

Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Bill Marmion; Mrs Liza Harvey; Dr David Honey; Mr David Michael; Amber-Jade Sanderson; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr John Carey; Mr Dean Nalder; Mr Stephen Price

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## METRONET — STAGE 1

### *Motion*

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse)** [4.01 pm]: I move —

That this house calls on the McGowan Labor government in its fourth parliamentary year, to finally outline the total cost of stage 1 Metronet, including taxpayer operating subsidies, and to outline to the house when stage 1 will be fully operational.

This motion that the opposition is moving points to a number of things in relation to this government's handling of its signature policy. It highlights issues that we have seen under the McGowan government in relation to transparency—or the lack of—and this government's inability to deliver in the important transport portfolio. To start with, it certainly highlights a great departure from the gold standard of transparency that the McGowan government promised in the lead-up to the election. It is a theme of the McGowan Labor government that there has been a state of secrecy, as highlighted by many journalists. One particular journalist, Dan Mercer, wrote in *The West Australian* in 2018 about the state's secrecy we have seen under this government's watch. Time after time, we have seen question after question not being answered by the McGowan Labor government, particularly in answer to questions about the true cost of Metronet and the Metronet projects.

It has been a great frustration for the Liberal opposition trying to ascertain the cost to Western Australian taxpayers of the expansion of the rail network. I should state from the outset that the expansion of Perth's rail network is something that we on this side of the house certainly support. However, what is quite important is that the government is up-front and honest with the taxpayers of Western Australia and the opposition in answering important questions on these important projects. That is the issue here. The Liberal opposition has asked the Minister for Transport in Parliament specific questions on each Metronet project about the benefit–cost ratios, the annual operating costs and the annual operating subsidies but we are yet to receive definitive answers to them. The feedback we have had is that they are under development and the important figures and information are yet to be determined.

The Minister for Transport has also refused to provide information to Parliament. The Auditor General's finding on 3 February 2019 stated that two of the four decisions by the Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti, MLA, to refuse access to documents were not reasonable and therefore not appropriate. That was the ruling by the Auditor General in relation to the unwillingness of the minister to provide information. One of the pieces of information was in relation to the minutes of the Metronet Taskforce meeting held on 27 February 2018, which related specifically to issues of safety that have plagued this project under this government's watch. I quote from the Auditor General where he states —

The decision by the Minister for Transport, the Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, not to provide Parliament with minutes of the METRONET Taskforce meeting held on 27 February 2018 was not reasonable and therefore not appropriate as parts of the minutes were not Cabinet-in-confidence and could have been provided.

We have asked question after question on this—on 20 February, 21 February, 14 March, 20 March and 11 April 2019—but the minister has continued to refuse to provide this information. On Monday, 17 February this year *Business News* had an article regarding cost delays and trouble for Metronet. It was quite extraordinary—unbelievable, in fact—that the minister was unavailable for an interview or to provide any comment about such a signature project when asked specifically about the costs of this project. This is a minister in hiding. It is a minister who has not been up-front with the people of Western Australia over what should be some very basic and reasonable steps. Considering the Auditor General has made such findings and been very clear that there is no reason that information could not be provided in the public interest, and given we have seen such significant issues around public safety, particularly on the Forrestfield–Airport Link, it is quite extraordinary.

Last year we asked the Premier to explain why there were huge cost differences between what Labor promised in the lead up to the 2017 state election for Metronet and what was submitted to Infrastructure Australia. As I stated, the minister and the government have not been up-front regarding the true cost of Metronet. As an opposition, all we have in our power is the ability to ask a series of questions and get information when it is available. Fortunately, we have been able to obtain a leaked document that outlined a request to Infrastructure Australia from this government. We have therefore highlighted and documented those costings to get an indication of the true cost of this important rail project. In relation to the Metronet costings and the question that the Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier on 7 August 2019, in response to the cost blowouts on the Metronet project, the Premier stated —

The comparison, which, as I understand it, was done by the Leader of the Opposition's office, compared a range of projects to which there are additional projects with the projects we took to the state election. What we sent to the commonwealth was a range of additional projects to the ones we took to the state election.

He repeated that. Then he went on to state “We are still doing final costings.” In the Premier's response he stated that one of the reasons for the blowout was that additional projects were added in. It is quite clear, and it is fair to

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state, it was not the opposition that added these additional projects. Those additional projects were listed as Metronet projects in the request to Infrastructure Australia funding. If anyone seeks any information on those additional projects, which include the Midland station relocation, Bellevue station, Karnup station and the Mandurah station parking, it is quite clear they are branded and included in the costings for Metronet. We tried to seek clarification about this important point. This response from the Minister for Transport to a question really highlights what we are dealing with in this government's management of the transport portfolio. In a question to the Minister for Transport we referred to a question asked by the Leader of the Opposition to the Premier. It says —

I refer to your answer ... and also to the answer of the Premier to Question Without Notice No. 570, in which the Premier stated, in relation to Metronet projects, "what we sent to the Commonwealth was a range of additional projects to the ones we took to the state election.... We sent to the commonwealth a whole bunch of new projects ...

We asked this question of the Minister for Transport —

- (a) Can the Minister detail each of the "range of additional projects to the ones (the Government) took to the state election" for which funding has been sought;
- (b) What is the total cost of each "new project";
- (c) What does each "new project" entail;
- (d) How was each project prioritised; and
- (e) Will the Minister table the business case for each new project and if no, why?

The Minister for Transport replied —

The Question on Notice to which the member is referring responded to a political document created by the Leader of the Opposition's office in an attempt to undermine METRONET.

The list provided by the Premier included a range of projects for funding, some were specific election commitments and others were not.

The State Government has been successful in securing record Federal funding for METRONET, despite calls from the Opposition for the Federal Government not to provide any.

That is a pretty pathetic response from the Minister for Transport. Once again, we are none the wiser about what should be a pretty simple question about what projects come under the Metronet planner. Just last week the Premier was still unable to answer in this place or explain to the WA public what the true cost of Metronet was. When he was asked in Parliament whether he would commit to tabling a total cost prior to the next selection, he could not give a straight answer. It is interesting that the Premier says that Metronet is under budget. When each of the key projects identified as part Metronet are isolated, it is quite clear that that could not be further from the truth. In his answer the Premier conveniently referred to \$347 million in savings from railcar acquisition, but did not mention that the Thornlie-Cockburn line had blown out in cost by 51 per cent from the promised \$474 million to \$716 million, which was a figure that came from the government's own media statement. It should also be noted that the savings delivered by the railcar acquisition would be drawn out only over the 10 years of this \$1.6 billion project. When asked again the next day, 12 February, in Parliament, the Premier could not even give a straight answer. I quote *Hansard*. The Leader of the Opposition asked —

Now that the Premier has had 24 hours to get himself across the facts, can he please update the house on the cost of Metronet stage 1?

In response to that question about the key signature projects our Premier of this state said —

If the member wants to go to the budget, she will see the exact costings at this point in time. Obviously, they are adjusted at each budget and midyear review.

It was a pretty simple question about the McGowan Labor government's key transport projects, which is something that the other side of the house and many in the community certainly like to talk about. It is extraordinary that going into the fourth parliamentary year this government is still unable to put a figure on what this project costs. In the absence of any clarification from the minister and any reasonable response from the Premier about what the cost of Metronet is, and given the fact that there is that document I pointed to outlining the requested funding for Metronet, which includes the Perth rail capacity initiative titled "Metronet" and which lists the Midland station relocation, Bellevue, Karnup, automated train control and the Mandurah station car park under Metronet, we can only assume that these important projects are part of Metronet. That is a fair assumption in the absence of any fair clarification from the minister responsible or the Premier. We understand that the true cost of Metronet has blown out by around \$2 billion from \$2.945 billion, as promised during the election campaign, to around \$5 billion. Last

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week, the Premier also stated in this house that the federal government's commitment was \$1.6 billion. That is not correct. The federal Liberal government's commitment to Metronet is \$2.3 billion. Despite receiving billions of dollars from the federal government, the McGowan Labor government has not laid a single inch of rail on new projects in three years since its election. If we put the additional projects to one side, we still see blowouts in time and cost on the original projects. We know that the Forrestfield–Airport Link is over a year late and it has been plagued with significant safety concerns. The Minister for Transport does not believe that this has been an additional cost to the WA taxpayer. I find that extraordinary and very difficult to believe. The Thornlie–Cockburn line project has blown out in cost by about 51 per cent and it is over a year late. The time frame for the Morley–Ellenbrook line is two years late and its cost has blown up by 15 per cent. The Yanchep extension cost has blown out by 30 per cent and it is a year behind schedule. The Byford extension cost has blown out by 65 per cent and, of course, the delays are unknown. That has blown out in cost from the promised \$291 million, and now we are looking at \$481 million. We still do not have the details of many other aspects of Metronet. I point to a report published on 28 October last year by Standard and Poor's. It states —

In addition, Western Australia's budgeted infrastructure program is relatively flat during the next few years, and smaller than it was in the first half of the decade. Expenditure on roads and public transport represents about 40% of the capital budget. This includes the government's signature Metronet rail extension program. In fiscal 2019, Western Australia delivered A\$5 billion of capital spending, about 20% lower than it had planned for in its 2018–2019 budget.

This indicates that this government has been unable to deliver in this portfolio as planned. It further states —

Our forecasts for the next few years assume capital underspends of about 10%.

I will now go through the projects in greater detail. The Morley–Ellenbrook line was promised to be an \$863 million project. We have since uncovered, through Infrastructure Australia's leaked letter, that it is now a \$1 billion project. The cost has blown out, as I stated earlier, by about 15 per cent. It is quite clear that this project will be about two years late. The federal commitment for this project has been on a 50–50 basis, with the federal government committing \$500 million towards this project. Members can imagine the frustration from the member for Pearce, who is a great advocate for this project. There is \$500 million on the table from the federal government to get this project moving. But to see three consecutive budgets without a specific commitment to the Morley–Ellenbrook line has been a great frustration for the federal member. The member for Pearce is quoted in an article from the *Echo News* of 28 March 2019 as saying —

“The federal Liberal government made good on that deal, allocating \$500m in the 2018 Budget, ensuring the project would become a reality,” he said.

...

“The federal Liberal government had a deal with WA Labor to fund Ellenbrook rail on a 50–50 basis ...  
... Labor's flip-flopping on this project is getting ridiculous—construction could have started if they weren't so interested in playing politics.

That is the frustration from the member for Pearce, who ensured that there is specific funding on the table for the Morley–Ellenbrook line. We certainly are looking forward to seeing some form of specific commitment to that project in the coming state budget. Members can hear in those comments the great frustration with the federal funding sitting there on the table and a commitment to start the project and construction last year, but then to have such delays in this project.

On 7 February 2017, the McGowan opposition released a media statement that highlighted that if it were elected, construction of the Ellenbrook line would commence in 2019 and be completed in 2022. The McGowan government's first three budgets, as I have stated, had no project-specific funding allocated in any year in the forward estimates for construction of the Morley–Ellenbrook line. On 4 August 2019, the government indicated that the tender would not be awarded until 2020, with construction to begin at some point after that. We were then able to uncover, from the Metronet project team, a slide that indicated that construction would not commence on this project until late 2021. The McGowan government has repeated claims that the upgrade of the Bayswater station is the first part of the Morley–Ellenbrook line, but what is also clear is that the upgrade of the Bayswater station has always been part of the Forrestfield–Airport Link as well. I think it is quite a stretch to bring in other projects and suggest that that is the start of construction when, quite clearly, the government's own time line of events, provided by the Metronet team, indicates that we are looking at late 2021.

In seeking some clarification on the timing of these projects, we would also like to know when an additional bus will be going to Morley, because it is a clear part of the government's plan for the Morley–Ellenbrook line. We know that the so-called Morley–Ellenbrook line bypasses the centre of Morley and the activity centre that is the Galleria. With so much work and talk happening on both sides regarding the value of the transit-oriented developments that

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support activity centres, it is quite extraordinary that the government has taken the move to bypass that important centre. The indicative site of the station for Morley is about two kilometres from the town centre, which supports thousands of shoppers and more than 200 small businesses. The current plan that has been uncovered will require a bus to bus people from that station to the Morley town centre.

It is similar in some ways to the McGowan government's substandard plan for the Forrestfield–Airport Link, which also required a bus to the town centre. At this point, it is worth pointing out that the former government's Perth and Peel transport plan had been put together by Main Roads. It was not a political document; it was developed by engineers and staff within the department, and it supported a connection to Morley as part of a future rail. Therefore, I can only assume that the member for Morley and members on the other side of the house who support transit-oriented developments will be pretty disappointed in this current plan. I point to the fact that when we are seeking clarification on the delivery of Metronet, that bus to Morley is an important part of it because the Morley–Ellenbrook line clearly requires it. It is a simple request. The motion is simple and states —

That this house calls on the McGowan Labor government in its fourth parliamentary year, to finally outline the total cost of the stage 1 Metronet, including taxpayer operating subsidies, and to outline to the house when stage 1 will be fully operational.

We know that \$474 million was promised for the Thornlie–Cockburn Link and, according to the Premier's own media statement, that this project has blown out by 51 per cent and is over a year late. The media statement reads —

The project was originally budgeted at \$535.8 million.

This is still a departure from what was promised. It continues —

The revised cost is largely attributed to relocating third party infrastructure (\$82.7 million), improved wages for workers (\$20.2 million), minimising network disruption and meeting environmental requirements.

It is interesting to point out that \$20.2 million has been dedicated to improved wages for workers on this project. Given there are 1 680 workers on this project, it works out to a pay rise of about \$12 000 a worker for the lifetime of this project, which is quite extraordinary.

This side of the house would like some clarification on that. We know frontline officers, many in the public service, will only get a \$1 000 pay rise. I think that questions need to be asked about why an additional \$12 000 is being made available for workers on the Thornlie–Cockburn line for the life of that project and why \$20 million has been committed to that.

In relation to timing, as I have stated, we were promised that the project would commence construction in 2019, but major works will not start until 2020. We know that train services will not be available until 2023. I refer to an excerpt from last year's *Hansard* on the consideration in detail of the Railway (METRONET) Amendment Bill 2019 about the Morley–Ellenbrook rail line. I sought some clarification and asked the minister —

Just to follow up from my question before, the minister said that contract finalisation for Yanchep and Thornlie will be later this year —

That is 2019 —

Does that mean that construction is set to start next year?

The minister's response was —

No, the construction is in two parts. There is the main contract, and then there are forward works. The forward works will start this year and major construction will depend on the mobilisation of the companies. We will find out when we announce the main contractor when exactly they intend to mobilise and where, because it will be subject to how they build these two projects.

Once again, that is pretty vague and, once again, the minister was being very unclear about the real time line for this project.

I move on to the Yanchep rail extension. We were promised that the cost of that project would be \$368 million, but that has now blown out by 38 per cent and is about a year behind schedule. The government promised that construction would commence in 2019 and be completed by 2021. We now know that the early works only started in 2019 and that rail services will not be available until 2022. There has been a blowout in the Byford rail extension by 65 per cent. As I stated earlier, the delays are unknown, but we look forward to the business case being delivered later this year. We understand that the construction time frames will be confirmed once that final business case is presented.

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The Midland extension to Bellevue is now off the cards until after the Midland station is complete. We know this from the Metronet website. Shifting—or early works—of the new station will happen this year. There has been no timing or costs on the McGowan government’s promised extension to Bellevue three years after coming to government. The Metronet website clearly states —

The options analysis found that staging the extension to Bellevue after the new Midland Station is complete not only presents the best opportunity to manage the existing transport constraints in the Midland city centre but will also deliver the best land use outcomes.

In the meantime, work will continue in planning for a future rail extension to Bellevue or beyond.

I now turn to the Forrestfield–Airport Link. It is questionable whether or not it is part of Metronet, but when I talk about cost blowouts, I certainly have not included the cost blowouts for that. At the same time, the government is not being up-front either about whether there will be blowouts on this project. I want to say at the outset that it is an outstanding project. It is a fantastic project that will finally provide a rail link to our airport. It will add to the great investment that the former Liberal–National government undertook in the eastern suburbs, including a great hospital and investment in roads. It is an improvement on Labor’s alternative, which was a substandard plan that would not even have gone to the airport but would have required a bus several kilometres away. What we have seen since Labor has come to government is a series of serious safety issues and a lot of secrecy and significant delays. In order, they have been: in November 2017, WorkCover issued an improvement notice, and brackets and frames were required to be fit for purpose; in July 2018, a 26-year-old New Zealand man was left in a critical condition after being struck by a flailing hose; in September 2018, the Public Transport Authority identified a failure to react to safety breaches; on 27 November, there was a union protest at the site regarding safety issues; in March 2019, there were issues of contaminated sand at a cost of \$300 million; in April 2019, a former tunnel worker claimed that he and his colleagues suffered the bends while in hyperbaric mode underground and this was confirmed by another worker; in May 2019, 500 metres of heavy piping in the airport tunnels collapsed; and in June 2019, a worker stood in water containing a substance that caused burns to his feet. I will quote from an article, dated 22 November 2018, that quotes Mick Buchan from the CFMEU, a good friend of WA Labor. He said —

“We’re seeing guys that are injured ... there is no debate or consultation on what’s the right way to do things moving forward.

“Enough is enough ... we’re not going to take it. The Government needs to step in.”

Despite this litany of safety issues, we saw another issue raised. Yesterday, in this house, the minister had the audacity to say that despite all these incidents, safety was a priority on the Forrestfield–Airport Link. Further to that, because it was such a big priority, the time line for this project had been pushed back a year. I quote yesterday’s uncorrected *Hansard* —

Of course, throughout the project we have made safety a priority and pushed the time line back a year to make sure we put all our effort into safety.

What an extraordinary comment from the minister considering that time line of events under this government’s watch that I have already outlined. It is a truly astounding statement in light of such events. I find it difficult to believe that the minister is maintaining that the delays associated with this particular project, associated with the safety issues on the Forrestfield–Airport Link, have not come at a cost to the taxpayer. Only time and further questioning of this government will highlight the true cost.

We have also seen in relation to the Forrestfield–Airport Link, as with every other project initiated or undertaken by this government, a clear lack of commitment to provide any form of gold-standard transparency. It takes a head-in-the-sand approach—nothing to see here; everything is okay. The government had the audacity to promote the progress of the Forrestfield–Airport Link in an article in *The Sunday Times*, when it knew full well that the very day before a second major sinkhole had developed as the borer machine edged its way to Bayswater station and that there were major issues once again with this project. It was pushing on, answering questions in Parliament, but providing no clarity to the people of Western Australia on serious issues with the project, which has been plagued with safety issues and secrecy under this government’s watch. The ministers were very happy to go out, don high-vis vests and talk about the merits of the McGowan government’s management of this project, knowing full well that there was a significant issue in the way that the project had been managed under this government’s watch, and only the day before as well.

I would also like to highlight that a study on the projects had been promised under this government’s watch. During the election, Western Australia was also promised a \$40 000 feasibility study into light rail between Armadale and Cockburn. I know the member for Armadale may be standing up, and I would be very keen to hear his commentary on this. I will quote an article from *WAtoday*. It states —

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Freedom of information documents obtained by *WAtoday* reveal the Department of Transport planners in the unit tasked with looking at a light rail network were not aware of the commitment until August 2017; six months after Labor's election win.

One planner only found out about it through an inquiry from a member of the public.

The Minister for Transport has since indicated that this is part of Metronet stage 2 and will include light rail, including \$40 000 for that feasibility study between Armadale and Cockburn as promised during the election. It is worth pointing out at this time that, given the commitment to that project, this is a broken promise.

When talking about Metronet, secrecy and one of the projects that has been a key feature of the list of requests for funding to Infrastructure Australia under that Metronet banner, it is also important to talk about automatic train control and this government's handling of the Huawei project. Emails reveal the extraordinary steps that the McGowan government has taken to talk down a cabinet decision to award Huawei a \$206 million Metronet project, or the \$136 million construction contract. It is quite extraordinary that the minister for media statements made a decision not to make a media statement on a topic such as this. It is so important. It is also extraordinary that it did not have the benefit of the scrutiny of cabinet either.

As well as that, we have asked a number of questions in this place about the government's ability to deliver the Huawei part of this project. In Parliament last year, in question time, I asked the Minister for Transport —

Can the minister update the house on the progress of the Huawei Metronet radio replacement program, and whether there have been any delays or significant issues?

The minister responded —

I thank the member for the question. As I understand it, the program is being managed by the Public Transport Authority and is in progress and its delivery is being managed. It is a partnership; it is a joint venture between, as I recall, UGL and Huawei.

Again, that was a completely vague response. If we compare what was on the PTA's website in May 2019 with what is on the website now, it is clear that there have been delays in the delivery of this project. However, when asked a really simple supplementary question, which was whether there had been any issues resulting from the trade issues between Huawei and the United States, the minister's response was —

I am not really sure what the member is asking. Maybe I can have a discussion with the member later if there are any specific issues or things that she wants followed up. I am not exactly sure what the member is asking.

I find that response quite extraordinary. I find it extraordinary that the minister is not aware of the delays or why there have been delays, and is being completely vague about the fact, but it is consistent. When we look at the rulings by the Auditor General and the failure to spell out the costs of these projects, we can see that the minister and this government are quite consistent in not being up-front about some pretty basic things.

On the Huawei project and the radio replacement project, we have undertaken some FOI requests to glean some information on these government contracts, particularly in light of the fact that the contract has not received any government or cabinet scrutiny. Once again, we see behaviour by this government that is completely questionable. It was not until we appealed the decision on the provision of information to the Information Commissioner that we were able to obtain the second page of a three-page document, which is a briefing note on the radio replacement program. That briefing note highlights that it is not just a train system—this program is actually much more—and highlights some of the issues with and the capacity of the radio replacement program. It is extraordinary that it took an appeal to get such information. It is extraordinary that the minister provided just two pages of a three-page document, and it was only through further digging that the opposition was able to get such information. But, as I stated earlier, it is consistent with what we have seen under this government's watch.

This motion is about the costs associated with Metronet. In asking those questions, it is also worth seeking some clarification on where the government is with some of the assumptions that have been made on this important project. We know that the value capture and developer contribution is \$122.6 million. That is an assumption that can no longer be made, given that we have seen the death of that policy. I quote from ABC news —

It was billed as “an innovative funding mechanism” that would revolutionise the way Western Australia funded major public works.

I refer also to a quote by the Minister for Transport when she was in opposition. She said —

“Walk into any pet shop and a parrot is talking about value capture,” ...

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**Dr D.J. Honey** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes. The Liberals did raise concerns when this was announced in 2017, and, like the lobster policy, Schools of the Air and the regional sponsored migration scheme, we have seen a backdown by this government on the delivery of this policy. This policy has been dumped. However, it is worth highlighting and seeking some clarification on the other assumptions that were made about the Metronet program. The government stated that it would cut government advertising by \$55 million. We will seek some clarification on that. Six million dollars has already been invested in the government spin campaign. The Premier, when in opposition, had been critical of the government spending money on advertising, but has still undertaken such a program in Metronet, which, as we know, has not seen a track of rail delivered after three years. An assumption has been made that \$11.6 million would be attained through the increased use of public transport. That is quite an assumption, given that we have seen public transport basically flatlined under this government. In fact, there are eight million fewer public transport boardings than in 2012–13. The challenge is to increase the use of public transport, particularly trains.

In referring to the different costs, I seek clarification on the operating subsidies. It is estimated that the Forrestfield–Airport Link, which is only eight kilometres long, will have 20 000 passengers a day from 2022 and will require a subsidy of \$50 million a year; that is without depreciation. The Yanchep extension is 14.5 kilometres long and will have fewer than 20 000 boarding a year in 2031. The Thornlie–Cockburn Link is 14.5 kilometres long and will have 14 500 boarding a day by 2031. The Ellenbrook line is 21 kilometres long. The government provided some estimates during the consideration in detail stage. The minister stated that the government had some estimates of patronage, which were between 12 000 and 18 000 for the line. When prompted, she said that by 2031 it should be 18 000. The numbers are there, but it would be of great value to know what the ongoing commitment for those lines will be. It is important to know what the ongoing costs will be. The level of subsidy for those Metronet projects clearly and obviously come into the overall cost.

In conclusion, this house calls on the McGowan Labor government in its fourth parliamentary year to finally outline the cost of stage 1 of Metronet, including taxpayer operating subsidies, and to outline to the house when stage 1 will be fully operational. We are not asking this just on behalf of our own members. There is a lot of enthusiasm in the community to see these important rail projects delivered. As I have stated, in real terms the Forrestfield–Airport Link is over a year late. It has been plagued with safety concerns and there are question marks whether there will be additional costs. Putting that aside, according to the Premier’s media statement, the Thornlie–Cockburn line has gone from \$474 million to \$716 million, and it is over a year late. An amount of \$386 million was originally promised for the Yanchep extension and we are looking at a year late. An amount of \$291 million was promised for the Byford extension, and \$481 million now. That project has blown out by 65 per cent. As I stated earlier, the delays are unknown. It is a pretty simple summary of what has been found based on the information that we have been able to gather from the opposition.

It is timely to point to a media statement from the then Labor opposition on 6 February 2017 stating that the Liberals’ Metronet analysis showed it could not be trusted. It questioned the costings that were undertaken at that time by the then Liberal–National government. Our now Treasurer, then shadow Treasurer, said that he was not sure what the WA Liberals costed, but that it certainly was not Metronet; that although WA Labor was committed to removing four level crossings, the WA Liberals seemed to insist on costing 30 level crossings as some form of rough estimate. It is worth pointing out that when we are talking about what is a \$2 billion budget blowout, we are considering only four level crossings, which I might add have blown out from \$257 million to \$550 million.

This is a simple summary of what has been found, as I stated, based on the information we are able to obtain. It is clear that the McGowan Labor government cannot manage major infrastructure projects. We saw that with not only the sinkhole disaster, but also the chaos on Kwinana Freeway and the incompetence around that project. It is clear that the McGowan Labor government is shrouded in secrecy and lacks transparency. That is indicative of two out of four rulings by the Auditor General that state that the minister had no reason not to provide information regarding a range of issues; in particular, those regarding the safety of the safety-plagued Forrestfield–Airport Link, but on other matters as well. There are serious issues, including the decision of the Information Commissioner to provide the second page of the briefing note regarding the Huawei projects and the sensitivities around that. The Premier cannot explain or give a figure on the cost of the Metronet project. The Minister for Transport cannot define what the additional Metronet projects are, if they are considered to be additional Metronet projects. They certainly were considered to be additional Metronet projects according to the government’s own website and according to the government’s own spin in a \$6 million campaign to the community. They are considered to be part of the Metronet rhetoric, but clarity is missing on the cost to the Western Australian people.

We on this side of the house support the expansion of rail. We certainly want to see those projects continue; however, it is fair to ask what the true cost of Metronet is for the Western Australian people. These are fair questions and we would like some clarity around that. We are keen to hear from the Premier about his signature Metronet project and we are keen to see how he will answer those questions.

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**Mr A. Krsticevic:** Good luck if you get an answer.

**Ms L. METTAM:** It will be good luck if we get an answer. With those final comments, I commend the motion to the house and look forward to contributions from other speakers.

**MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [4.59 pm]: Listening to the minister for Vasse —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price):** The minister for Vasse?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The member for Vasse. She soon will be the minister—for the whole of the south west! What a train wreck this is.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, please!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The McGowan Labor government went to the election on three simple promises: to not build Roe 8, no new taxes and that it would build four new rail lines. How is it going three years into its term? It was a simple message—four rail lines—but the government has gone over budget and over time on all of them. That is a free kick to us. In 2008, we went to the election and asked the electorate to name three things that the Labor government had done. I have to give credit where credit is due. The then Minister for Transport, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, had delivered one thing—a railway line.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** We started it.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** We started it but she delivered it. It is now nearly a year out before the next election. The Labor Party promised to build four railway lines. What is the chance that any of them will be delivered? I think only one railway line—the Forrestfield railway line—may be nearly delivered, although I do not know whether it will have railcars on it. After four years it has not been fully delivered.

In my brief time, I do not want to talk about the rail infrastructure itself; I want to talk about another project. I have good news for the minister, who is in Mogumber at the moment. I am very disappointed that the minister is not here and has run away. We have a very important motion in the chamber addressed specifically to the Minister for Transport, but she is not here. The Premier is not here either. In fact, only one minister is here. Everyone is hiding because this is a failure of the McGowan government. It has not been able to deliver infrastructure. It cannot deliver any infrastructure.

However, I do have some good news, and I promised to give members some good news. One project does not have a cost blowout. I have not been able to find any evidence of a cost blowout on the Huawei contract. The good news for the McGowan government, from what I can gather from the answers to questions asked by the member for Vasse and many others, is that there is no cost blowout on that project. However, the information I have been able to get shows that there has been a blowout in the time line. There is some good news and some bad news for the minister, who, unfortunately, is not here to hear about it. I will concentrate on the Huawei contract. It is a rather puzzling contract because we basically found out about it through a press release by Huawei itself. In July 2008, Huawei put out a press release announcing that it had won a lazy \$206 million contract. For one reason or another, the minister for opening sod ceremonies, who attends anything at the drop of a hat and puts out media releases for everything, did not find the time or energy, or maybe did not think it was important, to announce the \$206 million Huawei contract for Perth trains that will go down the spine of every single metropolitan railway line in Western Australia. We found out about it from a release by Huawei itself. When we did some digging on this, we found that a year earlier in *Rail Express*, a magazine about railway lines—I do not normally read those sorts of magazines —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** I thought you might.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Some people might think I do, including the member for Dawesville, but I do not. However, I read an article in *Rail Express* in May 2017, when the expression of interest was let, containing some interesting comments by the Minister for Transport. She announced that five parties had been short-listed for the expression of interest. They were Ericsson Australia Pty Ltd, Huawei Technologies (Australia) Pty Ltd, Optus Administration Pty Ltd, ZTE Australia Pty Ltd and Ansaldo STS Australia Pty Ltd. All five companies were going through the expression of interest process. The government wanted the contract awarded in early 2018 and the new system in place by late 2020. The plan was to have the system in place by late this year. We are already in 2020, so what is the chance of 80 towers being installed by then? I have not seen any towers when I have driven around Perth or occasionally caught the train to the football. How is the government going with the time line? Admittedly, this was the first time line that was mentioned in 2017.



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I will move on. When the contract was awarded in July 2018, Huawei announced a different time line. It announced that it was due for completion in 2021. That is next year, which is still a pretty tough task. If work had started in July 2018, it would probably be on target. The next bit of information we had was from the Public Transport Authority's website. About a year ago, it released an outline of the project timing. The EOI tender process began in February 2017, the design and build contract was awarded in July 2018, the design and early works were supposed to have been done in 2018–19, and the construction and fit-out were to be done by 2020–21, which is this year. Early testing and commissioning is expected to be done later this year. I have some very bad news about the delivery of this project, let alone the other security issues which might arise and which we have not had answers to. The McGowan government is relying on the Minister for Transport to get it across the line at the coming election. It went to the last election saying that it would deliver four railway projects. I want to know how many it will deliver. When the public votes next year, it will remember the government's promises. It will remember "no new taxes" and "stop Roe 8 and Roe 9". We make no bones that we will support Roe 8 and Roe 9. We will see how the government goes with that. Everyone knows that the government has introduced new taxes. The saviour to get the government out of jail could be a railway line—even just one of the four—but I think it will have trouble getting any of those four done. As the member for Vasse very eloquently outlined, on all four of those projects there has been a blowout in the cost and the time line. The operational costs of those four lines have been hidden because the Treasurer made sure of it. That may have been a deliberate plan. The electorate might think, "We know your strategy. You wanted to make sure you didn't have a big debt." It may have been a clever strategy by the government to not put in either the capital costs or the operational costs of the projects. Maybe the election was just a game for the Labor Party. It went to the election with some ideas for how to win and thought, "Let's tell the public this." When everyone votes next year, they will ask what the government has delivered.

The issue this afternoon is that the minister is not here. It is very disappointing that the minister decided, because she knows that she is not delivering, to go to a sod-turning ceremony in Mogumber. I can tell the minister that if she was delivering on this project, there would be 80 towers. That is 80 possible sod-turning ceremonies that she is missing out on. I cannot believe that she has not been pushing hard for this project. I wonder whether there are 80 shovels all ready to go. I do not know. Unfortunately, I have an engagement to go to. The member for Armadale wants to speak for 10 minutes, but I will conclude by saying how disappointed the opposition is about the government's lack of transparency and gold-plated accountability to let everyone know what is going on. We have heard nothing. If we ask a question, we are told, "I know nothing. It's up to the PTA. It is delivering it—not me." I think the minister has to lift her game. Of course, we are only talking about transport today; we might bring in planning on another day. That is for another day; today, I just wanted to make a little cameo on Huawei. We have lots of speakers on this motion, but unfortunately there is not enough time in a day for us to go through all the things that the Minister for Transport is not delivering on. I think that the Premier needs to keep an eye on the minister. Maybe she needs to give a report each week to the Premier on how she is going with the time line —

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** It's all on the laptop.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** It is hidden away on the laptop, but we do not see the laptop. I strongly support the member for Vasse's motion delivered to the house. We want to know more about these projects, the public of Western Australia wants to know more about these projects, and if the government does not deliver on these projects, it will lose the election.

**MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.10 pm]: I, too, rise to make some comments on this motion that states —

That this house calls on the McGowan Labor government, in its fourth parliamentary year, to finally outline the total cost of stage 1 Metronet, including taxpayer operating subsidies, and to outline to the house when stage 1 will be fully operational.

I would like to take members on a trip down memory lane. Remember when this government came to power with great fanfare, it issued the Langoulant inquiry. The government employed John Langoulant to inquire into how the former government managed its projects and went about its business, and the governance arrangements for certain key projects. Mr Langoulant made a number of recommendations, members. Some of these recommendations are pertinent to some of the issues that the opposition is bringing to Parliament today. My deputy, the member for Nedlands, talked about the radio replacement project—the mobile phone towers down the train line corridors. The tender given for that project delivery was given to Huawei. We uncovered on the project that, for whatever reasons best known to herself, the Minister for Transport decided not to submit that \$206 million contract to cabinet scrutiny. I draw members' attention to recommendation 3 of the Langoulant report, "Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects", which states —

The Government must not compromise on the quality of information contained in Cabinet Submissions. The Cabinet Office must be instructed to ensure that all agencies adhere to all protocols at all times. These

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protocols must include that all agencies which have a connection with the Submission are consulted before the Submission is accepted by the Cabinet Office.

Not only do we have the government thumbing its nose at recommendation 3—it is up at top of the recommendations and is obviously a priority for Mr Langoulant—that says that cabinet submissions should have integrity and all concerned and appropriate agencies should be consulted on that cabinet submission, but also we see —

**Ms A. Sanderson:** At least we've got a cabinet process.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I thank the member for her interjection, because with this \$206 million spend of taxpayers' money there was no cabinet process. That is exactly the point that the opposition is making, so I thank the member for her interjection. There was no process, no other agencies were consulted and the government now finds itself in an incredible pickle because this \$206 million project being delivered by this company looks like it will now be constrained and basically obsolete by the time it is constructed because it can only operate on a 4G system. It will not be allowed to operate on a 5G system so it cannot form the backbone for the automated train control system and it cannot transmit any emergency management data across the network. We have \$206 million of taxpayers' money that is being wasted because this minister made a decision not to take that submission to cabinet in direct contradiction to recommendation 3 of the Langoulant review.

I will move on to transparency. The member for Vasse raised many issues around transparency. The Langoulant report states —

There are many benefits to increasing the openness of the Western Australian government to public scrutiny. Sharing information with the community will build trust and confidence.

We, as an opposition, actually represent our community. We put questions on notice to this minister and she thumbs her nose at parliamentary process and refuses to provide information that the taxpayers of Western Australia are entitled to know about—she point blank refuses. That is her attitude and it shows her contempt for the Western Australian community. We represent the Western Australian community and the constituents who elect us in this Parliament.

We are very sympathetic to ministers and members who sometimes cannot be here and need to be paired out because of medical appointments, bereavements and all sorts of personal reasons. Yesterday, we asked the minister why she was not going to be around for private members' business because we have serious issues that we want to raise with her about the management of the entire suite of Metronet projects. She said, "That's too bad for you. I'm not changing my plans." It is "too bad for you" community of Western Australia, she is not changing her plans. Imagine my surprise when I saw a tweet from the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Michael McCormack, showing where the minister is today. The minister is not content with collecting a shed full of shovels and has decided that she needs to upgrade her shovel collection, and we now have a photograph of the minister in front of a front-end loader no less. She is out at the Mogumber–Yarawindah Road, no doubt a very important \$1 million local project funded predominantly by the federal government—\$800 000 from the federal government and less than \$200 000 from the state government. The state government is so stingy on road funding in the wheatbelt that it made the Shire of Victoria Plains contribute to that project, because everything else is going into Metronet and the cost blowouts that this government will not reveal to Western Australian taxpayers. The minister is out at the Mogumber–Yarawindah Road, a really good local project. She is with a cast of thousands in front of that front-end loader—the Deputy Prime Minister; Melissa Price, the member for Durack; the former member of this place Hon Tuck Waldron; and no doubt the Leader of the Nationals WA and the member for Moore. Apparently, advertising a spend of less than \$200 000 by this government was more important than coming into the Parliament and being accountable to the Parliament and the community of Western Australia. It is an absolute disgrace.

I will look further at the recommendations of Langoulant inquiry. Bearing in mind, members, that we have had no update from this government on what it is doing with that phone book—that report is a doorstop. Nothing has been done with the report and the government has ignored all the recommendations. Recommendation 6 is pertinent to the motion moved today —

Information about Government programs and projects should be open for scrutiny.

That would be refreshing. The recommendation continues —

Based on shared principles, the Government should develop a transparency framework for reporting details of major projects. The framework must require continuous disclosure.

What did we get? Our continuous disclosure, members, is photograph after photograph of the minister and a plethora of other ministers, backbenchers and anybody else who wants to come along and be part of the shovel project, wearing fluoro vests and hard hats, and being photographed digging up sods of soil and the like. Do we get actual real-time reporting on the progress of these projects and the amount of taxpayers' money that is being

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spent, the anticipated ongoing costs of these projects or the anticipated delivery times of these projects? We were promised that they would be substantially commenced if not completed by the next election, which is in 12 months, and yet no rail has been laid. We are not getting transparent reporting from this government on any aspect of Metronet. We get no transparency at all. When we have a look, we see deliberate attempts by this government to hide issues with the project from the community. I go back to a media statement of 18 February 2018, headed “Forrestfield–Airport Link tunnel to Airport Central on track”. We know what happened back then. It was a statement about a major milestone in the Forrestfield–Airport Link. Members will recall—a short time after that, around 19 March—what we discovered. We discovered at the time of that media release when the entire entourage of media, the Premier and the Minister for Transport went out to the Forrestfield–Airport Link to talk about this great milestone that, in fact, both the boring machines had been stopped due to ground disturbance. We know what the ground disturbance was, members, do we not? It was due to sinkholes that could swallow motor vehicles and that closed Dundas Road. The Premier denied that he knew about the sinkholes when he went there. We know the minister knew. What we do not know is whether the minister informed the Premier and the Premier threw the minister under a bus or whether the minister did not tell the Premier so that the Premier could be thrown under a bus. Between the two of them, there was clearly either communication and a deliberate attempt at plausible deniability or no communication at all. I think we are finding that there was no communication. It sounds as though the Premier’s office has become something of a bunker.

At that time, the Premier was saying that the project was ahead of schedule even though the machine was sitting idle for almost five weeks. The time line had not been disturbed because the tunnelling was ahead of schedule. If we fast-forward to December 2018, the week before Christmas, when the government was putting out the garbage, the project had been delayed by over a year. Back in March, blind Freddy could have seen that the project would be delayed by over a year, when we saw the size of the sinkhole and the time it was taking for the engineers to try to work out a solution to that problem. Was the government transparent at the time? Absolutely not, “Everything’s fine here; nothing to see; terrible media and terrible opposition talking about sinkholes in the Forrestfield–Airport Link. Stop talking down the project. Why do you hate Metronet?” That is what we were told when we raised this in this place. All we were asking was for the government to adhere to recommendation 6 of the Langoult inquiry, which says there should be transparent, staged recording on important government projects—accountability. But we do not get that. This government is not delivering the gold-standard transparency it promised us.

The member for Vasse outlined our frustration in trying to get information from the government about that incident. We asked a question in here the day after the media reported on the sinkholes on 20 March. The minister gave her usual dismissive, abusive response to the opposition at the time and gave us no information whatsoever about the ground disturbance that had shut down the tunnelling on that project for five weeks. There was no information. On 21 March 2018 in the other place, Hon Peter Collier asked about the members of the task force and what dates the task force had met; was the issue of subsidence on the Forrestfield–Airport Link discussed; and were minutes taken of the meetings; and will the minister table them?

Hon Stephen Dawson did a fairly good job getting a response from the minister, I have to say, because we got answers to parts (1) and (2) about the members of the task force, but then we received a really odd answer to the question about the minutes. Hon Peter Collier asked —

- (4) If yes to (3), were minutes taken at that meeting or meetings; and, if so, will the minister now table those minutes; and, if not, why not?

Part (3) of the question was linked to subsidence in the tunnel. In her clever, tricky way, the minister said that we were only asking if the minutes referred to the subsidence to the tunnel; therefore, the minutes of the task force meeting did not need to be provided because we only wanted information specific to the subsidence in the tunnel. That was not in the spirit of transparency at all. On 22 March we asked the question again and got a different answer. In answer to whether the minister would table those minutes, we were told that the minutes were cabinet-in-confidence. As a diligent opposition, we got to work on this and asked about the task force meetings and tried to get minutes from the task force meetings. We asked particularly about meetings on 27 July, 5 October and 27 February—particularly the meeting on 27 February because we knew that would be pertinent to the issue that had evolved at the Forrestfield–Airport Link. On 22 March, we asked again and apparently no minutes were taken. They have now become cabinet-in-confidence. On 13 February 2019, the Auditor General found the minister’s refusal to provide those minutes was not reasonable and therefore not appropriate. I will read a little more of what the Auditor General said than the member for Vasse provided to the chamber, because it is scathing of this minister’s performance and her contempt for the public, her contempt for the Parliament and her contempt for the gold-standard transparency promise the Premier made. It said —

We reviewed the minutes and found only a discrete amount of the information contained in them would likely reveal the deliberations and decisions of Cabinet.

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In our view, the minutes could have been provided to Parliament with the discrete amount of Cabinet-in-confidence information redacted.

The Auditor General's office disagreed with the minister's assertion. The minister asserted that because we asked whether the minutes referred to the subsidence, she did not need to provide the minutes. The Office of the Auditor General said, "We disagree as a discrete part of the question specifically requested the minutes." The minister was being too cute by half and absolutely thumbing her nose at the transparency requirements of her role as a minister on the treasury bench representing the community of Western Australia.

Furthermore, the Office of the Auditor General found that those minutes of the task force meeting were widely available to many people. The cabinet protocols that normally exist around cabinet-in-confidence documents did not exist. Furthermore, no part of those minutes was specifically prepared solely for the use of cabinet. We thought that the Office of the Auditor General had given the minister a bit of a whack, so let us see whether she will participate in democracy again. On 20 February 2019, we asked in the other place whether the minister would provide the minutes of the Metronet Taskforce. We got a no, as usual. In fact, I would like to read in the way the minister responded —

The minister is seeking advice on the tabling of the minutes, noting that the Auditor General did not find that it would have been reasonable and appropriate to table the minutes un-redacted. That process of seeking advice involves a number of agencies, including the State Solicitor's Office and those involved in the production and consideration of the minutes and involved in the issues dealt with by the minutes.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** We got the same response on 21 February, 14 March, 20 March and 11 March 2019 that advice was being sought from all and sundry about the minutes from the Metronet Taskforce meeting. What does the minister have to hide in those minutes?

**Ms S.F. McGurk:** You built a whole stadium and would not tell us how much it cost.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Then on 19 November—this is very interesting indeed, and I do not think the Minister for Child Protection would behave this way, but this is the response we got —

The Metronet Taskforce is now a subcommittee of the Expenditure Review Committee of cabinet.

It has been locked down again. There is no way the opposition will ever get access to these minutes. However, we want to know when it became a cabinet-in-confidence process. It certainly was not a cabinet-in-confidence process on 27 February 2018 when the task force was discussing the issues for the Forrestfield–Airport Link. After the Auditor General had said that it was not reasonable and did not appear to be part of the cabinet process, well over a year later, it is now a subcommittee of the Expenditure Review Committee of cabinet. This is all done to hide what is going on with the project. All the community wants and the opposition is asking for are meaningful progress reports. What are the costs of these projects? What have the costs blown out to? When will they start? When do we anticipate they will be completed? These are issues that we raise, and the minister thumbs her nose again and again. We saw that recently with great fanfare. We had the Premier, the minister and that amazing tweet. What was it? "Tunnel boring machine *Grace* meet Bayswater; Bayswater meet TBM *Grace*". It was very, very cute. What is the quote from the Premier? He said —

"Where once there was dirt, sand, rocks and tree roots, now sits the foundation for our new railway.

And a sinkhole—we forgot to mention the sinkhole that opened up on Saturday. Of course, the media event had to be kicked along a couple of days, but the government says, "We do not need to tell the community about the sinkhole, because it does not matter anyway. We are not going to report on what the cost of fixing a sinkhole might be. We are not going to report on whether the sinkhole and repair of that sinkhole might have an impact on the project, because we are not going to tell you anything, and if you ask, we are going to retrospectively make every single thing that you ask about a cabinet process so that you cannot get access to it for 30 years." Only a government that is hiding its ineptitude behaves in that fashion, and that is what we have here.

I want to go back even further in time to the Commission on Government in Western Australia of December 1995. Members might remember that there was a royal commission back then. I want to refer to what Commission on Government's report said about issues for consideration. It said —

The WA Royal Commission noted that:

Official records bear silent testimony to the administration of a government. ... Proper record keeping serves two purposes. First, it is a prerequisite to effective accountability. Without it, the end purpose of FOI legislation can be thwarted. Without it, critical scrutiny by the Parliament, the Auditor General and the Ombudsman can be blunted. Secondly, records themselves form an

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integral part of the historical memory of the State itself. A record keeping regime which does not address both these requirements is inadequate.

It is a basic, fundamental requirement of a government to keep appropriate records, and we know that the issue of the Huawei contract was not even formed into a cabinet submission. Now, because the opposition was able to FOI all those documents, every single thing this government does now is apparently put together solely for the purposes of cabinet, so the opposition has no chance of getting access to those documents for another 30 years. The report also goes on to talk about incomplete records and a range of other matters. I will take matters back, and I think this is really important, because this was an analysis of a Labor administration that lost its way, and a royal commission that looked into how that Labor administration lost its way. Section 7.8.4, “Cabinet”, says —

#### **7.8.4.1 Issues for Consideration**

...

Pervading all of this period was a clear disregard of the formal cabinet procedures ... Nowhere was this more apparent than in the attitude taken to record keeping. In some crucial meetings of Cabinet in late 1987 and 1988, for example, no record ever appears to have come into existence, no agenda, no submissions, no recorded decisions.

This is the kind of government we have now. We have a government that has a Westport Taskforce, which was also under this Minister for Transport’s purview. None of the minutes of the Westport Taskforce were made available to the public or the opposition for scrutiny. They were all hidden under a cabinet process. The Metronet Taskforce was hidden under a cabinet process. The Huawei contract deliberately avoided a cabinet process. It is a shambles. It is a shambolic maladministration of this portfolio.

Where our and the community’s disappointment lies is that this Premier over the entire year proceeding the March 2017 election promised that there would be gold-standard transparency on behalf of this government—gold-standard transparency. Correct me if I am wrong, but my expectation of gold-standard transparency is that when a question is asked of the minister and the minister refuses to provide an answer, but the Ombudsman says that that was not appropriate, the minister should provide the answer. Sorry, am I from another planet here or is that a proper process? Seriously, members, we have the processes in place to keep governments accountable. There is the cabinet scrutiny process, then there are the processes of the Office of the Auditor General and the freedom of information process with the Information Commissioner. He is the busiest man in government at this time, because when the opposition puts in a freedom of information request, to, especially, the Minister for Transport, the minister kicks the tin along, narrows the scope and refuses to provide information. We go to the Information Commissioner and he says nearly one hundred per cent of the time, “That was unreasonable, release the documents.” That is the way this minister operates. Thank goodness we have the Information Commissioner, because that individual stands for democracy and transparency in this state when the Premier and the Minister for Transport do not. The Minister of Transport in particular thumbs her nose at every measure of transparency that she should be accountable for. We go through the cabinet process, and there is the Information Commissioner, and there is the Office of the Auditor General, who has been scathing of this minister’s refusal to release information. In response to when the umpire said, “Release the information, you are acting unreasonably”, the minister says, “I do not care, I am still not providing it.” That is what the minister says. Then she smirks at us, and if we call her to account in this place, we get frothing abuse.

This minister needs to realise that we are here representing the people of Western Australia who want to understand what is going on with Metronet. They see signs everywhere. They see media releases ad nauseam. They see sod-turning ceremonies, they see fluoro vests and they see hats, but the only people wearing them are ministers and bureaucrats. There are no workers on site wearing fluoro vests and hats, because none of the projects have started. We know that the projects are well over budget and we know that they are well over time, but this government refuses to say what stage 1 of Metronet will cost. That can mean one of two things. It can mean that the government does not want to tell us the cost because the blowouts are so extreme it is going to be incredibly embarrassed, or the government does not want to explain those costs because it just does not care about accountability and gold-standard transparency. I think the community of Western Australia’s deserves to know. This is all we are asking of this government. Is the government too incompetent to add the figures up and tell us what this project is going to cost; has it not worked out what the ongoing subsidisation costs of Metronet are going to be; or is it deliberately misleading the community by not providing that information? I think we have a right to know. The government is either incompetent because it does not know the cost, does not know the ongoing subsidisation costs and does not know the time lines, or the government is deliberately trying to mislead the community, because if it did reveal those figures, it would know there would be an outrage in the community because the key election commitment that the government promised to deliver in Metronet by 2021 is not even substantially commenced. That is the situation we find ourselves in. I think the community deserves to know. I think the government does know the cost of stage 1 of Metronet. I think it has been trying to hide the cost by pulling projects in, pulling other projects out, saying one was an election commitment

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and another one was an addition to the project. All of this is designed to try to confuse the fact that these projects are well over budget, well beyond the time line that was promised and that they are not going to be delivered on time.

The opposition and the community of Western Australia no longer have any confidence in this government to deliver even one centimetre of rail. It has not commenced. There are no workers on site. It is too late to deliver it by 2021, and we are going to drive that home to the community of Western Australia because it is frustrated. People are frustrated that there will not be a train station at the Galleria. I used to own a business around the Galleria many years ago and it is a very important retail, employment and transport hub. There will be a Morley–Ellenbrook train that will not stop in Morley Galleria. Do not think that we will not make hay out of that in the lead-up to the next election; we will make hay out of that. We note that if the member for Morley were the Minister for Transport, there would be a train station in the Galleria. We know if she were a minister, there would be a train station in Morley. Do not worry; we will let the people of Morley know that the train on the Morley–Ellenbrook rail line will not stop in Morley. We are going to let them know. It will not stop at the Galleria. What a ridiculous decision of this government. With those concluding comments, I will sit down. I implore the government to read the recommendations of the Langoulant review. Read the recommendations of Mr Langoulant, who the government said was going to provide the blueprint for transparency for its government, and actually abide by them. Be a good, accountable government, as was promised.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe)** [5.40 pm]: I rise to support the motion —

That this house calls on the McGowan Labor government in its fourth parliamentary year, to finally outline the total cost of the stage 1 Metronet, including taxpayer operating subsidies, and to outline to the house when stage 1 will be fully operational.

This is a serious and important motion by the opposition. What has become very apparent in my almost two years here—can I say that the time has flashed by; it seems like just months and I am certainly enjoying it—is that the McGowan Labor government struggles with transparency on a number of issues. We all remember in August 2017 when the Premier talked about gold-standard transparency; that was his metric. Further on from that, we had what I would describe as a “show trial” that was the Langoulant inquiry, which was, apparently, to promote greater transparency and consultation. The Leader of the Opposition gave an excellent presentation in outlining the McGowan Labor government’s failure in that area. It was very clear that the McGowan Labor government did not see that review as a template that it should be following. It was all about: “How are we going to get the previous government?” Again, that has been the theme. I have been here for two years and all I have heard is: “You guys were terrible one year ago, two years ago, three years ago.” It is going to be the government’s campaign slogan: “Four years ago the Liberals did not do things right.” The electors are sharper and smarter than that. At the end of four years, the electors are going to hold the government accountable for all the things that it has done and, in the case of this debate, all the things that it has not done.

As I said, we had the Langoulant inquiry. It was the government’s view that it was just a way to criticise the former Premier and the former government. Quite clearly, the government has not learnt a single lesson from the Langoulant inquiry report. It has not learnt one thing at all from that inquiry. What is very clear is that the government does not value transparency. The government especially does not value transparency around the cost of Metronet.

**Mr D.T. Punch** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The member for Bunbury is very vocal. Tell me, what is the cost of Metronet stage 1? What are the capital costs and operating costs? Come on! Inform the house! I welcome the member for Bunbury’s interjection with those facts. Come forward. The member for Bunbury clearly sees himself as a bit of a rising member in the party. He is getting lots of money for Bunbury. That member should tell me, but he does not even know, does he? I am happy for the member for Bunbury to contribute to this debate. I am happy for any members opposite to tell us in this debate what is the capital cost and the operating cost for Metronet stage 1? Those members cannot tell us.

The government does not value transparency on a number of things. In a previous debate in this place, one of the issues that I raised was the cost of public transport. I received abuse from more than one member on the other side for simply quoting the numbers in the budget. All I did was quote the numbers in the budget on how much public transport costs, because it is very important. As we have said, we have supported the development and growth of the public transport system, but when the community is deciding what priorities are going to be applied to the government purse, it has a right to know how much that costs. In fact, I do not think any members opposite want to know the numbers or even do know the numbers. It is very easy to find it because it is in the budget. I will go through it for government members, because clearly they need education on it. When we raise this, we get the verballing, which is, again, a characteristic of those on the other side. Government members will not comment on what we said; they comment on what they said we said. They verbal us and then comment on the verballing by saying, “Oh, that’s a terrible thing” about whatever the thing was. That is what we see here with the verballing, as was outlined by the Leader of the Opposition. The verballing is that we do not support public transport. The government knows that it

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is demonstrably untrue; in fact, if it says that, it is a lie. Many Liberal governments have supported public transport, and our leader and the shadow Minister for Transport have made it very clear that they support this project.

When we get through this debate, I do not want to hear verballing from those on the other side in response. They should respond to what we have actually said. It is a really simple query: what are those costs? That party has said that it is committed to transparency, or at least its leader has said that he is committed to transparency. He had a multimillion-dollar inquiry that was about transparency and transparency of decision-making. Again, I greatly appreciated the contribution of my leader in outlining the extent to which the government has prevented transparency. I cannot understand why government members are not embarrassed by that. They have deliberately constructed processes to hide the costs from the community.

To contextualise why we are concerned about this, I thought it would add some value to look at the current costs of our public transport system. I refer to part 9, “Transport”, of division 38, “Public Transport Authority of Western Australia”, on page 543 of volume 2 of budget paper No 2. That outlines all the various costs for transport. The table has the total cost of the Public Transport Authority of Western Australia, which is \$1.47 billion, and the net cost is \$1.2 billion. Overwhelmingly, public transport services receive a massive public subsidy. The users of the public transport service contribute only around one-third of the cost of that service. The cost is divided into two parts: an operating cost and a capital cost. The capital cost goes up and down, but I will go through a couple of numbers. There are very detailed figures available. The Public Transport Authority’s reporting on the number of people who use public transport is very transparent. If we look at the number of people who use public transport, we find that in the last financial year people took 141 454 423 journeys. Some members know that I like simple arithmetic; I think it can be very revealing. Let us look at those numbers in a little detail and analyse them. If we look at the total operating cost forecast for 2019–20, we find that the net subsidy from the public purse per journey is \$11.02. The operating subsidy per journey forecast for 2019–20 is just over \$11—that is per journey, members. I will take those numbers through a bit. If we look at the asset investment for the year—in this coming year, it is a higher asset investment—we find that on average it is \$8.26 per journey. If we look at last year, which is probably more typical of the ongoing capital spend for public transport, we find that it was \$3.32 per journey. If we look at the capital and operating costs for that service and we take the lower capital spend, which was \$483 million in the last financial year, we find that the total subsidy is \$14.44 per journey. That is the total subsidy per journey, members.

Most people work 220 days of the year and go to and from work on public transport, so that 220 times must be multiplied by two. The average subsidy for a person who commutes to and from work on public transport is \$6 353 a year. Members might say, “But people pay fares.” That is the net subsidy. In fact, if a commuter pays the zone 3 fare, which is a typical fare—it is what I would and do pay when I catch public transport from my home into Perth—that commuter pays \$2 552 in fares a year and receives a \$6 353 subsidy. In fact, depending on whichever figure we take, at best, the person who catches public transport pays less than a third of the cost of that service.

**Mr D.T. Punch** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** That is less than a third, member for Bunbury.

Several members interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I have had this discussion with a few people —

Several members interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Through the Chair, what is the subsidy for a regional bus service?

Several members interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** That is the thing, is it not? Look at you; you are all excited. Do you know why you are excited?

Several members interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Deputy Speaker, can I have a little bit of relief, please?

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, I remind all of you, particularly the member who is on their feet, whoever that may be, that if you speak directly across the chamber to engage with people on the other side of the house, it is really hard to stop them from engaging. Speaking through the Speaker would be helpful.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. I am grateful for your advice and protection.

As I said, for someone who just commutes to and from work, the net subsidy—not the gross amount that is paid—is \$6 353 per person. I understand some people have no choice; that is one reason we support public transport. We understand some people do not have a choice. Can I tell members, most of the people who live in my area —

**Mr D.T. Punch** interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bunbury, I call you to order for the first time.

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**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Most of the people who live in my area do have a choice, but they choose to take public transport.

I draw members' attention to those numbers not to say that we should not be supporting public transport, because the speakers on this side have made it very clear that they do support it, but because there is a very substantial cost for public transport. We are not talking here about a subsidy of \$100 or \$200 per person a year; we are talking about an average subsidy of over \$6 000 per person a year in terms of it being aggregated over someone who commutes to work. That is a phenomenal amount of public money. Why is it important? It is important for one reason. There were two things that this government said it would do when it came into office: it said it would be financially responsible and that it would build Metronet. They are really the only things it talked about. There are other small things in that.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** And a plan for jobs.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** We have seen how that went! A plan for government jobs, maybe, Leader of the Opposition.

The government said that it was going to be financially responsible. When a substantial subsidy like that is going into the community, the government knows that to be financially responsible, the money has to come from somewhere. Does that money come out of social housing? Does that money come out of helping people who are homeless? Does that money come out of the new women's hospital? Does that money come out of dealing with the horrendous issues around rising problems in mental health? Our shadow Minister for Health did an outstanding job in outlining the community's enormous concerns about that. Where does the money come from? We are not talking about a few shekels; we are talking about hundreds of dollars—in fact, the public subsidies for public transport come from taxpayers or borrowings of over \$1 billion. When we talk about a significant expansion of the public transport system, we are talking about not only a significant capital expense, but also, potentially, hundreds of millions of dollars of additional operating expenses. Where does that money come from? Surely members understand that it is our responsibility to hold the government to account for what it promised. We want to know where those hundreds of millions of dollars are coming from. It is an enormous amount of money.

The government does not seem to manage this very well and we only have to look at some of its projects. Look at the Forrestfield–Airport Link—over a year late and plagued by problems. The Thornlie–Cockburn line is over a year late; money was promised then disappeared. The Morley–Ellenbrook line is two years late. The Yanchep extension is one year late. The Byford extension—I am very sorry, member for Darling Range, but given the way things are going, I think you might be in your twentieth year by the time that one comes through.

[Member's time extended]

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** What we hear from the government is, “No, no. We have actually started some of those projects.” Someone has gone out and put up a big sign. As I have said before in this place, the government is very good with signs. I give the government top marks for signs. If signs were a way to get to work, we would be in a happy place in terms of public transport. It is a bit sad that signs do not really help, do they, member for Dawesville? But if signs were building a railway line, we would be in clover. Getting a bobcat to push up a few piles of dirt while the minister is there with the hard hat and fluoro vest does not start a project. To start a project, the contractors must be seriously engaged, all the equipment must be there or have been purchased, the laydown yards have to be going, offices must be there and people have to be there working and building things. That is not what we are seeing. As has been pointed out in this place many times, not one inch of track has been laid.

This is a very, very serious issue. This motion is not some idyll on our part to take up a few hours in Parliament. We are genuinely concerned that there is a massive cost to the taxpayers' purse. There appear to be massive blowouts. We are seeing projects that cost at least twice as much as the public was told they would cost when the government was elected, and all we see are prices going up.

Another reason to be worried—there are already the stated delays—is that we know that the government is great on spin. The Minister for Transport has demonstrated that she does not have the capacity to manage large projects. In my previous life, I had responsibility for managing large projects in a management position. Can I say —

**Ms A. Sanderson** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Sorry?

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Member for Morley —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, member for Cottesloe. Given the time I will vacate the chair until the ringing of the bells.



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*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm*

[Quorum formed.]

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Before we broke, the member for Morley threw an interjection across the chamber. Would she care to repeat that interjection?

Several members interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The member was prepared to throw it across the chamber before.

**Ms A. Sanderson** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** It was the last interjection the member made, when I mentioned the fact that I had had experience in major projects.

Several members interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Because the member is now not forthcoming —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Members! The buffet is still on, if you would like to avail yourselves.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The member for Morley said, “Fresh new talent.” I can tell the member for Morley that this is another characteristic that I have noticed of the Labor Party. This is the group that says that it is for equality, this is the group that says it is for fairness, and this is the group that says it is for inclusivity. I can tell members that claiming to have a social conscience does not justify personal abuse. That is the form of that comment. I can say also that that has been the Labor Party’s history in this Parliament since I have been here. When I arrived here, certain members on that side —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members! Thank you.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** When I arrived in this chamber, members on that side thought it was perfectly fine to make snide asides and snide comments about the fact that I was older. In fact, last year in question time, the Premier said, and I quote—I will get the *Hansard* if he requires it—“Imagine coming into Parliament when you are 60.” That is what the Premier said in answer to a dorothy dixer.

*Point of Order*

**Mr D.R. MICHAEL:** Madam Acting Speaker, the debate has gone on for two or three minutes and what the member has said has not been relevant to the motion at all.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Member for Cottesloe, if you can get back to the motion. I am sure you are swinging back to it.

*Debate Resumed*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I can; thank you very much, Acting Speaker. I am pointing out to the member for Morley that the Premier, the Treasurer and also the member for Bunbury have done it. Personal insults about a personal characteristic are not acceptable in this place. Members opposite would not accept it anywhere else. The Premier should be ashamed of what he said; members should apologise.

**Mr J.N. Carey** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Perth!

**Mr J.N. Carey** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Member for Perth —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Thank you, members. Member for Cottesloe, I think you have made your point. If we can get back to the debate on the motion, we might get a little more done.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you very much. The member for Perth has not done that recently and I have noted that.

It is very clear to us on this side of the house that public transport is enormously expensive, as I have said, to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars. In fact, the current subsidy for the Public Transport Authority is over \$1.1 billion a year. Increasing passenger numbers on public transport will increase the size of that subsidy. As I pointed out, if members look at the average commuter going to and from work for the normal number of working days a year, they will see that that commuter is being subsidised something to the tune of \$6 300 a year, on average. These are very large subsidies. With the expansion of the network we are talking about the potential for that subsidy

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to increase by hundreds of millions of dollars. We know, partially, that many billions of dollars in capital expense has to be serviced by the state, thus we want to know, and the public of Western Australia deserves to know, what those numbers are.

We are coming up to an election soon. The way things are going it would seem that the Labor Party intends to hide these numbers all the way up to the election and say that it is not quite sure, or do what it did last time. We already saw that the original quotes for Metronet from the McGowan Labor government were less than half what the current estimate is, and we have not been given the final estimate. The Leader of the Opposition, the shadow Treasurer, our Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister for Transport have all come into this place and asked a simple question: what is the final cost? Members opposite are telling us that they are about to commence—or have commenced—these projects. I have expressed my scepticism about what “commenced” really means; nevertheless, members opposite are telling us that. I can tell the member for Morley that in my previous life I had a lot to do with major capital projects, and I never started a major capital project worth many hundreds of millions of dollars that I did not know to within about plus or minus five per cent what its cost was. I knew not only the capital cost, but also the operating cost of that project. Then I was held to account for that by management. In this case, the management are the public and the press, which is obviously the third arm of government, and they will hold the government accountable. The government should be properly measured against that when we come to the next election. It seems as though the government is contriving in every possible way to hide that information and will not give that information to us.

I have a deep fear that one of the skills that members on that side lack is an ability to manage projects. That is the point I was going to make before. If a member comes into this place and says, “The cost was \$X billion, now it is \$2X billion, \$3X billion or \$4X billion, or more importantly, a minister comes into this place and says —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Member for Cottesloe, you are being quite inflammatory. Keep going.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I am trying to stick to the topic, Acting Speaker.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** No, you are drawing interjections.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The minister comes into this place and tells us that the reason the project has blown out is that it had a surprise because the contractor had safety problems or some other unknown issue. If they are managing a project, they know those things. Government departments have a large number of people. How many public servants are there in the state? I think there are 160 000 public servants in the state. The Minister for Transport has a large ministerial office with, I think, 12 staff, but also has many experts and engineers in her department who are supposed to be taking control of things. The transport minister, as the CEO, if you like, or the head of that organisation, should have her finger on the pulse. She should know. These things should not come as a surprise. That is the responsibility of the accountable manager when they come into this place. We do not see a capacity to manage those projects. We hear lots of blame on other people and we still hear it, when we are, what, a month shy of three years into the minister’s government? She must be well into her office now. We are three years in and we still hear, “Oh, well, it was the other guy’s fault.” The reality is that this is an enormous commitment on the part of the government. The government came to the election with two main things—there were lots of little things—one was responsible financial management and the other one was Metronet. That was the government’s cornerstone project. The government should be completely on top of that and completely transparent. If we look for the reasons for non-disclosure, I can think of only three main reasons why the government does not want to disclose the true capital and operating costs of these projects. The first is that the government is afraid to disclose the true cost of these projects. The minister for North West Central quoted a number some time ago of about \$10 billion. I have a horrifying feeling that it is sort of approaching that. I can tell that we are more than halfway there.

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** Minister for North West Central?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The member for! He would like to be the minister for.

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** North West Claremont.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I do not think that is appropriate, minister, and you know that.

The member for North West Central quoted that number and the cost is well on the way to that. It is vastly greater, so the government is afraid to disclose those costs; it is afraid to put the recurrent cost of subsidy into the budget because it will make the balance of the budget look shaky. The other reason could be that the government simply does not know. It has rushed into this and is now panicking towards the end of its term of government. It is rushing into it to try to get things done, but it has not done the detailed planning. I can say, because I have been involved in this type of work, that if I were involved in a major project that was commencing, I would know within

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a few per cent what the capital cost was and within a few per cent what the operating cost was. I would be able to predict that.

**Mr D.R. Michael** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The member for Balcatta knows that I was not involved with the stadium, but the government Whip is in government now. He needs to whip his people into shape. The government simply does not know. The other possibility is —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Member for Balcatta and member for Carine, take it outside please. The member for Cottesloe only has a couple of minutes left.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The other possibility is that the government simply does not have any confidence in its ability to manage these projects and to manage the cost of them. It is afraid; it has a cost and is really afraid that it will reveal a cost and in six or 12 months that cost will keep growing.

The minister must show the community the respect it deserves and let the community in Western Australia know the total cost of stage 1 Metronet, including the operating subsidy. That is something the minister can be held to account for when we go into the election, otherwise the government is hiding information from the public against its own stated objective of gold-standard transparency.

**MS A. SANDERSON (Morley — Parliamentary Secretary)** [7.13 pm]: I rise to make my contribution to this “debate”—I guess we could call it at this stage. I am not going to spend much time on the previous speaker’s contribution, but I will respond to the litany of errors that were littered throughout the Leader of the Opposition’s speech earlier and what seem to be significant points of confusion on her part, quite frankly. She was wrong on so many points that she demonstrated what a lightweight she is when it comes to detail and what she is talking about. She went to great lengths to talk about the Information Commission and him being the busiest man in town. He must be very busy getting so many FOIs! The Information Commissioner is a woman and has been in that position for the last 18 months to two years. Little details like that matter and reflect on members when they talk like that and clearly demonstrate that they are not across what they are talking about.

We got a quote from 1995 about the royal commission—a history lesson. There seems to be real confusion from the Leader of the Opposition about the difference between keeping cabinet records, which is absolutely appropriate and right, and releasing them, which is appropriate and right under particular circumstances. We got a lecture and a definition of how to keep cabinet records—yes, tick, thank you very much; the government continues to do that—versus releasing them, which is what the Leader of the Opposition was actually asking for. It was just more demonstration of her clearly not having the depth of understanding of even the operations of government. For someone who sat around the cabinet table in a very senior position in government, she clearly does not have an understanding of government. We heard complaints about the cabinet process. Let us talk about the cabinet process under the previous government—the government that she helped to lead. It was a cabinet process that broke down so badly that the Expenditure Review Committee ceased to exist. The ERC ceased to exist or was completely powerless. There was a dual process by which royalties for regions projects were developed and pushed through without any accountability through the ERC. That was under the previous government. One of the first things that this government did—the Treasurer and the Premier—was to reinstate that very important governance and financial check of the ERC so that everything goes through Treasury. That did not happen under the previous government, so we will not be lectured about cabinet processes by members of the previous government.

There was a lot of reference to the Langoulant report, which is quite dangerous territory to be treading, considering some of the findings about project management in that report. I will go into some of those individual projects under the previous government and where they landed the state. I FOI-ed the previous government many times as a member of Parliament and before I entered this place, and every single time we would get back “commercial-in-confidence”, because the former government was privatising everything it could get its hands on. The answer was always that things were commercial-in-confidence. It is absolutely appalling that members of the former government can sit there. I have sympathy for the member for Cottesloe, because he was not in government then. I have a bit of sympathy for that member, but the Leader of the Opposition was a senior member of that government and very much part of that response of not providing transparency around contracts and projects. There was a constant litany of responses saying that things were commercial-in-confidence. I FOI-ed the contract with St John of God Health Care. It is an interesting story. It took me nearly three years. I got to the end of that time still negotiating with the government, trying to get the scope of the contract. It went on for so long that we won government and I got a letter from the Information Commissioner saying, “You don’t need us anymore; you’re in government.” That is how long that went for. It was three years of trying to get information about what services were and were not going to be provided by the former government. It is appalling to be lectured by members of the former government.

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Let us talk about releasing business cases. Let us have the business case for the Forrestfield–Airport Link; let us have it. The minister wrote to the then Leader of the Opposition and asked for that business case to be released, but he refused to release it. Where is the gold-standard transparency there?

Several members interjected.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** Where was the former government's?

Several members interjected.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** Where is the business case for the Perth Freight Link? Why does the opposition not release that? Where is the business case for jacking up TAFE fees by 500 per cent to be cost reflective? Where is that? The opposition sits there, lectures and moans, telling us to release this and do that, but it should look at itself. The opposition should look at its own record in government. It is absolutely appalling.

I want to respond to some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition about the minister's absence today. She is at an event in the wheatbelt launching the Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Route, which is a \$90 million project that she worked on. The only reason we got that money out of the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael McCormack, is that the minister worked with those local governments to put the applications in for him to approve the project. Without the minister's work, without her getting those local governments involved, without her actively involving herself in that project, we would not have that funding. Other members were also at that launch. There was the Leader of the Nationals WA, the member for Central Wheatbelt; the member for Moore; and Hon Martin Aldridge, a member for the Agricultural Region. It is okay for half of the Nationals WA room to be there, but not the minister actually responsible for driving the funding to meet the Deputy Prime Minister. It is just incredible.

**Dr D.J. Honey** interjected.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** The opposition talks about getting personal. The member for Cottesloe does it best. He has no credibility on public transport. The reason that —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** We are public transport's best friend!

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** That is good!

The member for Cottesloe talks about the cost, but he never talks about the social and economic benefits that flow to people who cannot afford to have a car, to get to work, to get to school, to have education or to move around a city that is car-dominated. That is why we are committed to building this rail network. This is coming from a member who complained about the amount of public housing in his electorate. These people need transport and access to Metronet. The people of Morley, Noranda, Ellenbrook and Malaga are excited about this train line. They are excited —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Tell us about Morley.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** I will talk about Morley; I would love to. We went to the election with a proposed route, which was our preferred option. It was very transparent and open. This was after we had had years of pontificating from the previous government about Morley's place in the transport network—those members have to admit that. The previous government said, "Oh, it's an important strategic centre, but we are going to build MAX light rail, but it is not going to go anywhere near Morley. We might tunnel." But there are major problems with tunnelling. There were lots of ideas and pontificating. The previous government talked about a tunnel to Morley, let us not forget, from the CBD. That idea was floated.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** That's true. And do you know who put it out in the press first? Hon Alannah MacTiernan.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** It was in response to you, my friend. Morley was let down under the previous government, without question, and it is looking forward. The whole north-eastern corridor was completely ignored by the previous government and it is now looking forward to a new rail line. To say that it is absurd that it is not going through the Galleria is a complete misunderstanding of Morley. I would like our friends to come to Morley and have a look. Morley is not just the Galleria. In fact, people do not live in the Galleria. They live in the surrounding area where they go to school and work. I know that residential corridor very well and the people are very excited about having a train station one kilometre from their houses.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** I look forward to the election. If that is going to be the candidate's pitch, to take the train station to Morley, bring it on. Let us have that debate, because I will gladly discuss with those residents on both sides

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of that rail line that the opposition wants to take the train line away from them and from their immediate amenity and divert it to a large shopping centre, with a challenging road network and limited development. That is what those members want to do.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Carine, you should go and get a bit of cheesecake.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** I make no apologies for that route. I am proud of the work that we are doing to redevelop Morley and Noranda and put it on the map. The people of Noranda will have access to public transport like they have never ever had. The bus network in Noranda is very poor, and this will revolutionise those people's lives in being able to access the city immediately. Noranda is a suburb that is very close to the city, but it can take hours to actually get there.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Carine, it is really hard to hear.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** There is a lot of talk about cost. Large infrastructure projects cost money; there is no question about that. There is no discussion about the actual ongoing and knock-on benefits of those infrastructure projects, the thousands of jobs that they will create over the next 10 years and the fact that many of that work will go to local contractors because of the work that we have done in this place with the Western Australia Jobs Act. Fifty per cent of the railcars will be manufactured in Western Australia. We are bringing that work back here.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Carine!

Several members interjected.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** I will check my facts and if I am incorrect, I will come back and correct the record, member for Carine.

Let me talk about some of the projects under the former Liberal–National government, if the opposition is interested in knowing how large infrastructure projects were managed. I refer to the “Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects: Final Report” seeing as the Leader of the Opposition raised this point and is so keen that we keep our eye on all the recommendations of the Langoulant report and not repeat the mistakes of the past. Let me start with Fiona Stanley Hospital. Fiona Stanley Hospital was developed by the previous Labor government.

*Point of Order*

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** This motion is about the timing and costing of Metronet stage 1; it has nothing to do with Fiona Stanley Hospital.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Thank you, member for Carine. I believe that that report was raised —

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Carine. I think the report was raised in the debate previously, so I will let the member for Morley continue.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** Fiona Stanley Hospital was a \$4.3 billion contract, the size of which this state had never, ever seen before.

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Carine, I am going to call you to order because you are being a bit cheeky. The cheesecake is calling. Member for Carine, so that you are aware, that actually puts you on three, so you are getting very close to the dessert bar. I think you should zip it now.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** Fiona Stanley Hospital was a \$4.3 billion project, the largest facilities management project the state had ever seen. It was a huge contract. There was a huge amount of public interest in the state's premier hospital, but it was delivered without a business case. The former government did not even have a business case to release! No business case was ever actually developed to privatise the services at that hospital for 20 years. The former government privatised the jobs and services in that hospital for 20 years with no business case. The entire process was confected and constructed to a predetermined outcome; that is, Serco would be the contractor.

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Two contractors were left at the end of the tender process—one was Multiplex, which had never run a hospital, and the other Serco. After extracting information on those contracts through freedom of information, we found that those companies came out of the tender process and were found to be very average, yet the former government still awarded Serco a \$4.3 billion contract to run our state's premier hospital. A \$4.3 billion contract was granted to Serco with no business case at all. That happened after the Education and Health Standing Committee stated that outsourcing may actually cost more or be of poorer quality. That was discovered when we realised that the sterilisation services at the hospital were not up to scratch. The government and Department of Health had to scramble around and pull together the sterilisation services so that the people in hospital would not be contaminated. It was absolutely appalling. That happened under the former government in our premier hospital, which it privatised.

Perth Children's Hospital is a beautiful building. I said previously in the other place that, without question, PCH will be an outstanding hospital but that the management of that project was appalling. The Langoullant report found there had been a complete lack of coordination and governance at a government level—ministers were not talking to each other, departments were not talking to each other, there was asbestos in some of the materials, and subcontractors were not paid to the point that one subcontractor took his own life and left his family behind. That project was managed outrageously badly under the former government. The design and scope of the whole project continued to change throughout the project and potentially it could still cost the state. It took this government to open it.

I refer also to St John of God Midland Public Hospital. We are talking about transparency, openness and managing projects. The former government went to the election and said that it would build a new hospital to replace Swan District Hospital—there were no arguments about the need for a new hospital in the eastern suburbs. Swan District Hospital had very aged infrastructure and needed improving. The people of the eastern suburbs deserved a new hospital—no question about that. What the former government did not tell them was that it was going to privatise it to a Catholic organisation. It did not take that to the election. That is unforgivable. People still approach me and say that the decision to privatise a public hospital to a Catholic organisation was outrageous because it had an impact and has created problems.

**Mr T.J. Healy:** They're proud of it!

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** They are proud of it. It is a nice building, a great building, no question. But there are issues with the service contract. It was viewed at the time that Ramsay Health Care had too much in the market. The old Peel Health Campus was not looking too good at the time. We all remember Health Solutions (WA)—that was a lot of fun. Ramsay had too much so that kind of left St John. The tender process was constructed with a particular outcome in mind, and that was St John of God Health Care. However, "Oops, they don't provide family planning services or key legal health provision. Oh, what are we going to do?" With one stroke, one contract, the former government took away the rights of the women who accessed that hospital to access not only abortion services, but also any family planning, so no contraceptive, no emergency contraceptive for sexual assault cases and no contraceptive after teenage births, which is always the best way to prevent further teenage births. There was no advice about that. There was no tubal ligation, no vasectomies—for goodness sake!—and no third-term fetal screening. They stopped third-term fetal screening because of the government's contract. Access to those services in Western Australia is some of the worst in the country. The Marie Stopes clinic is down the road: "That's okay, we'll send them there. They can just go there." There is no referral pathway, no smooth pathway to Marie Stopes for those women. They walk into St John of God because they need access to these services and are told, "No, it's against the Catholic code of ethics to refer people. Go to your GP." Women would be lucky to find a GP who would refer them there. It is true, my friend, it is true. There are many who will not. There are two clinics in this state that provide those services—two. Many women relied on public hospitals to provide those services, and the former government took that away. It is an absolute disgrace. It is one of the worst decisions of the previous government and we are left with it for 20 years. The former government then had to spend \$1.5 million on the Marie Stopes clinic to lift the surgical requirements, because a tubal ligation is quite serious surgery and requires much more equipment and provision than does an abortion service, as abortion is a short and simple surgery. The former government had to spend \$1.5 million to retrofit that. Not only that, it also created an unequal system. The Leader of the Opposition can roll her eyes but these are important services. It just goes to show how little regard the Leader of the Opposition had for those services and women in the eastern suburbs.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** You make things up. I did not roll my eyes.

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** The Leader of the Opposition just made up her entire speech!

The former state government provided free family planning services to women who went to the clinic if they lived in a certain postcode. If they lived one street out of that postcode, they did not get access to those services and had to go and pay for them. The former government created an uneven system. We will certainly make access to those

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clinics better when we introduce safe access zones, and we will see whether the member supports that and how Liberal Party members in the other place vote.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I call the member for Perth.

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary)** [7.34 pm]: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** We have had only one speaker, who spoke for a short time.

An opposition member interjected.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** Members of the opposition are the Kardashians of the politics world. They are superficial, have no talent, and after a few minutes people want to switch them off. Members opposite cannot handle it.

We heard some extraordinary attacks by the member for Vasse. I thought the use of the word flip-flop was quite hilarious.

**Ms L. Mettam:** I used it once.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** Flip-flopping—it appeared regularly in her speech.

**Ms L. Mettam:** No, it didn't.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** That was extraordinary given the number of flip-flops in the member's previous government. That became the signature of the opposition's transport plan and the member for Vasse had the audacity to stand up and accuse the Metronet plan of being that. Elections are about choices. In an election, voters will look at people's experience, history and ability to deliver on public transport. It is absolutely clear that only one political party in Western Australia delivers on public transport. In the opposition's eight years all it delivered was 7.5 kilometres. We are delivering 72 kilometres.

Members opposite promised on the Metro Area Express light rail. They not only promised, but also spent \$21 million. They criticise us for spending \$6 million on an advertising campaign to inform people how they can avoid congestion because of our massive infrastructure program, but they spent \$21 million and nothing was built. Small businesses and city councils rezoned and did everything in expectation of the program. We engaged seriously. I was the Mayor of Vincent at the time, and we took it seriously. I met with the government's ministers and worked to that plan. But the member's government just shelved it. It did the same with Ellenbrook. It is extraordinary stuff. Members opposite made a promise to the people of Ellenbrook that was so deeply cynical that the people of Ellenbrook lost their trust in government because of the decision-making and commitments that the opposition's former boss made.

I feel for the member for Bateman because he came in as the public transport minister and was left with an incredible mess. He had to try to pull something together, and released the "Perth Transport Plan for 3.5 million People and Beyond". I have to give the member credit, despite the Premier of the day completely ridiculing aspects of that plan. I note that it was an attempt to create a comprehensive transport plan. Of course, it had no costings whatsoever for the public record. It ruled out Ellenbrook and said the Ellenbrook line would be built by 2050. Two weeks after the Minister for Transport in that government, the member for Bateman, said that, the Premier of the day came out and said the government would do Ellenbrook before 2050. He totally contradicted the latest government plans to be released.

The bigger problem is that no-one believes the state opposition anymore—the Kardashians of politics.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** I don't understand the analogy.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** They are superficial, have no talent, and people switch them off. It is as simple as that.

The member for Vasse says that the opposition now supports Metronet. She said tonight that the opposition supports Metronet. She said that it supports the project and the community is excited about it, so we have to deliver on it. The problem is that, like their Ellenbrook promise and their MAX light rail project, what they say out there completely contradicts that.

Remember this: the member for Scarborough was the transport spokesperson and was asked her position about Ellenbrook. This is an extraordinary position for any shadow spokesperson to take. The member for Scarborough was the shadow Minister for Transport; Planning, and she said that it was irrelevant whether she supports the Ellenbrook rail. When we think about it, that is extraordinary. She was the shadow spokesperson, she held the portfolio, and she did not have a position on one of the most fundamental and major routes as part of the Metronet plan.

The member for Churchlands demonstrated the opposition's lack of commitment to public transport. The opposition tells us now that it is supporting Metronet. We have an election coming up and it understands that Metronet is very

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popular; probably its focus groups and research done by the state Liberal Party are showing that investment in public transport is popular. The member for Churchlands called it “creating narcissistic, grandiose monuments under their own name” and “a white elephant transport system”. As the member for Morley outlined, members opposite have no understanding of the benefits of public transport. This is the opposition and how it describes public transport! This is how it describes public transport in Western Australia and meeting the future needs. Then, of course, we had the Leader of the Opposition at the time simply saying that we do not need to prioritise a rail line to Ellenbrook—not at all. He said that should not be on the books —

“I have said, ‘Ellenbrook—do not commit funding to Ellenbrook.’”

Now we are hearing from the opposition that it is committed and wants to see Metronet delivered. It is saying that the community wants it now. However, the comments of the Leader of the Opposition, the former Leader of the Opposition and other members demonstrate that there is no genuine commitment to public transport. Elections are about choices. They are about looking at not only the future plans, but also the past performance of governments and political parties. What is very clear is that the previous government failed on public transport planning, and it cannot be trusted.

We get a sense that we are attacked for going too slow, but we also need to plan. The contradictory argument is made that we are also not doing enough planning. When we came to office, there was, of course, the plan, and I acknowledge the work done by the member for Bateman on the Perth transport plan for 3.5 million people. Unfortunately, there was no detailed work on some of the proposed routes.

**Ms A. Sanderson:** Nothing on Morley–Ellenbrook. Nothing.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** There was no detailed work on not only Morley–Ellenbrook, but also the Byford rail extension, so substantial work had to be undertaken by this government on its submissions to Infrastructure Australia. That is why the Morley–Ellenbrook line took a substantial amount of time. In fact, 62 000 internal and contractor hours were used to develop a substantial submission to Infrastructure Australia. When we came to government, despite the Perth transport plan, which was the previous government’s plan for transport, there had not been substantial work done on many of the routes that we are delivering as part of Metronet.

I want to be clear: this is about a philosophical difference between the two political parties. It is right to contrast and look at the performance of the previous government on public transport. It is extraordinary for the member for Vasse to say that we are flip-flopping when, in fact, we only have to look at the series of decision-making by the previous government—light rail; the Ellenbrook line; no substance to the Perth transport plan. We have to understand that there is only one party and one government that can deliver on public transport, and it is the Mark McGowan government.

**MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman)** [7.44 pm]: One of the key promises that the Premier made when he came into government was a new gold-plated standard of transparency. It was the Premier, member for Morley, who promised a new gold-plated standard of transparency. That is what we are calling on here. The member spoke about the past but what we are saying is that the Premier made this promise. He gave this expectation that there was going to be a new gold-plated standard of transparency. We have seen anything but transparency with regard to the Metronet plans.

We also heard from the member for Morley a whole recital about issues with previous projects. She may well be right about some of them, I cannot go into the detail about whether she is, but guess what? The people who were advising us are the same people advising this government. The same people are providing the advice. I have warned the other side about this issue around trying to pick holes in specific projects when it is exactly the same people in the departments who are providing that advice. If government members want to criticise the department about the quality of its advice, what have they done about it in three years of government?

The member for Perth spoke about setting the benchmark for public transport. Let us look at the record of the previous government in the public transport space. The former government spent \$470 million upgrading the bus fleet, increasing it by 30 per cent. It spent a quarter of a billion dollars on increasing the rail fleet by 30 per cent. It spent \$220 million on a new rail line to Butler and a new station out there, which came in ahead of schedule and under budget. Did government members also know the former government was responsible for building Aubin Grove train station? It built the 900-series rail lines. It introduced a new bus station. Compare Perth Central bus station with the Esplanade bus station. Members opposite can tell me who has actually been more focused on public transport.

Referring to the Mandurah line, what car parking facilities or bus programs were built into those stations to facilitate public transport? Look at the thousands of car parking bays that the former Liberal–National government built to ensure that public transport operated efficiently. As I said, the 950 bus service to Morley is the most popular route in Western Australia, and it was introduced by the former Liberal–National government. Because of that, the



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direct, rapid, high-frequency solutions around major corridors were introduced on the back of the 950 bus route to Morley. It has the same standard of customer satisfaction as the CAT service in the CBD.

Talking about public transport, this government now claims the Forrestfield–Airport Link as its signature Metronet project. When there were leaks inside the tunnel, the government was running a hundred miles from it and putting it back on the former government: “It’s the former government’s project, not ours.” Now that it has got on top of that, all of a sudden it is again part of the Metronet project! It is a \$2 billion commitment that was made by the former Liberal–National government. Government members talk about public transport, and the record of the former Liberal–National government stands alone. If we look at what has been completed under the current Metronet program, we see there is nothing.

The government talked about starting the Forrestfield–Airport Link rail line. The underground stations were commenced for the Forrestfield–Airport Link under the former government. When we looked at the program, we saw the actual project that the Labor Party, under Ken Travers, was promoting and took to the election was to run it along Tonkin Highway and Horrie Miller Drive, but stop a kilometre away from the international airport! People would have to hop off and catch a bus—the same as people do in Mandurah and Rockingham, and the same as people will have to do in Morley. People will have to catch buses to these major activity centres. One of the things we have to do in public transport is create better links with our activity centres. We have to look at where our activity centres are, such as major shopping centres, hospitals and universities. We need to ensure that we are providing the proper connections. The government’s Metronet program will simply pursue urban sprawl. I am not going to debate each project in isolation. We are actually supporting each project in isolation, but, when looked at as a combined result, the people of Western Australia have the right to know what this will cost and what the responsibility will be on future taxpayers to fund it. What is not transparent from this government is what the patronage numbers and operating subsidy will be for these rail services. Western Australians have a right to know what the ongoing operational subsidy and costs will be. We have a right to expect the capital cost to be transparent. We were criticised when we talked about the Forrestfield–Airport Link being a \$2 billion project. Guess what? We then lowered the budget to \$1.86 billion and the contract came in at under \$1 billion, but we decided that the Forrestfield station was not good enough and decided to upgrade it, which took the cost of the project to just above \$1 billion. If we include the project management expenses and standard project contingencies, it adds up to about \$1.35 billion. We left this government a \$500 million surplus in the budget. What has the government done with it? What is the total cost of the Ellenbrook line? I would love to know that. It looks as though the government is transferring the capital costs to other projects and that road projects are funding some of the Ellenbrook line. Is that true or not? There is no transparency for the capital or operating costs of the specific Metronet lines, and that is not good enough. During the election campaign, the Premier criticised the former government and promised there would be a new gold-plated standard of transparency. However, this government is providing less information than the former government. I provided this chamber with the patronage details of the Forrestfield–Airport Link when I was minister and I provided the information that was available from my department on the patronage of the Ellenbrook line. I shared that with the house but when I want to know what the patronage details are of Metronet stage 1, what do I get? I get absolute silence. It is you guys who went to the election and promised gold-plated transparency. Do not stand in the chamber like the member for Perth did and claim that Labor governments are the only governments committed to public transport. The record of what this government has done in this term and what was delivered in the last term of the previous government cannot be compared. Other things were done to improve the standard of public transport under the former government but there is no recognition of that. GPSs were put in every bus in Western Australia so we could fix the apps and improve the customer experience for people catching public transport. Instead of people standing at a bus stop wondering what the frequency was and whether the bus had already gone, they could look at an app and know where it was. Those things were done under the former government. It is about not only laying rail line, but also looking at the complete public transport picture.

The Charles Street bus bridge at the bus station was built at a cost of \$33 million. That initiative saves five minutes in travel time for each bus trip for more than 1 000 buses a day. We are talking about saving 5 000 minutes a day. It is a saving of four minutes during off-peak times and six to seven minutes during peak times for commuters travelling to the northern suburbs. These major public transport improvements were provided by the former government. We were very transparent about it and we have a great track record on what we delivered for Western Australians. What are we seeing from this government? When we ask what the cost is, the government says, “Don’t worry about that.” In a budgeting sense, we are seeing capital from the federal government listed as a revenue line. It is expensed as a capital line below the line because that helps the operating surplus look better than it is. When we tell the government that it has expensed federal money as a capital item and ask where the expense is around the state, we are told that it is not there yet because the government has not finished the business case. The government cannot commit federal government funding without going through Infrastructure Australia, and Infrastructure Australia cannot assess and approve it until it receives a business case. The government had no right to book that revenue into the budget and claim a bigger operating surplus. That is fudging the books. We

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want to see a transparent process. The member for Vasse, the shadow Minister for Transport, made a very clear argument when she asked where the transparency is, what the costing is and when stage 1 will be completed. What is the plan? We are into the fourth year of this government's term and that is not clear. It looks as though the Tonkin gap is funding part of the Ellenbrook line. I can tell members that when I was Minister for Transport, the Tonkin gap was estimated to cost \$270 million, and it is now estimated to cost \$400 million. That project would provide connections for the rail line into Bayswater station. Its current estimated cost is more than what the road costs. The government is not being transparent about that. Because the government is creating three lines into one—we are still worried about the capacity into the CBD—it has not been transparent.

The member for Morley talked about a direct connection from Morley into the city, but that ain't going to happen because people will have to hop off the train at Bayswater and catch another train. It is not a direct line at all. Capacity is an issue on that line from Bayswater into the city when we create three spurs. It requires a signalling upgrade. Is the Ellenbrook project funding the signalling upgrade? No, it is not. Is the Forrestfield–Airport Link project that now has these extra funds having to fund that and the upgrade to Bayswater station? The government has made Bayswater station a priority when there are people who do not yet have access to a train station. I would have left Bayswater station as it was to see whether we could deliver a station at Lakelands or a different place that actually requires one.

Where is the plan? The member for Perth talked about the importance of the Perth and Peel transport plan as a guide to future planning. That report was not done by a political party; it was done by the department and industry experts. However, it has been totally trashed and forgotten by this government. We need additional radial lines. Do members know that by going out to Yanchep, there will not be enough capacity on the Joondalup line? The Perth and Peel transport plan had a separate radial line heading north and connecting to the Joondalup line to facilitate that capacity, so that the line could be extended to Yanchep. What has this government done about that? Absolutely nothing. The government has pursued a new rail line without understanding the capacity constraints in the current line to Joondalup.

The government talks about its commitment to public transport, but it fails on the basic test of gold-plated transparency that the Premier promised when he came to government at the last election. Government members criticised the former government. The member for Morley ran through a series of the former government's projects and criticised and critiqued them, yet the Premier promised a new gold standard of transparency. We are asking for basic information that the people of Western Australia have the right to know. What is the total capital cost of the rail projects the government has committed to? What are the operating costs of those rail projects the government has committed to? What subsidy will the state pay for those rail projects? I would also like to know about the forecast patronage figures on those lines. I want to see how real they are. I have a feeling that some of those figures are based on developments around train stations in areas that have no population. I think people have a right to be concerned about the lack of information. We are not saying it is right or wrong; we are saying that there is a lack of information for us, and the people of Western Australia, to make a prudent decision on whether this government is managing the affairs of state in a prudent and appropriate manner. Today, the government is failing to be transparent to the people of Western Australia, and it is simply not good enough.

I was fascinated to hear from members opposite in this debate. It was a chance for the member for Morley to spruik the benefits of Metronet. It was an opportunity for her to champion the cause of Metronet, but her whole contribution was rhetoric about Fiona Stanley Hospital and Midland Public Hospital. I feel proud of those hospitals that we built, so I was pleased that the member was giving us credit for all the projects in the health portfolio, but this was her opportunity to stand and explain the case and champion the cause of the government's plan for public transport.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** It's because the train line doesn't go to the Galleria, member.

**Mr D.C. NALDER:** It does not go into central Morley whatsoever. If members look at the Perth and Peel transport plan, they will see that the department's recommendation was to send a new radial line to connect Perth CBD with Edith Cowan University and central Morley, before heading out to Tonkin Highway, through to Ellenbrook and connecting up with the Joondalup line, as I said, to ensure that there would be capacity available to handle the extension through to Yanchep. That is what it was there for. This government has ignored that option, and I am worried that future generations and governments will have to fix up the mess that potentially could be created by inappropriate planning that totally ignores the departments' advice and recommendations on an appropriate transport corridor for Perth as it grows.

The government has taken a cheap option by just doing a spur from Bayswater to Ellenbrook, but that has challenges that could become a burden for future taxpayers. That is what I am worried about. I am worried about the ongoing operating subsidy that will be required and the total operating cost, the patronage, and some of the ramifications that will exist for future generations because this has not been done properly. I am concerned because of the lack of transparency from this government.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 19 February 2020]

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**MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield)** [7.59 pm]: I rise to talk about the Forrestfield–Airport Link.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Delayed!

**Mr S.J. PRICE:** Show us the business case for it! We have heard tonight that it was a \$1 billion contract to build the tunnel, an extra \$300 000 was put in to upgrade Forrestfield station, and there is \$500 000 for contingencies. Members opposite should tell us what they know about the contaminated soil. Tell us how they justified spending almost \$100 million per kilometre of rail. Put out the business case so that we can see it. The Forrestfield–Airport Link is a fabulous piece of infrastructure and it will be great when it is finished.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.