

BUNBURY PORT — ROAD AND RAIL TRANSPORT LINKAGES

467. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the “Roads to Export: Bunbury Infrastructure Investment Plan” released by the South West Development Commission last week, which identified that \$756 million in funding over a period of five years is required for critical road and rail transport linkages to the Bunbury port, with an immediate start on construction being essential if the five-year forecast plan timetable for resource and industry projects is to be realised.

- (1) Will the minister commit the state government to funding the balance needed, being \$586 million, within the planned completion time line of 2014, noting that \$136 million in commonwealth funding and \$34 million in state funding has already been committed?
- (2) Which, if any, of the road and rail transport linkages formed part of the state government submission to Infrastructure Australia and what funding contribution was sought from the commonwealth government for each project?
- (3) If one or more of the road and rail transport linkages formed part of the state government’s submission to Infrastructure Australia for commonwealth funding contribution, what is the current status of those discussions?

Hon SIMON O’BRIEN replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question and for his ongoing interest in the South West region.

- (1) It must be recognised that many high-priority projects across the state are currently unfunded. The normal process is for these projects to be considered on their merits as part of the development of the annual budget process. It would not be appropriate or equitable to commit to a list of projects in a particular location in isolation of consideration of overall needs across our state.
- (2) The state government’s submission to Infrastructure Australia included the upgrading of the Brunswick Junction–Bunbury port section of the rail network. Although the project cost was identified at notionally \$63 million, the specific contribution being sought from the commonwealth was not identified as it is anticipated that the majority of funding will be provided by the private sector.
- (3) The commonwealth is yet to respond to the state’s submission.