn’t want to get them dirty.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is probably true. The government did not want to pay anyone to clean them.

However, the fact is that, in government, the Liberal and National Parties have a record strewn with lack of investment, lack of commitment and lack of strategy. The member for West Swan highlighted this very clearly and very appropriately when she mentioned the dramatic need for the public transport strategy to be released and certainly for the public to have greater consultation on and greater input into that. Those of us in the Mandurah sector look with great interest to the public transport strategy with regard to where the next station will be between Warnbro and Mandurah. As many members would know, the localities of Warnbro are currently serviced by the Warnbro station, but people then have to travel 22 kilometres south before they get to the next station at Mandurah central, which is the terminus. The communities along the northern part of Mandurah, in particular, including the localities of Lakelands, Madora Bay and Meadow Springs, are very rapidly growing areas. They have a demographic mix of young families, particularly in the Lakelands community, through to retirees and people in middle age. The choices of those northern suburbs people for accessing the rail are limited. One choice is to go south to get to that Mandurah terminus, and some people go north to the Warnbro station; and, if they are lucky enough to get a car park there, they will access the rail link there.

In this place I have always expressed my strong support for a station at Lakelands. It is a growing community. Every day when I go back to Mandurah from this place—sometimes late at night on the lonely journey—everyone else is sleeping in their little homes, some collecting \$255 just to go home. I, of course, go home to the city that I want to go to and where I want to be. If people go through those burgeoning suburbs of Lakelands and Madora Bay, they will notice that every day there are more and more roofs of new dwellings. Therefore, I have always put on record my strong support for a station at Lakelands, and certainly I will be watching with great interest the public transport strategy and what the minister proposes for a station between Warnbro and Mandurah. As I have argued in this place before—this was confirmed in the Australian Bureau of Statistics report only two weeks ago—the City of Mandurah remains the fastest-growing city in Australia. Last year it had a growth rate of 5.34 per cent. That is over and above the state’s population growth. The growth of the City of Mandurah continues to be greater than the growth of most other equivalent regional cities in Australia. Currently, the 83 000-plus people who now call Mandurah home—that is the latest statistic from the Australian Bureau of Statistics—are serviced by only one station. The only station that the people of Mandurah can access is indeed the Mandurah terminus, unless they travel further north to Warnbro or even Rockingham.

Mr T.R. Buswell: And, member, serviced by a train and a bus paid for by the City of Mandurah.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is the foreshore express.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The bus that goes from the train station into —

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, the foreshore express connects the station with the central business district.

Mr T.R. Buswell: You’ll be pleased to know that we are working very actively at the moment, trying to develop a CAT service for Mandurah.

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Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is very, very important. However, as I think the Leader of the Opposition clearly identified in his opening remarks this evening, the government’s investment in 65 new buses only replaces 65 buses that will be retired from service.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Member, the additional three or four buses that are now servicing Austin Cove Baptist College were not specifically those buses, but the reason they have been added to the fleet is that we have delayed the retirement of some buses, so it is entirely possible to have an expansion of the fleet still on a 10-year annualised replacement rate of 65 per annum. I appreciate that that is at the margin.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: However, the reality is that as the fringe suburbs of Perth and the regional areas such as Mandurah expand, the government will not have the buses to service the growing demand.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I think the holes in the bus network are probably the biggest challenge at the moment.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That remains the biggest challenge, but the government does not have any answer to that growth issue in its budget or in its strategy. That is what I think the minister has to explain —

Mr T.R. Buswell: We had an answer for Austin Cove.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is only for the school, and that is great.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The minister wrote back to me only two weeks ago after I had been saying that we need a service in the corridor between Mandurah and Pinjarra. The Shire of Murray continues to expand rapidly. We have the growing suburbs of Ravenswood, the Riverland Ramble area, the areas along Pinjarra Road and the Austin Cove development in South Yunderup. The locality of North Yunderup is a much older suburb. We then have, of course, the important town centre of Pinjarra. Pinjarra is a fantastic place. It is not in my electorate. Part of the Shire of Murray is. Pinjarra town site is not; it is in the seat of the member for Murray–Wellington. That remains a growing corridor, and young families live along it. There are a number of retirement complexes in the Ravenswood area that currently are not serviced by public transport. If there are going to be extensions of public transport for that corridor, as there should be, where is that expansion going to come from? It is not shown in the budget, and there is no evidence of strategic planning by the government to purchase more rolling stock; in this case buses. Two weeks ago the minister wrote back to me, saying that there was no plan for an extension of Public Transport Authority service through the corridor between Mandurah and Pinjarra. That is very disappointing.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Can I just say—

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I will let the minister have a say in a second. It is demonstrative of the petition that was presented to the Parliament by the member for Murray–Wellington earlier this week. People in the communities of Pinjarra and that corridor want access to the rail system of Mandurah, and they want to have access to a public transport service. One of the problems, which the minister would be aware of—this is one of the problems with the Austin Cove bus proposal—is that outside the municipal boundary of Mandurah is a grey area in terms of PTA coverage.

Mr T.R. Buswell: And your country fuel card.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, but you see—

Mr T.R. Buswell: And your orange school bus service—

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, that is right. I would love to talk about the Country Age Pension Fuel Card, because one of the great problems with the country fuel card is that it discriminates against people who live in the postcode 6210—the people of Mandurah. My electorate straddles a significant proportion of the northern and eastern section of the City of Mandurah and a significant part of the western section of the Shire of Murray. People over one side of the Serpentine River get the fuel card—and good on them; I strongly support them getting it. However, 200 metres across the Serpentine Bridge, there are people with the same needs, many of them in the Mandurah Gardens Estate, who can look at their good friends across the Serpentine River in the River Glades Resort. The River Glades Resort people in the Shire of Murray get the card, but those in the Mandurah Gardens Estate do not.

I know the Minister for Regional Development has tinkered with the boundaries, but, as has been demonstrated, I fail to see the equity. The fact is that the City of Mandurah, as far as the metropolitan region scheme is concerned, is outside the metropolitan region scheme. Its current status is part of country Western Australia. The Country Age Pension Fuel Card is for country pensioners. People make an assumption—and this is the problem—and say, “No, you have got a train.” The fact is that many people in various parts of Mandurah and

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parts of Dawesville have been given the country fuel card, because the argument has been that they do not have access to public transport. Some of that is true for people in Dawesville. However, there are people in sections of Mandurah, particularly people who are aged and need to get to Fremantle or to the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital for oncology treatment, who would be greatly assisted by receiving the fuel card; however, they are not eligible because they do not live on the right side of the Serpentine River. That is the reality.

Then I make the following comparison: if members look at the number of the services that service the outer suburbs of Mandurah, the timetable is equivalent to the PTA services in cities such as Bunbury, and yet the people of Bunbury get the fuel card. I do not have a problem with people getting it; I do have a problem with those who do not get it, but, according to the criteria, should be eligible. If members look at the City of Bunbury and some of its bus services, they are equivalent in terms of frequency to those in the outer suburbs of Mandurah. Yet the argument by the Minister for Regional Development is, “Oh, but they’ve got a train.” The simple fact is that the service by PTA in Bunbury is equivalent to a number of the services in Mandurah. Where is the difference? The difference is that this is discriminatory.

The member for Dawesville, the Minister for Health, admitted in writing in a letter to one of his constituents, which was shown to me, that the underlying reason was cost. The reason that the people of Mandurah did not get the country pensioner fuel card was simply that it would have cost too much. The figure was around \$15 million, and the Minister for Regional Development decided the government was not going to spend the extra money to make access to this card equitable.

I want to finish by saying this: We have demonstrated in this motion that this government is absolutely lax in its investment in public transport and its strategy for public transport expansion, and now it has been found wanting. In his reply, the Minister for Transport needs to map out very clearly what the strategy is and he needs to make sure that he comes clean to the people of Western Australia. It is absolutely wrong to continue to tax them to the hilt, particularly those people who are most vulnerable, to increase power, gas and water prices, and to continue to put further impositions on their day-to-day costs by not investing appropriately in public transport. It is essential, if Perth is going to become more sustainable and better connected to places like Mandurah, that we actually have a massive investment and a long-term strategy for public transport infrastructure. The Western Australian community knows that in government there is only one party that has a track record of delivering quality, efficient public transport, and that is the Labor Party. That is the reality. No matter how some government members might try to rewrite history, that is a fact.

When I look at people such as the member for Swan Hills, Duffy at Swan Hills, he wriggles and squirms every time the Ellenbrook railway line is mentioned. He knows he is squirming because history shows that that rail link will not be committed to or delivered by a Liberal government and that the burgeoning population there can only look to Labor to deliver the quality public transport infrastructure they require.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Which *F Troop* character would you align yourself with?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Crazy Cat!

Mr T.R. Buswell: What about Vanderbilt?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: No. My sight is not that bad. I would be Crazy Cat.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [7.17 pm]: I rise to support the motion before the house. The need for quality public transport and transport infrastructure is absolutely critical to the quality of life of Western Australians. If we do not have good quality public transport and transport infrastructure, it is certain that we will have more and more traffic jams, more and more congestion on our roads, and people spending hours getting to and from work. They will be suffering the consequences of poor planning and poor government, which just means their day-to-day life is that much harder to bear. Their day begins badly as they are stuck in traffic. It ends badly as they get home from work after a frustrating time, waiting for several light changes to get back to their homes.

That is the critical thing about this area. If the government does not act, people will look at this issue as the thing that really shapes their day-to-day living and what upsets them most—the sorts of traffic jams we have on roads around my electorate that are used by my constituents. Nicholson Road, Ranford Road along to South Street, Roe Highway, Tonkin Highway and Albany Highway are roads used by many people each day, but we are not seeing any improvement in the fluidity of the transit along those roads. On the contrary, we are seeing that people are spending more and more time stuck in traffic on those roads. The public transport options that are available to people are not growing at the rate that is required. The bus services and the rail network are not expanding to meet the demand.

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One proposal that is of particular interest to people in my electorate—it was touched on earlier today by the member for Southern River—is the extension of the Thornlie rail line to Nicholson Road, Canning Vale. There is huge community support for that extension. The City of Gosnells would love this extension to go ahead. It commissioned a report into the cost of extending the Thornlie rail line. Quite remarkably, that report found that that extension could be done for as little as \$20 million or \$25 million. I think that might be a very low estimate. A report that was commissioned by the government—the former Minister for Transport, Simon O’Brien, commented on it—said that the cost of extending that rail line was more likely to be around \$70 million. Fortunately, there is an existing freight line that provides the alignment, and there will be no need to acquire land, although that will probably need to be studied a bit more closely, because there might be a need to widen the rail reserve. But essentially much of the critical infrastructure is already in place. A train station at Nicholson Road in Canning Vale would have great appeal to people in my electorate. Whenever this matter has been raised with the government, the answer that has come back each time has been that the government is developing a 20-year public transport master plan, and that will indicate what level of priority the government is prepared to give to the extension of the Thornlie line to Nicholson Road. Unfortunately, there has been nothing but delay from the government when it comes to the production of that master plan. My recollection is that the first time the former minister for Transport spoke about the master plan, he commented that it would be available to the public some time in 2009. We then heard that it would be available to the public some time in 2010. We now hope that with the new Minister for Transport, that master plan will be delivered in very rapid time. That master plan will be critical, not only to policy and planning people, but also to people who are looking to invest in properties in different parts of the city, because they need to know where the public transport infrastructure will be developed, and what the government’s commitment to public transport will be. I certainly hope that a Nicholson Road train station will be at the top of the list. Both the government study and the City of Gosnells study indicate that the return on investment from such a station would be very high. Therefore, there is good justification for such a train station to go ahead. This would make a big difference not only to people in my electorate, but also to people in the electorate of Southern River. Extending the Thornlie rail line to the Mandurah line, to connect with the South Street station area and the Murdoch area, would also have great appeal and would clearly be of benefit to people in a range of electorates, including Riverton and Jandakot. There is great appeal and interest in that project going ahead. I hope that when we see the master plan, this project is very high on the list.

Another matter that relates to all things to do with public transport infrastructure is TravelSmart. I know that the government does not really believe in funding the TravelSmart initiative. However, I put it to the Minister for Transport that if we do not help people to understand what travel options are available to them, they will not be able to use the new infrastructure in the best possible way. This has been demonstrated to us by the problem that we have with the very successful Mandurah rail line, and also the very successful rail line to the northern suburbs, and out to Thornlie and Armadale. That problem is the supply of parking spaces at the train stations. It almost seems as though the present government is scared to extend the rail network because it knows that there will never be enough parking spaces at the train stations. There needs to be a solution to that. There are many good studies to show that many of the people who park in train station car parks have driven only a couple of kilometres to get to the station. We should be able to develop options for those people so that they do not feel the need to drive to the train station. Each individual parking bay represents a cost to government of upwards of \$18 000. That money would be much better spent on helping people to consider alternatives to driving to the train station. The most obvious alternative is to use a local bus service. If the local bus service is not adequate, money that might otherwise be allocated to increasing the number of parking bays could be put towards improving the bus service to get people to the train station.

Another TravelSmart-type initiative that could help people understand and appreciate and have confidence in the public transport system is to ensure that cages are provided at train stations so that people can secure their bikes. People might not want to ride their bikes all the way into work, but they might be happy to do a short two-kilometre ride to the train station if they can be sure that their bike will still be there in the evening when they get back from work. There are many examples elsewhere in the world, particularly in Europe, which has a higher population density than we have in Perth, of how we can successfully use the full mix of public transport options—train, bus and tramway—and also options such as walking or riding a bike to a train station. What drives the high usage of each one of those elements of the public transport system is the quality of infrastructure. We need to provide infrastructure that is more sophisticated, more cost efficient and more cost effective for the community than the traditional idea in Western Australia of simply allowing people to drive on freeways to their place of work, and then have to hunt around for that very expensive piece of real estate—a car parking space—be it at an urban train station or in the city centre. There is a real argument to say that building more car parking spaces is a great waste of money, especially in the city centre, and that it gives people the wrong message and

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does not help to solve many of the problems that we are facing. TravelSmart is at the core of helping people to change their behaviour and their appreciation of the different transport options that are available to them.

We need to look also at the current zone structure that is used when charging fares for patrons of our public transport system. It seems somewhat inequitable that a person who has travelled for only a couple of kilometres, but from one zone to another zone, is charged more than a person who has travelled for many kilometres more but has stayed within the one zone. We need to provide people with the right sorts of incentives to encourage them to use public transport more effectively.

In other speeches in this debate, people have homed in on the issue of bus replacement. Clearly the present rate of bus replacement is inadequate. The amount of money that has been provided for bus replacement is not sufficient. The supply of new buses will be sufficient only to meet the replacement need. About 600 new buses will be provided over the next 10 years —

Mr T.R. Buswell: It will be 650.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: If it is 650, that is 65 new buses a year. However, clearly at least 65 buses a year will fall into an age category that will make them no longer viable, and the government will want to move them out of the system to make sure that the bus fleet is the very best that we can have and that it uses the most efficient form of energy.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I like those old belching diesels!

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: People might like them; they are a bit of the old steam engine nostalgia type of thing, but when it comes to air quality and, of course, the actual fuel efficiency of those vehicles and their greenhouse gas emissions, I do not think it is reasonable to suggest that we want to see 20-year-old or 30-year-old buses on our roads anymore. Clearly, we want a much better bus fleet; one that is ever-improving and expanding, which is the critical thing. At the moment there is no expansion of bus routes. If somebody gets a new bus route in their area, it means that buses are being taken out of service from somewhere else. There is no expansion.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Member, can I just make a point? The new bus route that I mistakenly announced today—I was supposed to announce it next week—that will go from Armadale via Piara Waters to Murdoch is not being provided at the expense of another bus service.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: At the expense of what; sorry?

Mr T.R. Buswell: It is an additional one.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Sorry, I am missed what the Minister for Transport said.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I am saying that a new bus service will be starting, I think, at the beginning of next month—I thought it was next week—and will run from Armadale via Piara Waters to Murdoch, and no bus service has been dropped off to provide that. That is only one little example, but I thought it might be relevant in that it is in your area.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I have heard of many more examples from around Perth of a decrease in the number of services.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I thought you might like that announcement.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I am pleased for the people of Piara Waters.

Mr T.R. Buswell: And Armadale.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: And Armadale—they will be very pleased to hear that.

While riding my bike to Parliament, as I usually do, along the Roe Highway bike path and freeway bike path, I have observed that traffic congestion on the freeway is getting worse and worse. It is getting really diabolical. I look at those people and I think: “Gosh, surely there must be a better option for those people to get into their place of work.” Perhaps many of them have no option because they are involved in a line of work that means they have to have a car all day, or they have other things to do at the end of the day, or they have dropped children off at school or something like that that requires them to have a car. But I am sure that of those many cars that are stuck on the freeways in the morning, many people would take other options if they were presented to them, and that is where I come back to TravelSmart.

I know the minister is a recent convert to cycling, and I welcome that; I hope the minister will have the fervour of a convert, because we need the extension of and investment in the cyclepath network. It is absolutely vital that we continue that. As a rule of thumb, taking 100 cars off the road, getting rid of those single-occupant vehicles

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and getting the drivers on bikes will free up about one kilometre of road space, so there is a clear economic argument that investment in cycling infrastructure is a very sensible investment in our public transport infrastructure. I certainly encourage the minister to continue to enjoy the health benefits that he gains from cycling; I note he has an excellent bike and I am sure he rides it at least three times a week. It has all the gear and it is a very stylish choice, and I welcome that. We have to make sure that the cycling infrastructure in Western Australia—in Perth especially—continues to expand.

One real disappointment for cyclists in recent times relates to the St Georges Terrace refurbishments. It is amazing; when we look around the world at cities that are improving their transport infrastructure, they straightaway make sure that a bike path is included in that transport infrastructure and that there is a good cycleway. Unfortunately, the St Georges Terrace upgrade has not allowed for that at all, and I believe the excuse is that there is not a sufficiently wide strip between the skyscrapers that line St Georges Terrace to allow for the necessary carriageways for traffic and to squeeze in what would be a three-metre strip for a cyclepath to allow cyclists to go east–west, west–east. It is a real shame, because that is a missed opportunity, and it means, unfortunately, that, compared with other cities, we are slipping way behind. It also means that the very good bike paths coming into the city centre bring people to the edge of Perth, but when they get to the edge of the city it is actually quite hard to traverse from one part of the central business district to the other. It gets very tricky because cyclists have to cross over busy roads if they want to come in off the northern freeway bike path or the southern freeway bike path and head towards East Perth. At the moment they have the option of Riverside Drive, but I am concerned about the future of that; we need to know the effect of the foreshore developments on that option. However, at the moment, and in the future, riding down St Georges Terrace is highly dangerous; and in some cases cyclists are putting other people at risk by riding on the footpath.

The motion before the house is an excellent one; we do need to condemn the government for its failure to invest in basic infrastructure across Western Australia, particularly in relation to public transport, trains and buses. We urgently need to tackle this problem because it is critical to the quality of people’s lives, and the economic aspects to it are considerable, especially when we think of the emerging issue of peak oil. I think some people feel that, at the moment, oil prices are still relatively acceptable, but I think that in the months or years to come we will see significant increases and there will then need to be a vast improvement in the quality and capacity of our public transport.

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Nollamara) [7.36 pm]: I, too, rise to speak to the motion. Clearly, the Minister for Transport is aware that I have welcomed the construction of the Mirrabooka Avenue overpass as I believe it is much needed in the community.

There is a real necessity for a public transport master plan. I will take the minister through a whole series of issues in my area to put them on record, so that when a master plan is considered he understands and has an appreciation of the needs of the people in the electorate of Nollamara. The electorate of Nollamara is in a bit of a no-man’s-land and will not necessarily be serviced if and when we get a train service through to Ellenbrook, the provision of which I would welcome. The area is not currently serviced by our overcrowded trains, although a percentage of people from the area commute to train stations.

The electorate of Nollamara encompasses the suburbs of Nollamara, Mirrabooka, Koondoola, and Alexander Heights, and I wish to inform the house of something that I find extremely and extraordinarily concerning in that electorate. I will take members through the 2006 census suburb by suburb and they will notice that an appallingly small number of people from those suburbs catch public transport; it is below the Perth statistical data as a whole. In Mirrabooka in 2006, 212 people caught public transport to work on 8 August, which was the date of the census. Of those 212, 47 caught the train and 165 caught the bus. Compare that figure with the 2 149 people who drove private vehicles to work. This occurred in the suburb of Mirrabooka, which is really 15 kilometres—at the outside maybe 20 kilometres—from the City of Perth.

It is somewhat concerning for urban development in our community that people feel such antipathy towards catching public transport. Public transport should be available and effective, but, as the member for Balcatta outlined, people are choosing to drive their cars rather than take public transport despite the costs involved. If it is no quicker to catch public transport than it is to drive a car, the convenience of driving will encourage people to drive in spite of the distance.

In Mirrabooka alone 7.5 per cent of the population made use of public transport, compared with 8.5 per cent of the whole of Perth. Use of private vehicles in Mirrabooka was 76.1 per cent, versus 70.4 per cent for the whole city. That is a massive number of people who should be looking at alternatives to driving their cars. In Nollamara, which is even closer to the city, a higher percentage of people used public transport, but there was

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still an enormous number of people driving their cars. In August 2006 in Nollamara, 330 people caught public transport, two per cent of them on trains, compared with 2 350 people who drove a private vehicle. That is, 73.1 per cent drove a private vehicle, versus 70.4 per cent for the whole of Perth. In Westminster, bordering Wanneroo Road, 123 people caught public transport, while 1 144 drove private vehicles. Again, that is 74.2 per cent versus 74 per cent, which is roughly the average. In Koondoola, which is a very small suburb, 66 people caught public transport to work while 1 015 people drove private vehicles. In Alexander Heights, 230 people caught public transport to work, and 2 892 drove in private vehicles. That is 6.2 per cent versus the statistical average of 8.5 per cent, so more than two per cent fewer people in that area used public transport than the Perth average, and 77.5 per cent drove vehicles, compared with 70.4 per cent. In my area alone, on census day, 9 550 people drove to work, while 965 used public transport. What does that say about our community, when so few people are using public transport?

Mr T.R. Buswell: It might work in the other direction.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I looked at that, because it shows where they go. The vast majority go to the city; there are a few who go through to Malaga. There is a cross-suburb transport problem. I am happy to give the minister further statistics to drill down.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, I'll be right. Seriously.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I am trying to indicate to the minister that we have a major issue in public transport delivery in our area.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Just so you can establish a trend, what were the numbers for the previous census?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: They have increased for both public transport and private vehicles. I was not able to show which increased by the greater percentage, but both increased. It appears that the figures for driving may have increased at a slightly higher rate than the figures for public transport. But the issue is that it should have gone the other way around. When we think about the difference between the 2000 census and 2006 census, we had increased parking costs in Perth and reduced parking availability. It is an issue that needs to be addressed in our area to provide rapid, effective and efficient public transport into the city for people who need it for work. Obviously there are other issues surrounding public transport across the eastern suburbs, such as feeder services to train stations, because people seem to want those services to avail themselves of rapid transport into the city.

I have recently posted on my website a transport survey, and I have also sent the same survey out to the constituents of Nollamara. I admit that there has been a very minimal response to the online survey; only 10 responses to date.

Mr T.R. Buswell: How many did you send out, just out of interest?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: We are hand-delivering the paper survey; this is the online survey, which was publicised in an ad. I am waiting to see what happens—maybe not very much! However, the overwhelming majority identified road congestion as being the most important issue, which reflects the fact that the majority of people are driving. Again, 20 per cent of people are having trouble with access to public transport, but the response was overwhelmingly about people driving vehicles and their road issues. There were some suggestions, including a call for light rail along Alexander Drive, which was also mentioned by the member for West Swan. That is something that I think would benefit the people of Nollamara, Morley, Mt Lawley and West Swan. There really should be great consideration given to that in any government master plan. There should also be a higher frequency of buses. There was a suggestion that buses should be smaller and run more often; I do not know the issues involved in increasing the number of buses, but I know that bus frequency is not particularly fantastic, especially on Sundays, because my son has to catch a bus on Sundays to get to work and is constantly complaining about the service in that area. I presented a petition in the house on 20 August 2009 that requested the addition of a bus service along Mirrabooka Avenue on Sundays. It is an issue that has concerned the people of Nollamara and Mirrabooka for some time and it is a great concern that we are only replacing buses and not increasing their number. The frequency of rapid transport in the area, which is necessary to encourage people to leave their vehicles at home and take public transport, is an issue. I note the member for Gosnells' very good contribution about the education campaign on public transport and transport alternatives.

The census in Mirrabooka revealed that fewer than 0.8 per cent of people rode a bike, and I can understand why. I have tried to ride a bike from Nollamara, and I am not much of a bike rider. However, I know that if someone yells out that they have a flat tyre, the person in front will usually stop to help!

Mr T.R. Buswell: Not in the Liberal Party!

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Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Maybe bicycle etiquette is not something the minister has been taught!

Mr T.R. Buswell: I seriously thought it was a seagull! If I’d known you were in distress, I would have stopped immediately!

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I did yell, and I had to wait until my good comrade from the other place and some police officers came along. I said that I thought the usual etiquette was that if you yell, “Flat tyre”, everyone stops to help, or at least checks to see whether you can do it yourself—but no; the Minister for Transport kept on going!

Mr T.R. Buswell: The problem is that when someone is moving at the speed of sound, it is very hard for your voice to catch up.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I can tell the minister that he was not moving at the speed of sound!

The bike ride from Nollamara to the city is beset with difficulties. There is a bicycle path down Flinders Street, but cyclists take their lives in their hands riding on that strip of the road. There is no way anyone would ride on that path during peak hour. My partner rides to his work in Hay Street every day. He has to take a circuitous route through Dianella and Mt Lawley to get into the city. He basically rides on the roads all the way. He is a seasoned bike rider and, although it is not particularly pleasant, is capable of doing that. I enjoy riding to work but cannot cope with the cars. The most recent research on this matter shows that I am not alone; it is a female trait. We are just not aggressive enough to take on the cars. That means that a group of people in our community are not riding bikes. It is imperative to look at bicycles as being part of the transport plan. Bicycles can be and often are a much quicker form of transport for many people in many cities throughout the world. Recently I was in Melbourne and I used the Melbourne Bike Share system and the bicycle paths.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Did you return the bike?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I did. I used it every day that I was there. I did not return the helmet because cyclists need to buy a helmet.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Who operates that?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: There is one in Queensland and one in Melbourne. I believe that in Melbourne it is operated by the Melbourne city council, but it may be operated by a private company. Queensland has it, too.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The London bicycle scheme is operated by Serco. You wouldn’t like that.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I do not mind Serco running bicycles but I do mind it running hospitals. It can run as many bicycle-sharing schemes as it wants, but it certainly should not run hospitals. Clearly it is not capable of running hospitals if all it can do is run bicycle-sharing schemes.

I will quickly talk about the Mirrabooka bus station upgrade. Although it is very welcome, I will outline a problem with Sudbury Road. I do not know whether the minister recalls the place where he launched the housing project in my electorate one day; it was in Sudbury Road, which has now been made a through road. It will be part of the plaza, which has been paved with bricks and has trees. It is expected that pedestrians will cross that road to go to and from the plaza and the bus station. Transperth is keeping its massive service road into the Mirrabooka bus station, which its buses can drive in and out of, and it will also use the new Sudbury Road that has just had a lot of money spent on it. Frankly, that will cause havoc. A bus will drive along the plaza every 17 minutes between 9.00 am and 4.00 pm, and every 11 minutes between 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm. Transperth can use an alternative route because it has kept its service road. Driving buses on the new road will cause havoc and is dangerous. Despite the city raising the matter with Transperth, Transperth has continued —

Mr T.R. Buswell: If you raise that as a grievance, we will look into it.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Okay. On that basis, I thank the house.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [7.53 pm]: I see that there is not much time left.

Ms J.M. Freeman: Sorry.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is okay; I am quite relaxed about that. This is an important resolution. I am pleased that the Minister for Transport has been, and is, in the house to listen to the debate. I respect him for that. He is about to deal with a bill as Minister for Housing, so he has a lot to think about.

Mr Eric Ripper; Acting Speaker; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Tony O’Gorman; Mr A.P. O’gorman; Edgewater Train Station Was; Mr A.P. O’gorman.; Mr David Templeman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Bill Johnston

Mr T.R. Buswell: I think my title for that is the minister assisting the Minister for Commerce.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The Minister for Commerce certainly needs plenty of assistance. I was just about to comment on his performance as the Minister for Transport.

Mr T.R. Buswell: And we were getting on so well.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: We were. One of the interesting things about public transport in the metropolitan area is that the Minister for Transport was missing in action. Let us take the issue of the 12 railcars that the new minister found in a shed in the northern suburbs. We have not heard from the government why the previous minister left those railcars in a shed. The Minister for Transport might let the house know why Hon Simon O’Brien decided to park 12 carriages in a shed. The member for Wanneroo seems to be amused by the idea.

Mr P.T. Miles: It’s a very big shed.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is a very big shed, is it? What else is in it? I remind the house that on 13 November 2008 in this chamber we had a debate about public transport and the need to order 30 additional railcars. I remind members that part of that discussion was about not being able to build a rail line to Southern River without those 30 railcars. Of course, the government has done no planning on the rail line to Southern River. Even if it had done that, a train could not turn up anyway because there would not have been any railcars to carry passengers on the rail extension. Even if that planning were to start tomorrow, the railcars would not be available at the station when it is ready.

The interesting thing about railcars—the Minister for Transport can probably talk about this issue—is that because there is a massive expansion of the metropolitan rail lines, not just in Perth, but, as was so ably demonstrated by the former Labor Party, in cities all around the world, it is quite difficult to produce railcars for metropolitan services.

Mr T.R. Buswell: We buy good Aussie railcars from Queensland.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: From Downer EDI, whose partner is Bombardier, a Canadian company. The essential technology is Canadian and the railcars have a large component of Canadian equipment in them. There is a worldwide shortage of railcars. The former Labor government gave a commitment during the election campaign to order an extra 30 railcars because doing it that way meant that at the end of the previous contract for 45 additional railcars, Bombardier–EDI would not have had to retool to produce the 30 additional railcars. As no city connects its rail service to another city, each city’s trains are built slightly differently. Every time an order for a rail system is finished, the manufacturer has to retool for the next production run. If the incoming government had followed through on the Labor Party’s commitment to order the 30 extra railcars, the cars would have been cheaper and delivered earlier because Bombardier–EDI would not have had to retool. Its factory is being retooled for the next order. When we do order the railcars, they will be more expensive than they should have been because Bombardier–EDI will have to retool again back to the specifications required for the Perth metropolitan rail system.

On 13 November 2008, I pointed out to the chamber that the Liberal government could not build a train station in South Perth, and the Premier challenged me on that. That has come true. These issues are all connected. I will keep talking, minister. Every time another station is added onto a line, extra railcars are needed to keep down the travel time because every time the trains have to stop it adds to the travel time. As the railcars are not available, the government cannot add the extra station at South Perth and at Secret Harbour; is that where the extra station is needed, member for Warnbro?

Mr P. Papalia: Karnet.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It cannot be added at Karnet because there are not enough railcars to stop and keep the travel times to a reasonable level. These issues are all connected.

The problem is that the Liberal government—we know from the history of the Liberal Party in this state—has no commitment to public transport.

Dr A.D. Buti: It’s in the DNA of the Libs.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is in the DNA of the Libs, as the member for Armadale said. The Labor government had made those decisions but the Liberal government has not implemented them. It is like the relocation of the train station on the northern extension; people had planned their lives around stations at Butler and Brighton. These issues are important; they are all connected. In the 60 seconds I have to go on the clock, I will say that just before I was elected to this place the former minister promised to refurbish Queens Park rail station.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 6 April 2011]

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Mr Eric Ripper; Acting Speaker; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr A.P. O'gorman: Edgewater Train Station Was; Mr A.P. O'gorman.; Mr David Templeman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Bill Johnston
