

RAILCAR MANUFACTURING — BELLEVUE

**494. Ms C.M. ROWE to the Premier:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts to diversify the state's economy and drive investment in WA's local manufacturing industry. Can the Premier please update the house on our government's efforts to bring local railcar manufacturing back to WA after the industry was shut down by the Liberal and National Parties?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Belmont for the question. I am very proud, Madam Speaker; member for Midland, to say that local railcar manufacturing is back in Western Australia. We made a commitment in the lead-up to the 2017 election that we would bring railcar manufacturing back. The Minister for Transport has put it in place. Members might recall that the critics of it were the Liberals and Nationals who said it could not be done—and they were wrong once again.

This weekend the first of the six-car C-series rail packages rolled out of the factory in Bellevue near Midland, having completed its high-voltage testing. It will next month move out of the Bellevue railcar facility and begin testing on the lines. It comes around 30 years after the Liberals and Nationals closed railcar manufacturing in Western Australia. Over the next 12 months, it will undergo testing on the network. It will run on the Mandurah and Joondalup lines outside passenger operating hours. It will be very rigorously tested, and this level of testing has never occurred locally considering that for the last 30 years any railcars here were built outside Western Australia by the Liberal–National government.

The 246 new trains that we are building will carry more than 100 000 boardings a day. I have seen them; they are outstanding pieces of engineering quality and will be a much welcomed addition to the local network. By 2029, we will have 246 locally manufactured electric railcars, and six diesel railcars to replace those on the *Australind* service down to Bunbury. They will all be manufactured at Bellevue near Midland. It is the biggest order of railcars in Western Australian history. The cost is far less than it would be to purchase them from over east. It supports a great many Western Australian jobs and local suppliers. Members can go out to some of the engineering firms particularly around Bassendean, Bayswater and Midland, and find a lot of the train components have been manufactured there. We are also working with private industry for some of the rail carriages for mining and other sectors to be manufactured here in Western Australia.

It just shows that when you have a bit of imagination in government, when you are prepared to take on some tough issues, you can get great outcomes. That is what this government has done, this minister has done and this cabinet has done, and we will have Western Australian-made railcars running on our network very soon. Some people—the Liberals and Nationals—said it could not be done. Once again, they were wrong.