

PERTH–DARWIN HIGHWAY — BUSINESS CASE

4503. Hon Ken Travers to the Minister for Finance representing the Minister for Transport

- (1) Has a business case been prepared for the Perth to Darwin Highway?
- (2) If yes to (1), will the Minister table a copy?
- (3) If no to (1), on what basis was the decision taken to commit the \$8 million in the recent State Budget to planning and design work on this project?
- (4) What analysis was undertaken to consider the benefits of this project against other projects that are waiting to be developed?
- (5) What is the estimated cost and net benefits of the project proceeding?
- (6) When is the project likely to be funded?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

Main Road WA advises:

- (1) Yes. The member would be aware that the Liberal–National Government has moved to ensure detailed planning and good project development for the Perth–Darwin Highway is done so that when the Commonwealth finally funds its share of the project work can begin as soon as possible. Unfortunately the previous Labor Government did not act in any substantive way to advance the construction of the Perth–Darwin Highway. The Member would also be aware that the Liberal–National Government wrote to the Federal Labor Government late last year requesting the Perth–Darwin Highway be funded as part of the Federal budget, but this request was ignored.
- (2) As the Business Case is a Main Roads' internal working document for Main Roads and Government I am not prepared to table it.
- (3) Not applicable
- (4) The business case that was prepared included a cost/benefit ratio.
- (5) The estimated cost to construct the project will be determined as part of the project development work.
- (6) The timing of this project is unknown. The project development work should provide a better indication of when the project can commence after taking into account the time needed for engineering investigations, to secure environmental and heritage clearances, acquire land etc. It will also be dependent on securing at least a 50 per cent contribution from the Commonwealth.