

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

The SPEAKER: I give the call to the member for Mirrabooka, but we might just pause for about 30 seconds so that people who want to exit can exit and we can hear from the member. Member for Perth and member for Wanneroo, please sit. Minister for Housing! I want to hear the continuation of remarks from the member for Mirrabooka, but the number of conversations has made that impossible.

MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka) [2.53 pm]: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I was really bringing my comments to an end when we were interrupted by question time, but I will perhaps sum up where I was at and carry on from there. In talking about this very important bill, it is an opportunity to reflect on this government's great track record on rail. I talked about the new Forrestfield–Airport Link that was recently opened and reflected on railcar manufacturing in Bellevue. It was important to hear, just in question time, about the announcement today that BHP will be added to the list of those that are building railcars in Western Australia. Not only has the state government committed to building Metronet railcars at Bellevue, but also Rio Tinto announced in October last year that it would contract for its railcars to be built here, and now BHP is joining that list.

I was really making the point in my contribution on the Government Railways Amendment Bill 2021 that it has always been Labor governments that have been committed to building our rail network, and Labor governments that have had a vision about the importance of our public transport system and how important rail is to that system. When we compare our track record with that of the opposition, the comparison is really stark. The opposition promises much but delivers nothing, as it did in Ellenbrook, with Metro Area Express light rail to Mirrabooka, and when it told people that the Midland railway workshops would not close, but then immediately closed them once it was elected to government. Opposition members promise all manner of things and then do the exact opposite. By comparison, Labor governments are committed to public transport and to having a rail network that services the people of this state. Our Labor government is investing in building not only new rail, but also railcars, and we all know what that means for manufacturing, jobs, the economy and the community at large. I am always excited to talk about railways in any context.

I will bring my contribution to a close by just reflecting on how important this legislation is. It is incredibly important that we have appropriate penalties in place to discourage reckless and inappropriate behaviour. This is a really important bill that will significantly increase the fines associated with trespass and will hopefully act as a strong deterrent to people who might think it is fun, cool or Instagrammable to behave in crazy and dangerous ways on the public rail system, which not only puts their lives at risk but also endangers the community and has an impact on train drivers who witness or are involved in terrible incidents, as that stays with them for a long time.

I commend the minister for her work on this bill, having first introduced it in 2019 and then brought it back to the house now. I commend the bill to the house.

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield — Deputy Speaker) [2.57 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to contribute to the debate on the Government Railways Amendment Bill 2021. As clearly outlined by the member for Mirrabooka, rail and Labor go together. There is a long history of the Labor Party being very progressive within the rail sector, whether in building railways or, as we heard mentioned a few times today, the bringing back of railcar manufacturing to Western Australia.

I will shortly touch on the most recent piece of railway that has been opened, the Forrestfield–Airport Link, but I want to digress a little first.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.A. Munday): Could members either move in or out of the room? It is a bit hard to hear. Thank you very much.

Mr S.J. PRICE: As I have mentioned a few times, I come from Harvey. Where we lived in Harvey was probably from here to the dining room away from the rail line that ran from Perth down to Bunbury. Quite often, we would go out and play on the rail reserve and on the rail line. When trains came past, we would jump off and let them go by, and then get back on. It would probably be termed trespassing these days, but I am pretty sure every young child in Harvey had a set of coins that had been put on the tracks and run over by a train. The rail line was in close proximity to where I lived. As you drive off South Western Highway towards Harvey, there are two roads either side of the main rail line—Hackett Road is just before the railway line and Herbert Road is just after it, which is where we used to live. Trains used to run constantly during the development of industry down there, the Pinjarra alumina refinery and then the Wagerup refinery. When the Worsley Alumina refinery was developed, the amount of freight and the number of trains on the lines increased over time, but, unfortunately, so did the number of incidents with those trains.

As a young kid, one of the most exciting things to do was to catch the *Australind* into Bunbury. The *Australind* was an old wooden-framed train with windows that opened. It used to clatter along. As a young fella, I finished my schooling in Bunbury. I would catch the bus from Harvey to Bunbury to go to the Catholic college there. In my final couple of years, the *Australind* was replaced with a new *Australind*. It was quite strange the first time I caught the new train. That was back in 1987, probably before most of the new members in this place were born! The interesting thing about the new *Australind* at the time was that we could not open the windows.

Move forward 35 years, and that same train is still running up and down those tracks. As we know, it is well past its 30-year use-by date. The McGowan government made a commitment in 2020 to replace the rail sets for the *Australind*, and that is part of the reintroduction of railcar manufacturing in Bellevue happening now. The old *Australind* is coming up for 35 years of service and it has a significant number of issues. Once again, the previous government—we have heard from many of the previous speakers about its failings—failed to plan to replace a 30-year-old train that was dangerous for passengers. But the McGowan Labor government has invested in rail and will continue to develop rail and make sure new lines are built, as it has done with Metronet—I will talk a little bit more about that shortly—and railcar manufacturing. The Premier's announcement that new rail ore cars will be built in Western Australia is a significant outcome for the state economy, the people of Western Australia and employment opportunities. Working for the railways was a major source of employment for tradespeople in the state. When the rail workshops shut down, a lot of trades and opportunities for apprenticeships in trades were lost as well. Bringing that back creates more opportunities to fill the skills voids that we have. We are now seeing the impact of decisions taken years ago.

Whenever we humans interact or interface with rail it needs to be in a very controlled and organised manner. Uncontrolled interactions between the two always have a terrible outcome, whether that is a person and a train or a vehicle and a train. We have heard some horrific examples and we need to look at a number of places around the state where potential issues could arise.

This bill refers to trespass. The minister's second reading speech states —

The purpose of this bill is to increase the maximum fine for trespass on the rail network from \$200 to \$5 000, to introduce a modified penalty provision and to delete the provision ... abolished in 2003.

We need to ensure that people are disincentivised from trespassing on rail networks. Over time, we have seen improvement in the quality of railcars and networks, and an expansion of the rail network into very populated areas. As a consequence, we have seen a significant increase in the occurrences of trespass.

I have a big concern about the recently opened Forrestfield–Airport Link. It is a magnificent piece of rail infrastructure. It is one of the largest pieces of public infrastructure that the government has ever put in place. It connects High Wycombe to the international and domestic airports, then Redcliffe station, through to Bayswater station to connect onto the Midland line to run into Perth and then through Subiaco to terminate at Claremont station. We have put in place a development that will be life changing for all the people who live in the eastern suburbs and foothills, especially High Wycombe, Maida Vale and Forrestfield. Over time, we will see higher density development, more employment opportunities and more housing, and people will have greater ability to get around Perth and the state. The opening day was absolutely amazing for the number of people who jumped onto the train to go through the tunnel out to High Wycombe and experience our newest piece of public infrastructure. People were amazed by it. It is an 8.5 kilometre tunnel. It takes two minutes to get from High Wycombe to Airport Central. It is another two minutes from Airport Central to Redcliffe, and then two minutes to Bayswater station. It takes 22 minutes to get into Perth. It takes 30 minutes to get to Subiaco and 38 minutes to get to Claremont.

We have put in an absolutely amazing piece of infrastructure. I have been monitoring it since it opened to see what the usage is. We built a multitier car park. The previous government's original plan was to have 1 800 cars in front of the station; it would have been a sea of bitumen. The minister took on some feedback and made some positive changes that meant moving the car park to the side of the station, building a multideck car park and allowing land in front, the forecourt, of the High Wycombe station to be developed. It will be incredible when we get to that. Every day since it has been open, I estimate there have been 100 to 200 cars in the car park; the bottom deck of the car park has been pretty full. People are catching the train to get to work in town, and that is taking cars off the roads. That is what having good public transport is all about. It is about enabling people to get into town without using their vehicles. It has been designed and constructed in a way that is very access-friendly for people who want to cycle and ride. I believe it is the only station in Perth that has double-decker bike racks, which means it can take more bikes than any other station.

The genesis for this legislation was the footage we all saw of a young person jumping off a train going over Fremantle Railway Bridge. As I said earlier, my concern is that we now have 16 or 17 kilometres of rail in two 8.5-kilometre tunnels for people to try to get into and do their stupid social media stuff. I suppose a lot of security and deterrents have been put around the portals, or the dives, at the start and finish of the tunnels to stop

people gaining access to them. The tunnels are open 24 hours a day and there is a real risk that someone will try to get into one of them by following the rail line, so it is extremely important that we do more to disincentivise people from trespassing on rail land. As mentioned, there are a number of aspects to this, and it is not just about increasing the penalty, as in this legislation. Education programs are being run and a lot of signage and information is being provided to all age groups and school groups. It is a significant issue that we need to keep on top of because the unfortunate consequences are catastrophic, for not just the person who is injured, but also the rail workers. One of the biggest fears those drivers have identified as a workplace risk is being involved in some sort of incident like that. If someone undertakes a stupid activity to put something on social media, they face a consequence and, I suppose, an element of accountability, but for the poor person doing their job driving the train, there is no responsibility or accountability and they should not have to be put in a situation like that through someone else's inappropriate behaviour. The more we can do to protect the train drivers and other workers on the railways, whether they work for the railway patrol, as first responders, or anyone who has to go to a situation where there has been a human-railcar interface, the better off we will all be. Our new piece of infrastructure is fabulous, but it comes with the additional challenge of stopping people from trying to get their five seconds of fame on social media. The more we can do to stop that, the better off we will be.

I would like to thank the minister for her continued work in the areas of transport and rail. The number of Metronet projects we have going is 17 or so, which is absolutely incredible. As our rail network expands throughout the city, these types of legislative amendments will become more and more important. I commend the bill to the house.

MS H.M. BEAZLEY (Victoria Park) [3.11 pm]: Today I will speak on the Government Railways Amendment Bill 2021 to stress the importance of our responsibility as members of Parliament to keep our communities safe. Safety is of paramount concern as we extend our rail network through Metronet. Trespassing on the rail network is a serious offence that impacts on the safety of not only the trespasser, but also the train drivers, the public, the rail workers and our first responders. Too often, rail safety precautions are not taken seriously by some members of the public or not enough weight is given to the thought that it deserves. All too commonly, dangerous stunts have been performed, particularly by young people, as a means of gaining attention both in person and online. Perth's metropolitan trains can quickly reach speeds up of to 110 kilometres per hour. One wrong step, combined with these speeds and our electrified systems, can result in very grim outcomes that rest on the shoulders of train drivers, first responders and the families of the offenders.

The severity of trespassing has grown in WA since 2016, as have the corresponding adverse impacts on rail safety, railway operations, railway workers, and the community as a whole. In April 2018, members may remember an incident involving a train surfer on the Fremantle rail line. At the time, footage posted to Facebook and Instagram showed a young male train surfer waving to the camera before leaping off the moving train as it crossed the Fremantle Railway Bridge. This young man was seemingly ignorant of the effect of momentum on his trajectory, as he nearly hit at huge cement pylon before slamming into the Derbarl Yerrigan. Compounding this man's complete disregard for his own safety is the fact that he ignored the presence of the train's overhead high-voltage wires, which are fully capable of killing a person with a 25 000-volt electric arc. A similar incident three years prior saw a teenager clasping to the back of a train between Leederville and Glendalough train stations. Luckily for both of these individuals, they are alive to tell their tales. They also walked away only \$200 lighter due to the associated fine.

Understandably, in response to these incidents and others, the McGowan government committed to increasing the fine for trespassing on our rail lines. Currently, the maximum fine for trespass under the Government Railways Act 1904 is \$200. This bill will increase the penalties to \$5 000. This newly significant fine will discourage premeditated and deliberate acts of trespass and reduce the risk of serious injury. This fine of up to \$5 000 will apply to any person who commits the offence of trespass upon any part of the railway not being a station, platform, railway crossing or similar areas prohibited from access to the public by law. This increased penalty will also cover the substantial fees of up to \$3 000 involved in processing each offence through the courts. I think this will be a welcome outcome for many in our community who do not want their taxpayer funds to cover the court costs necessary to deal with what is demonstrably stupid risk-taking and illegal behaviour.

The amendments in this bill were initially introduced in 2019, but the bill's progress was halted by the state election. The reintroduction of these amendments reassures me that the occurrence of these types of risky trespasses will reduce. We are lucky in our local community that the incidents I mentioned did not result in death or serious injury to offenders. Other train surfers and trespassers on rail networks across the country have not been so lucky.

In June 1988, a 17-year-old Melbournian lost both his legs when he climbed outside a moving train carriage and collided with a railway sign, falling underneath the wheels of the train. In 1992, a 15-year-old and a 23-year-old died in separate incidents on the Sydney rail network after climbing onto the roof of their respective trains and being electrocuted. In 1996, a 17-year-old died when train surfing in Melbourne, colliding with a bridge and falling into the path of another train. The next year saw another death in Melbourne when a 16-year-old was found dead on the roof of a train from suspected electrocution.

In 2003, a 15-year-old in Melbourne was severely burnt and knocked unconscious when they touched the train's overhead power supply while train surfing. In 2008, another 20-year-old died via electrocution due to train surfing on a Melbourne line. Just four years later, there was another death in Melbourne, this time of a 17-year-old who was train surfing who also encountered the overhead wires. In the same year, another Melbourne teenager suffered serious injuries when they fell from the roof of a moving train carriage, landing on the track bed and receiving severe, lifelong head injuries.

The list goes on. In 2020, there was a tragic death in Sydney when a 20-year-old decided to train surf in one of the network's train tunnels and fell off. These are tragic and completely preventable deaths and injuries. We do not want to see these types of awful outcomes in WA.

I care about rail safety in particular, as the oldest passenger rail line in Perth—the Armadale line—runs through the heart of my electorate of Victoria Park. Pairing this bill's new safety measures with the delivery of this government's Metronet rail projects, which includes raising the rail through my electorate, will greatly improve public safety. Raising the rail through Victoria Park will remove the old, quite open, pedestrian railway crossings as well as the boom gates down the line. These upgrades will significantly reduce the risk to pedestrians and cyclists moving around the rail, as well as reduce boom gate traffic congestion and its associated risks. The Victoria Park–Canning level crossing removal project includes replacing five level crossings at Mint Street, Oats Street and Welshpool Road in my electorate, as well as providing elevated rail at Hamilton Street and Wharf Street. Four new elevated stations will be built at Carlisle, Oats Street, Queens Park and Cannington, and around six hectares of versatile public space and better community connections will be created through the new elevated rail.

Another highlight of Metronet is the new Forrestfield–Airport Link, commonly referred to as the airport line, which has just opened. This project delivers three new stations: Redcliffe, Airport Central and High Wycombe. The opening of the airport link marks the first time that passengers in Perth can travel directly between the city and the airport via rail. When people visit a foreign city and are yet to find their feet and their bearings, often their first thought is to ride the railway line directly from the airport to the city centre. For the first time, WA can now be proud to be added to the ever-expanding list of cities worldwide that provide this level of accessibility to greet new visitors and welcome home residents returning from abroad. Efficient public transportation is a cornerstone of sustainable urban design and the functioning of liveable cities. Green transportation such as Western Australia's existing railways alongside Metronet's proposed railway networks will support and enhance walkable urbanism. These facilities will simplify our lives and reduce congestion and our dependence on cars. They are safer and less costly, and will reduce our environmental footprint.

Passenger rail has been a part of our state's history since the 1870s. Within the chronicle of our local rail history is our history of local railcar manufacturing. The first railway workshops in Western Australia were located at Fremantle and shifted to Midland in 1904. For close to a century, the Midland railway workshops were the main workshops of the Western Australia government. These workshops were vital to the development and maintenance of our state's rail system and provided an absolutely crucial training ground for skilled tradespeople. The workshops manufactured rolling stock, constructed and maintained engines, and undertook all major rail maintenance. In 1993, the then Liberal government, after promising in the preceding election campaign that it would not close the workshops, announced that the workshops would be closed and pulled the plug less than a year later. The closure of the Midland railway workshops not only ended the operation of an industrial complex, an invaluable training ground, but also unravelled a close-knit social community. In the years that followed, many thousands of former workers felt deeply the loss of solidarity and pride in the craftsmanship that characterised their working lives in Midland. Former Midland railway workshop workers living in my community still talk to me about this today—almost three decades later.

Today, our McGowan Labor government, under Minister Saffioti, has brought back railcar manufacturing to WA. We have brought back our community's pride in local railcar manufacturing. We have brought back a valuable skills training ground. We have brought back the opportunity for community creation through a strong workplace backed by government investment. In August, the first train built in WA in almost 30 years rolled out of our government's new Bellevue railcar facility in Perth's east. Over the next decade, over 240 new C-series railcars will now be built locally. Our new trains will undergo rigorous testing to ensure that all future WA-made railcars are ready for passenger services and that the expected 103 000 daily boardings on our rail lines—including the Armadale line, which is used by my community—are undertaken as safely, reliably and smoothly as possible. It is under this leadership and these policy settings that businesses have followed our example.

Just today, the Premier announced that BHP has committed to constructing 140 iron ore railcars in Perth over the next four years. This follows Rio Tinto's announcement in October last year that it would use local suppliers to build all the railcars for its Pilbara operations. Businesses have the confidence to make these decisions because of the example set by this government's leadership and the strong economy that our sound fiscal management has delivered, and through our purposeful policy settings and investment initiatives, such as our \$15 million local

manufacturing investment fund to help existing businesses build iron ore wagons locally as part of this government's WA jobs plan. We are supporting WA businesses to ensure we can continue to keep a long-term pipeline of work.

I am proud of Labor's historic and ongoing commitment to local manufacturing. I am proud of our renewed investment in rail yards, railcars, rail yard workers and training—investments that have, in the past, created the careers of generations of West Aussies. WA Labor has a proud history in rail and we are building a strong future.

Just for a moment, I would like to make a quick comparison. Labor brought back WA-made railcars, it opened our new Bellevue railway facility and it is supporting businesses to do the same. The Liberals outsourced manufacturing and closed our Midland railway workshops. Labor is extending our rail network through Metronet. It has built new stations, removed level crossings and improved road safety for all users and it has delivered rail transport to our airport. The Liberals closed our Fremantle passenger line—something that our community has never forgotten, like with the closure of the Midland railway workshops. The Liberals did not invest in rail for the entirety of their tenure and they did not deliver a centimetre of new rail line. Labor also takes the safety of all rail users, rail workers and rail infrastructure seriously.

The Government Railways Amendment Bill 2021 before us today reflects the McGowan Labor government's commitment to public and industry safety. Its provisions will act as a deterrent to potential offenders, reduce the number of occurrences of trespass and, importantly, reduce the risks and adverse outcomes associated with offences of trespass on railways. I am pleased to commend the Government Railways Amendment Bill 2021 to the house and I look forward to its passage through both chambers.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition) [3.28 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution on the Government Railways Amendment Bill 2021. I will start by commending the minister for bringing the amendments to the Parliament. We have indicated our support for the legislation, particularly in light of the community impact that the actions we are trying to deter have on train drivers and first responders. Without question, it is important that this impact is deterred. I have listened to other members in the chamber talk about the importance of this bill in terms of our safety. I want to take the opportunity to talk about passive rail crossings in regional Western Australia. Although they are not directly related to this legislation, they fall within that remit and I hope that passive rail crossings are on the government's agenda. Without question, the opposition is supportive of this legislation and we would very much like to see that safety aspect extended to passive rail crossings. I have raised this matter in the past with the minister in this house. With a bit of indulgence, I would like to recap briefly.

Passive rail crossings in regional Western Australia is an issue close to my heart. The vast majority—not all of them—would be in the agricultural region. Unfortunately, 22 years ago three young lives were lost not very far from Northam—where I live now and in my electorate—at a Yarramony crossing. Some members in the chamber will be familiar with the campaign mounted by Lara Jensen, the sister of one of those people who lost their lives. Back in July 2000, 22 years ago, her brother Christian and two of his friends, Jess Broad and Hilary Smith, lost their lives. We are still talking about some of the issues that could be addressed to prevent any further loss of life or serious injury. Again, it comes back to not only the tragic and horrific circumstance in which a young person, or any person, loses their life, but the impact that has on first responders, the train drivers—if one reads the evidence in the coroner's reports from the reviews of these incidents—and also the community around them.

Although the Yarramony passive level crossing in my electorate has become the driver for this campaign, a national campaign is occurring because of the loss of life at passive rail crossings in other states. Three state coroner reports or inquiries have concluded for that particular incident at the Yarramony crossing that a factor in the fatality was the inadequate lighting at the crossing and on the train to make it visible to the three people who were crossing the rail line. It has been very well canvassed in previous reports that no alcohol or speed was involved in that particular incident. Those people simply did not see the train. I can tell members, having driven on many of those main roads from which those crossings come off, that for anyone in that circumstance it is very disconcerting to find that a train is running parallel to you and you have absolutely no idea that it is there. Many of these rail crossings are marked with only a Give Way sign. In some locations there has been some improvement with ditch lights, but the combination of improving the lighting on trains and also the crossing interventions would improve safety immensely.

Back in October 2001, the coroner recommended immediate action to get lights on trains. Further work was done on what might be improved at the 509 passive rail crossings across the state, 410 of which have Stop signs and 108 have Give Way signs. The families involved in this campaign for so long have been repeatedly told that the volume of traffic on some of these crossings does not warrant an upgrade or further intervention and that driver behaviour is sometimes the thing that needs to be focused on. People have also commented to me that this is a driver issue. There is no doubt that when it comes to things like this there is a combination of factors on all different fronts, but some relatively easy interventions could be put in place.

On 4 October, I was made aware that another railway crossing review was being conducted by the state government and I understand that it is looking into signage at all main line level crossings across WA. I would say that, at the

very bare minimum, those crossings should have Stop signs and that is what the families believe. We think that the crossings could be far better. Ideally, they would have lights powered by solar panels that are triggered when a train approaches so that people are aware a train is approaching.

Petitions have been circulated, with signatures collected, all over the state. The Country Women's Association has thrown its support behind the program, as have regional businesses. The community resource centre network has been instrumental in making sure that people know where they can go to sign these petitions. Experts in rail safety and engineering, such as Dr Brett Hughes, are supporting the call for change. Indeed, the previous federal Liberal–National coalition government committed \$160 million towards a regional Australia level crossing program in the last federal budget. I hope that the state government has been in contact with the federal government and asked for that program to be retained and that there will be an opportunity down the track for the state government to cooperate and collaborate with the federal government to roll out the funding in Western Australia. We are not asking for it to happen overnight, but it would make an enormous difference to the people who have been working on this to see a program rolled out.

It is a big task. There are lots of competing requirements for funding, but for 22 years, these families have been calling for change, and that is too long. I will be the first to acknowledge in this place that governments of both persuasions have failed to act. Therefore, with the reinvigoration of this issue a year or so ago by Lara Jensen, Merrilea Broad and the family members impacted by this horrific accident, I have made it one of my responsibilities as a local member to use my position to add weight to this issue so that it will not be another 22 years before we see any action. I hope that we will see action sooner rather than later. Christian, Jess and Hilary lost their lives 22 years ago and the impact of that loss has lasted a lifetime for not only their families, but also their communities. When we talk about rail safety, as many other members have commented today, the importance of having safe access and being able to construct rail corridors and infrastructure that mitigates the risks when humans interact with these pieces of infrastructure is very important.

I again congratulate the Minister for Transport on the amendments to this piece of legislation. I ask that this matter remains on the agenda to be addressed in the future, hopefully at the next state budget.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [3.33 pm] — in reply: I thank everyone for their contribution to the debate. I will not linger on some general comments to this bill, but I acknowledge that the issue of trespass on our rail system is something that we take very seriously. It is something that can endanger the entire community, including the passengers on the rail lines, so we really want to try to reduce and limit trespass on our train lines.

Of course, as the member for Victoria Park highlighted, we do not have a closed rail system; we have an open rail system whereby there is interaction between drivers of railcars and the public. We do have a bit of a closed system now for 8.5 kilometres from Forrestfield to Bayswater, but unlike in some other countries where it is entirely closed, there is interaction, and we try to limit and control that. That is why the level crossing removal project, through the metropolitan area to begin with, is important in separating road users and rail users and the general community from railcars. Again, it will help improve safety in those areas.

I want to talk about some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA about rail crossing removal through regional WA. We have increased funding to improve rail crossing safety across the state. We have injected \$30 million; that commenced in 2020 and will go to 2026. Those additional funds will help address, and progressively address, those crossings that are not active and try to improve signage and, where we can, install boom gates and improve the lights and other controls at those intersections.

Works are already underway. We have upgraded three flashing light–controlled crossings to boom gate controls. We have upgraded one passively controlled crossing to active boom gate controls. We have upgraded one passively controlled crossing to active flashing light controls. We have renewed 17 actively controlled crossings, upgraded one passively controlled pedestrian crossing to active controls and renewed five pedestrian crossings to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act. We will continue. Those are just some of the works that have been delivered. To date, eight flashing light to boom gate upgrades, three Stop sign to flashing light upgrades and 12 flashing light or boom gate renewals have been delivered. Three passive to active pedestrian crossing upgrades, five pedestrian crossing upgrades and two new pedestrian crossing installations have also been delivered. In addition, the following works are to be completed this year: three flashing light to boom gate upgrades, six flashing light or boom gate renewals and six pedestrian crossing upgrades. As has been highlighted, there are 3 000 railway level crossings across WA, 1 327 of which are on public roads. The annual cost of maintaining these rail crossings is \$2.4 million, but we will also inject money into improving the safety at these level crossings.

Another program that was announced more recently were the upgrades to 11 railway crossings along the *Australind* line, and these include flashing lights to be replaced with a boom gate at Leslie Street Serpentine; Waterloo Road, Bicton; and Lakes Road, North Dardanup. At Forrest Avenue, Bunbury, there will be a pedestrian crossing renewal, and flashing lights to be replaced with a boom gate at both Station Street and Clifton Road, Yarloop. At

Extract from Hansard

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Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Hannah Beazley; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Rita Saffioti

Johnston Road, Yarloop, there will be a renewal of the flashing light control. There will be a pedestrian crossing renewal at Watkins Road, Mundijong. At Uduc Road, Harvey North, there will be an automatic gate pedestrian crossing upgrade. At Uduc Road, Harvey South, there will be a pedestrian crossing renewal. At Peterson Road, Warawarrup—hard for someone who does not roll their Rs well—there will be a renewal of the flashing light control. Those are some of the works that we continue to do. As part of the federal budget process, we are seeking to keep all the funding that we were previously allocated. I am confident we can do that, and we have had some very constructive discussions with the federal government on that front.

More generally, in relation to a point raised by the Deputy Leader of the National Party about transit guards and cultural awareness training, I will highlight that as part of their training course transit officers receive a half-day session on cultural awareness. This unit is delivered by an Aboriginal elder and is designed specifically for some of the challenges faced by PTA officers. The half-day training session includes information on Aboriginal culture pre and post colonisation, the impact of past policies on the Aboriginal community, how fear and trauma affect engagement and effective communication with Aboriginal people. In addition, transit officers receive an accredited unit to coordinate the provision of quality security services to clients. This nationally recognised unit of competency includes a specific learning module on cultural awareness. This unit includes discussions of the following topics: diversity within cultures, effective communication, minimising misunderstanding, first impressions and stereotypes. Furthermore, transit officers work with Aboriginal liaison officers employed by the PTA, which provides ongoing cultural awareness to transit officers.

I thank members for their support. I acknowledge that we need to try to eliminate and reduce the interaction of people with our train lines, in particular when people proactively seek to trespass on train lines, creating massive security and safety concerns for everyone involved. I recognise the challenges with level crossings, both in the metropolitan area and in regional Western Australia. There are challenges involved with the high number of level crossings that we have and the safety concerns that have been raised. We continue to work to try to improve safety at those level crossings in regional WA. I thank everyone for their support for the bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Ms R. Saffioti (Minister for Transport)**, and transmitted to the Council.