

COALFIELDS HIGHWAY — SOUTH WEST DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION REPORT

964. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Has the minister read the original South West Development Commission report “Roads to Export”, particularly page 25, which discusses the cost of traffic accidents on the Collie Coalfields highway and the cost of a death that resulted from a road crash?
- (2) When developing a business case for road funding, does the government use the conventional figure of \$1.5 million for a death, or the recent research that concludes that a value of \$6 million should be used?

Hon SIMON O’BRIEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) I am aware of the most recent South West Development Commission report, “Roads to Export”, dated October 2010. Page 26 of the report refers to upgrading the Coalfields highway and discusses the cost of road crashes and the estimated safety benefits over 30 years.
- (2) The cost of a fatal crash, using the human capital approach, is \$2.66 million, based on the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics report that was released earlier this year. This may be what the member refers to as the “conventional figure”; however, the cost of a fatal crash has not been \$1.5 million since the 1990s. I am advised that Main Roads Western Australia has commenced using the willingness-to-pay approach in assessing the safety benefits of road safety investments, which values the cost of a fatal crash at \$7 million.