

TRANSPERTH BUS SERVICE — ROUTE 527

Grievance

MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot) [9.30 am]: My grievance is to Minister for Transport. My concern is with bus route 527 that operates through Aubin Grove and Atwell. This service goes to the Cockburn train station and the nearby Cockburn Gateway Shopping City. Aubin Grove is one of the fastest growing suburbs in the south metropolitan region. In recognising this, earlier this year the government opened a brand new primary school at Aubin Grove, which is doing very well with an excellent headmaster. I will put in context the size of the population growth in Aubin Grove. In the 2008 state election, 330 people were on the electoral roll for Aubin Grove; there are now just over 2 000. There has been a massive increase in development. Every month I sign letters to welcome people who go on the electoral roll in my electorate, and the majority of them are sent to residents of Aubin Grove.

Recently some Labor Party hack was reported in the local media stirring up some anxiety about the perceived lack of care by this government for Aubin Grove.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Operative!

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Whether she is a hack or an operative, clearly she is pretty misguided. It is a concern when someone who does not live in the electorate uses a residents' association to springboard themselves into ALP preselection—but whatever floats their boat!

Mr T.R. Buswell: So this individual, this operative, does not live in Aubin Grove?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: She is not on the electoral roll in Aubin Grove. She is on the electoral roll in the member for Cockburn's electorate, at Success.

Mr T.R. Buswell: But she is a member of the Aubin Grove residents' association?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Yes, absolutely. Most of the office holders in the Aubin Grove Residents Association do not live in Aubin Grove or in my electorate. I will not say that it is a Labor Party front, as there are some very decent people in the Aubin Grove Residents Association, but we do not need someone who uses a residents' association to springboard herself into preselection—but, as I said, whatever floats her boat!

Bus transport is a very important issue to me and I am deeply committed to bettering the services within my electorate. I have always believed that if we want to encourage people to use public transport, we have to make it easy for them. That includes parking at the station and interconnecting bus routes to train stations. The Cockburn Central and Cockburn Gateway shopping centres, which are on either side of the Kwinana Freeway, and the Cockburn train station, are highly utilised facilities within my electorate, even though the western side falls within the electorate of the member for Cockburn, who I am sure shares some of my passion for wanting better public transport. It is because these facilities are so well used and the traffic there is a bit of a nightmare that it is important that we provide solid public transport services to the people who live around these areas.

I am sure the minister has been briefed on bus 527. My grievance raises a number of different issues, and there have been a number of causes for the delay in extending the route. My grievance is fairly simple, and it raises a couple of questions: What is Transperth doing to increase the services to Aubin Grove and Atwell? When does the minister think construction might start on a terminus to allow the extension of route 527—I understand there have been delays? What has been the cause of these delays; and can the minister give me an overview of what the government is doing to grow transport services across the metropolitan area?

MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Minister for Transport) [9.34 am]: I thank the member for Jandakot for his grievance. The last time the member raised a grievance, it related to car parking at the Cockburn station. I had good news for the member then, and thanks to the member's representation I have good news again. Interestingly, at that time, I also pointed out the activities of that Labor Party operative who was in the local newspaper talking about parking at Cockburn. I noticed the same operative was in the *Cockburn Gazette* talking about problems with the 527 bus service. I also notice on the POWAnet website that the same Labor Party operative is listed as an employee of the state Parliamentary Labor Party, and I am pretty sure that person used to work in the member for Cockburn's ministerial office—but who would know how things work! One thing the operative failed to mention in the press recently —

Mr M.P. Whitely: You were a Labor sleeper agent.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: My friend, I was there for a little while and I was glad to get out. That was more in honour and reflection of my late father, who was a very passionate Labor supporter.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Your cousin talks to me about that.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: My father was a very passionate Labor supporter. Unfortunately, he passed away when I was eight. As a young man I carried many memories of him; one of them was his great passion. I am sorry I digress, Mr Speaker. My father passed away in 1974, but I remember all too well 1972—I would have been six—and the party my parents hosted at our new house in Thomas Street, Bunbury, as I recall, to celebrate the victory of the then Whitlam government. People’s views change as generations move on, and I did not stay around the Labor Party for too long. I have seen what it can do to people.

Mr M.P. Whitely interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I did not live in Vasse then, and I suspect the member for Bassendean will not be the member for much longer come the next round of preselections. The member for Bassendean will be replaced by the former state secretary of the miscellaneous workers’ union—a title that would invoke fear in anyone in a preselection process! I do not know what they call him now, but comrade No 1 of United Voice sounds like the lead singer on the Labor Party’s version of *Glee*.

Let us get back to the buses—I did digress. The member for Jandakot asked a couple of very important questions about bus 527. The services provided to the people of Aubin Grove will be improved for a number of reasons. Firstly, the government put a record amount of funding into the Perth bus network in the last state budget. It was an unparalleled and unprecedented increase. That is, \$88 million to buy 160 extra buses over the next seven years, and another \$87 million over the next four years to put on more bus service kilometres. Not only will we have more buses, but we can do more with them. That means that in suburbs all over Perth, but particularly in Aubin Grove, matters around inadequate bus services will be addressed. There is more money for the service and more buses to provide the services.

As I understand, and as the member for Jandakot pointed out, route 527 currently travels from Cockburn Central shopping centre, works its way into Aubin Grove down Lyon Road and, at the moment, terminates at or near the intersection of Lyon Road and Camden Boulevard. The member indicated the incredible growth in the number of electors in that part of his electorate—no doubt attracted in part to live there by the quality of representation in the state Parliament. There are a lot of people who live south of Camden Boulevard who would access that bus service if it could run down Lyon Road. The intention is to run the 527 bus south down Lyon Road and onto Rowley Road. That will mean, effectively, that all of those people who live between Lyon Road and east of the freeway, which is probably several hundred households, will have access to that bus route. That will happen. We estimate that the new and improved service will be implemented on 11 September. One of the reasons for the delay is the difficulty in securing approval and cooperation from the City of Cockburn for the location and construction of that terminus. A terminus is not a building; it is really just a lay-by where the bus can put in at the end of the run to facilitate the timing of the return journey.

I understand those issues have now been resolved with the City of Cockburn. However, efforts to secure that terminus go back to February this year, so it has taken some time to secure it. A reason for the delay in the extension of that important service has been the challenge of dealing with the City of Cockburn. Notwithstanding, I am advised those issues have been resolved, the money is there and the new buses are being delivered. In fact, last week I took delivery of the first of the new breed of Volvo/Volgren buses in Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: No; they are the same; they are green.

All together, those things mean that this much-improved service will be provided and I appreciate the member raising the grievance.

I have an interesting point for the member for Bassendean. “Goldfinger” attempted to take some journalists to look at five buses allegedly in the shed at Joondalup, but when he got there, they were gone.

Point of Order

Mr M. McGOWAN: As you know, Mr Speaker, under standing order 92, when referring to members of the other place, members are supposed to refer them by their title and are also not permitted to refer to them in a derogatory way. I request that the Minister for Transport cease these attacks on members of the other place.

The SPEAKER: It is a very good point of order, member for Rockingham. I will instruct the Minister for Transport that if he is in fact going to refer to a person in this place or the other place that he give them their correct title.

Grievance Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 23 June 2011]

p4761b-4763a

Mr Joe Francis; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Mark McGowan; Speaker

When Hon Ken Travers turned up with the media, there were no buses to see. They were not there because the security screens, two-way radios and ticketing systems were being fitted. If the member is suggesting that we send out buses without security screens, two-way radios and ticketing systems in place, he is in dreamland. He is in absolute dreamland!

However, a much better outcome for residents of the member for Jandakot's electorate. I thank him, on their behalf, for his representations to me and to the Parliament to help improve public transport.