

GRAIN FREIGHT NETWORK

Motion

HON KEN TRAVERS (North Metropolitan) [10.04 am] — without notice: I move —

That the Council —

- (a) condemns the Barnett government for —
 - (i) closing the Quairading to York and Trayning to Merredin rail lines; and
 - (ii) failing to upgrade the roads that will now carry the grain freight, prior to the closure of these rail lines; and
- (b) expresses its grave concern that these decisions will have significant impacts on road safety across the wheatbelt and increased congestion on metropolitan roads.

As members would be well aware, on 31 October this year, those two rail lines outlined in the motion were closed as a result of the actions of the Barnett Liberal–National government. We could go back and look at the original disastrous and hapless contract that was signed by the previous Liberal–National government back in the dying days of the Court era. We could look at the broken promises of both the Liberal and National Parties prior to the 2013 state election, when they promised to keep the tier 3 lines open. We could look at the flawed policy that was adopted back in 2010 regarding the proposal to close these rail lines and upgrade the road network to replace those rail lines. We could do all those things. They were hapless, disastrous and flawed policies. But today I want to focus on the implementation of the government's plans. I do not accept for a moment that the policy the government adopted in 2010 was the correct policy, but I know that members on the other side do. They have constantly come into this place and argued that it is the right policy and that it is the right thing to do. If we accept that it was the right policy, let us look at whether this government has implemented in a good way the policy that it set out to implement in 2010 or whether it has completely botched it and, as a result of the complete botching of that implementation, put at risk road safety in the wheatbelt and increased the likelihood of congestion on metropolitan roads.

Hon Darren West and I had a road trip last Friday to inspect all the roads that were identified back in 2010 as the ones that would be upgraded to replace these two rail lines. We took many pictures. I have brought along my show-and-tell pictures for members to look at today, because I think when members of this house actually see the state of the roads and the failure to do the upgrades that were promised back in 2010—in fact, many of them have not even commenced—they will be absolutely shocked and horrified, as will the people of Western Australia as they become aware of how incredibly incompetent this government has been in implementing this policy.

The first road that we drove down was the York to Quairading road. As a result of the policies of this government, at the very least, the Mawson bin will be unloaded. As we go through this, members will realise that for at least the next two years the Quairading bin will also have to be out-loaded along that road, despite the government claiming that it will be out-loaded up to Cunderdin. But I will explain in detail why that cannot occur. The first thing I want to show members is the pictures of the York—Quairading Road. This road is supposed to have had work done on it. We can see that the edges are already failing. There are major drop-offs on the side of the road. Anyone who knows about driving trucks or caravans, or even inexperienced drivers, will know that those drop-offs are very dangerous. The edging is already pulling away, and there are many areas where the widening of the seal of that road has not been taken out to the promised width.

We then arrived in Quairading. As drivers come out of the Quairading bin towards Cunderdin, they need to undertake an interesting manoeuvre and swing a truck and trailer out onto the Bruce Rock road and make a hard left turn onto the Cunderdin road. That intersection is supposed to have been upgraded. To this date, not a single skerrick of work has commenced on that upgrading; yet, supposedly, this year's harvest will be carted through that intersection.

We then drove along the Quairading–Cunderdin road to look at where the road widening has been done. I have here a picture that shows where the seal on the Quairading–Cunderdin road has been widened to the point where trees are on the road reserve. If people want to see some beautiful pictures of Mr West, I am happy to bring those into the house! With this picture, I can clearly show the trees sitting inside the road reserve. I challenge members to question how safe it is, and how long it will be before we see crosses on those trees. It is a potential disaster. A caravan, a truck or a car will end up wrapped around a tree.

I now come to the next section of road. Along the Cunderdin–Quairading road there are a number of fairly tight bends. Part of the plan was to build a new, straight road to avoid the bends. That work has not started because it

Hon Ken Travers; Hon James Chown; Hon Darren West; Hon Col Holt; Hon Samantha Rowe; Hon Brian Ellis;
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requires land resumption and a range of complex design details. As I understand it, the straightening of that road will not be completed for at least the next two financial years. What does that mean? It means that the bends shown in this picture will be on a narrow road with poor edging all the way along. Eight and a half thousand truck movements, loaded with 2 000 tonnes at Quairading, will be trying to drive around those tight bends on narrow roads. It is a recipe for road safety disaster in an area that already has one of the highest road fatality rates, not just in Australia, but in the world, but this government will force trucks along that road. That is what the Barnett–Redman government is proposing for the people in the wheatbelt, an area they call their heartland that they claim to represent.

This picture is the telling one. On this section of winding road there is a culvert that Hon Darren West and I inspected. It is subject to monthly maintenance. I will show members the pictures of the culvert. The circular drain pipes, which look as though they are shaped like ovals, are not an optical illusion. Subiaco oval is rounder than these pipes. The pipes have cracks in them; we can see Darren pointing out the thickness of the cracks. Hon Darren West can tell the story about trying to put his wedding ring in a crack. My fear was that he would lose the ring.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Can I have a look?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Hon Alanna Clohesy can share the A4 version among members behind me. That is the state of the culvert. This week we asked questions in this house of the Minister for Transport about that road and the state of the culvert. We were told, “The culvert in question is currently being monitored by the Shire of Quairading on a monthly basis for deterioration.” It is being monitored on a monthly basis, but it is being monitored by Main Roads on behalf of the Shire of Quairading. Main Roads is monitoring and it is marking the state of it. The minister said he did not think it would cause any problems and he expected that the culvert would not prevent grain trucks of RAV 4 or 5 configuration using this road. I will shortly read to the house extracts of correspondence from Main Roads to the Shire of Quairading in which Main Roads recommends three options for that road. Option one is to restrict load limits to six tonnes, two is to strengthen it and three is to replace it. The second and third options will not be done because when the straight road is finished, that culvert will no longer be used, so why would they be done? The only option therefore for the Shire of Quairading will be the six-tonne limit. I do not know why the parliamentary secretary gave us the answer that he expects RAV 4 or 5 trucks to use it when the minister’s department is telling the Shire of Quairading that it should put a six-tonne limit on that road. A RAV 4 or 5 truck weighs a lot more than six tonnes. In fact, I doubt that any grain is carted on six-tonne trucks in Western Australia; it would be a highly uneconomical proposal and would make rail cartage look incredibly cheap.

That was correspondence from Main Roads to the Shire of Quairading giving those three options: a load limit, repair or strengthen the culvert or replace the culvert. There will be a six-tonne load limit on that culvert. That means that the Quairading–Cunderdin road cannot be used for transporting grain out of Quairading. What does that mean? It means grain will come along York–Quairading road and along Great Eastern Highway to either the Forrestfield or Kwinana terminals. Members for East Metropolitan Region who think that will not affect their constituents are completely wrong. Grain cannot be taken to the York bin because as the members for Agricultural Region will be well aware, there is a 44-tonne load limit on the bridge to the York bin. The York line is a narrow gauge line, not a standard gauge line. The economics of that mean that the grain should be taken straight to either the Forrestfield terminal or the Kwinana terminal. That means there will be more trucks on congested roads in the Perth metropolitan area, particularly the east and south metropolitan areas. All the city members who think they do not have to worry about this issue will be affected. Those members who love Rockingham need to understand that this will affect them. I want an explanation from the parliamentary secretary about why the government did not disclose that Main Roads had been advising the Shire of Quairading that they should be putting a six-tonne load limit on that culvert. Even if that were not the case, the road is not up to standard. This picture depicts the quality of the roads. There are large potholes creeping into the Quairading–Cunderdin road. Even the parts of road that have been repaired have bubbles and unevenness throughout. The people of Cunderdin can look forward to thousands of trucks passing their school and hospital daily thanks to the policy and the failure of the Barnett–Redman government to properly implement the policy.

We then drove along the Kellerberrin–Trayning road, which is still being worked on. This picture shows the quality of the widening that has been done. Long stretches of the road where it has been widened are already deteriorating and falling apart. The job has not been done properly. Why? The government is trying to implement this policy on the cheap. According to an answer the parliamentary secretary provided this house this week, all 15 shires had asked for sections of road to be completely rebuilt rather than widened, but the government failed to provide the money for the rebuild. It provided for only the widening and this picture shows the result of that. The roads deteriorate when low quality, cheap widening is done. It puts people’s lives at risk. The roads are deteriorating. Members who care about the ratepayers in the shires of the wheatbelt should be

Hon Ken Travers; Hon James Chown; Hon Darren West; Hon Col Holt; Hon Samantha Rowe; Hon Brian Ellis;
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concerned, because those ratepayers will pick up the long-term cost. The government is paying only for the maintenance cost of these roads, of which there will be many. Within five years, the government will have to spend significant sums of the budget trying to maintain those roads. That is because the Liberal–National government failed to do the job properly. It has completely botched the implementation of the policy.

We had a good chat to the Shires of Trayning and Nungarin and we looked at the Nungarin road. Members might say that this picture shows a pretty good road.

Hon Mark Lewis: That's a pretty good road.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes; that is the problem. I will take Hon Mark Lewis for a drive along that road. I will give the member two options: we will take him in a truck, even though Hon Darren West said he did not want to drive a truck along that road.

Hon Ljiljana Ravlich: Take him in the back of the truck.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes, or we can take him in an ambulance, because at Nungarin we were told that a couple of ambulances recently had to take people with spinal injuries to Merredin. The ambulance drivers drive on the wrong side of the road for as far as they can until they see an oncoming car. Why? The widened section is so uneven that it is dangerous for the passengers in the ambulance. Hon Darren West was kind enough to point out to me that a truck driving along that road would bounce all over it because it so uneven. It is an uneven road with trucks bouncing along. What did we see on the trip as we were going along? We saw a school bus coming the other way. The government is putting our children at risk with poorly constructed roads—thousands of trucks and school buses use those roads at the same time. That is the flawed implementation of this policy of the Barnett Liberal–National government. Government members should hang their heads in shame or the backbench members should stand up in revolt today about the state of this road.

The other road we took a drive down was the Kellerberrin—Shackleton road. Some good work is being done around Kellerberrin on a bypass outside that town. Although the answer provided to us earlier this week suggested that all the work on the road had been completed, it certainly had not been completed on Friday, when we drove along it. However, I give credit that that part of that road is clearly getting upgraded so that trucks can avoid the outskirts of Kellerberrin and go straight to the bin. What about the rest of the Kellerberrin—Shackleton road? This picture I am holding shows the state of it. Do members think that is an acceptable road? This road was supposed to be upgraded, and according to the Minister for Transport all the work required had been done. It is a complete disgrace. It does not have the right seal, and what there is of the seal is completely falling apart and deteriorating. There are quite a few extra shots of Hon Darren West inspecting parts of that road. Yet, the government tells us that all the works on that road have been completed. What an absolute joke. I knew there were problems in the wheatbelt and I knew some of the works had not been completed, but even though I have been pursuing this issue now for three of four years, I was completely amazed at the poor quality of the roads out there. I could not believe that so much of the work that was promised has not been done, yet the rail lines have been closed. I could not believe how much of the work that had been done is already deteriorating and failing. This is not about coming to this place and trying to raise the temperature; I am genuinely concerned that we will lose lives. I do not want to come back into this place and say I told the government so and point the finger at members on the other side—no-one wants to do that in politics—but the sad reality is that lives will be lost out there. That is the key issue for me. This policy will also impact the metropolitan area, but that is around congestion, not around road safety. I just hope that members will take the time to look at these pictures. I am prepared to provide these pictures to members and to table them for the benefit of members so they can actually have a look at these roads. I hope members will do the same as Hon Darren West and I did and take the time to go out there —

Hon Col Holt: We're out there all the time.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Then why is Hon Col Holt not screaming about it? Why does Hon Col Holt not bring this issue to this house? Does he consider this acceptable?

Hon Col Holt: I will make a contribution.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: If Hon Col Holt is out there all the time, he should be absolutely condemning his government.

Hon Paul Brown: We're happy to let you rabbit on about it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Hon Paul Brown can feel free to trivialise this debate, because his constituents will read the transcript of this debate and see how much he cares about them.

Extract from Hansard

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 21 November 2013]

p6359d-6373a

Hon Ken Travers; Hon James Chown; Hon Darren West; Hon Col Holt; Hon Samantha Rowe; Hon Brian Ellis;
Hon Lynn MacLaren; Hon Paul Brown; President; Hon Simon O'Brien

In the couple of minutes I have left, I want to make the point that there is an option. As I said at the very beginning of my speech, when this government announced the program, it said there would be \$188 million, in round terms, allocated to the rail program. According to evidence to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, the current contract to do up all the tier 1 and tier 2 lines will come in at around \$159 million. That means that around \$29 million has not been spent, and around 75 per cent of that is commonwealth money. If we do not spend it in accordance with commonwealth requirements—it was made very clear that the requirements were for rail—that money will be lost to Western Australia, and no-one wants to see WA lose money. I urge the government to take that \$29 million and do two things. It should immediately allocate it to upgrade the Trayning and the Quairading lines to get those lines back into operation for this harvest—a harvest that will be up near record levels. It should repair those lines so they can be used for this harvest. There is no way the government will get the roads fixed, so it should get those rail lines back into operation and then make the rest of the money available to Brookfield and CBH Group to see if we can get a long-term solution for the people of the wheatbelt. That is what I would suggest. The money is there; it should be in the budget. It was promised back in 2010 and that money should now be spent. It is important for this debate, because I have referred to these photos and shown them to members, to table them.

[See paper 1031.]

HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.25 am]: I would like to thank Hon Ken Travers for moving this motion today. The opposition spokesman for transport is a gift that just keeps on giving in this matter as he tries to gain relevance within his own peer group and in the wheatbelt on this issue. In fact, when my leader gave me the motion at the afternoon tea break yesterday, I looked at it and I thought it could not possibly have come from Hon Ken Travers. I thought it was something that Hon Darren West had put forward, but on closer scrutiny it was the opposition spokesman for transport. Be that as it may, I will address the issue in the motion. I understand why Hon Mark McGowan has made very public statements regarding the performance of his upper house members, and about performance parameters —

Hon Kate Doust: Why don't you talk about the substance of the motion and not attack the individual?

Hon JIM CHOWN: I will speak to you, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Order! That is a good idea; speak to me, but also speak to the motion.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I am speaking to the motion, Mr President.

Several members interjected.

Hon JIM CHOWN: My apologies.

Hon Mark McGowan spoke about performance parameters at the Labor Party's state council meeting and stated that his upper house members were out of touch with the community. We have a very good example of that in this motion. I also thank Hon Ken Travers for his show and tell. I am sure members will be very interested in the photographs he has taken and selected from the hundreds and hundreds of kilometres of roads in Western Australia. Of course, any member can travel on any road in this state, even Forrest Highway, and find a fault that they could blow up out of all proportion and bring to the house as evidence; but we will judge that on its own merit.

There is always history in these matters, and I will go back a few years. Let us set out the parameters of the Labor Party when it was in government. Hon Ken Travers was the parliamentary secretary, my equivalent, to Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who was the Minister for Transport at the time. In 2003, the Labor government appointed the Grain Infrastructure Group. The members of that committee were the Australian Wheat Board, Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd, Department of Transport, Western Australian Local Government Association, and WestNet Rail—now Brookfield—the rail operator on the rail line. That group made recommendations to the government of the day. Page II of the 2008 Grain Infrastructure Group's report states —

Within past Grain Freight Agreements, negotiated on a commercial basis, a proportion of the infrastructure costs are deemed to be fixed and must be met irrespective of the size of the harvest.

There could well be scope, in future agreements, to negotiate a fixed cost component for all infrastructure provided (Above and Below Rail, Roads, and Storage) and require that all tonnes produced be required to contribute to these costs.

In other words, the group was looking at levying growers for every tonne of grain produced. It was going to implement a levy on growers on the grains they delivered to their bins to pay for infrastructure. This was going to be funded by the growers, who are now the victims, under a previous Labor government. That would have been implemented if this government had not won in 2008. Hon Ken Travers knows that, and he sits there

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quietly putting up something in regard to this particular issue and trying to score very small, irrelevant political points in this place. Page V states —

Also required would be rules of entry for new entrants and legislative support to ensure that unnecessary duplication of infrastructure is avoided.

That is talking about a monopoly; a lack of competition. Competition is something this government has pursued and will continue to pursue on behalf of Western Australian growers. At this stage, Western Australian growers are receiving a minimum of \$5 to \$10 a tonne over and above what their counterparts on the eastern seaboard receive due to competition, and that competition is ongoing.

Page VII states —

It is also recognised that coordination of the supply chain by a single coordinator with equitable access and services to all customers will minimise the supply chain costs and risk of leakage.

The Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd grain express program was challenged by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission on this very point. If this recommendation had been adopted, it would have been illegal under the competition act that the ACCC administers.

I will go further to say that the grain infrastructure report group designated a number of rail closures. I will read them out. Hon Ken Travers, the shadow spokesman for transport, is fully aware of this—if he is not fully aware he was not doing his job properly as a parliamentary secretary. The Grain Infrastructure Group, under the Labor government of the day, had no grower representative. It only had industry representatives: CBH, the rail operator, the Australian Wheat Board, the Western Australian Local Government Association and the Department of Transport. It was Hon Simon O'Brien, as the Minister for Transport, who formed the strategic grain network group, which invited grower representatives on to its committee, and which we are working under today.

I will return to the rail closures anticipated by the last Labor government. I have no doubt at all, with regard to those recommendations, that these rail lines would have been closed. They include: Katanning—Nyabing, which is not operational today; Tambellup—Gnowangerup; Newdegate—Lake Grace; Narrogin—Yealering; Kulin—Yilliminning; Bullaring—Merredin; Kondinin—Merredin Trayning—Merredin; Goomalling—McLevie; and Amery—Kalannie—Beacon. And what do we have here? Goodness me, the York to Quairading line. My goodness, hypocrisy is emanating from the other side of the house; it resounds through the walls of this place. They stand there and keep doing it time and time again. Time and time again!

This government has not levied growers; and will never levy growers for infrastructure requirements. It has spent around \$128 million upgrading roads in this particular tier 3 area, and that program continues to be rolled out and will be rolled out. The ignorance of a shadow Minister for Transport on this issue is overwhelming. I am happy to see that he has actually gone out there and had a look and spoken to some people. Hon Darren West should know better. Obviously, he is in train with the shadow minister on this matter, hoping that he will gain some relevance in the electorate. That is the only reason I can see why he would support this motion.

Just for the information of members, with regard to the extensions on the side of the roads, it is worth noting that this is a very cost effective and suitable treatment that is often used across the road network to improve safety. In fact, it was Hon Alannah MacTiernan, when she was Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, who had Main Roads initiate this program. It was used to upgrade many kilometres of Muirs Highway in the south west of Western Australia for the logging industry when Labor was in government. The treatment was effective then, and was welcomed by local communities that used the highway.

The motion at (a) condemns the Barnett government for closing the Quairading—York and Trayning—Merredin rail lines. As everyone on this side of the house knows, Brookfield Rail is the lessee of the rail lines and it was its decision, not the government's decision. The Trayning—Merredin rail line has not had an operator for 12 months, if not longer.

Hon Ken Travers: Which line?

Hon JIM CHOWN: I might stand corrected on that point.

Further, the motion states —

- (ii) failing to upgrade the roads that will now carry the grain freight, prior to the closure of these rail lines; and
- (b) expresses its grave concern that these decisions will have significant impacts on road safety across the wheatbelt and increased congestion on metropolitan roads.

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Hon Ken Travers has been in the press on this emotional subject on more than one occasion. What he does not understand, and what I would like him to think about, is that during harvest time, which we are in the middle of right now, on average 10 million tonnes is carried by road to a receival point. In a very protracted period of time, six to eight weeks, 10 million tonnes is moved by road to a receival point. That is about 100 000-plus heavy vehicle movements a day on roads throughout the area. My point is, with regard to this part of the motion, the most dangerous time for anybody to be driving in the wheatbelt is at harvest time. The heaviest traffic movement of trucks, in any given year, whether a rail line operates or not, is at harvest time, because it is the only way that grain can get from a paddock to a receival point. In the tier 3 area, since farming began, those roads have been used—and are being used today—to carry grain regardless of the \$120 million-odd of upgrades that this government has put in place. The member's emotional statements are incorrect and irresponsible and should be condemned by this house, because it is at harvest time that heavy transport is used on those roads most often; it is not when receival points are being emptied over a long period of time, which can be 12 months if not longer.

The existing rail lines, apart from the ones closed by WestNet Rail—for example, the Quairading—York line, which had a significant derailing that cost \$1 million to rectify and where the issue is a rail bridge over the Avon River—need significant upgrades. That is the real issue with that particular line. WestNet Rail and CBH are both commercial entities, and, as Hon Ken Travers knows, CBH has applied to the Economic Regulation Authority to overcome the impasse over rail access agreements. The ERA is an independent authority, and one would hope that in the course of time it will come out with recommendations as to who will have access to the lines, what the access arrangements will be and what the access fees should be on a reasonable commercial basis; and the government will look at those recommendations.

With regard to this motion, I think the house and the general public are fed up with the opposition's constant misinformation, which has emanated throughout the agricultural area. It is totally irresponsible and it is an opposition spokesperson, once again, looking for relevance so that he can say to his leader, "Here I am; I am doing my job." I think Hon Mark McGowan, the political opportunist of political opportunists, must go home every night and say to himself, "My God, what a mistake I made. Why didn't I join the Liberal Party?"

Several members interjected.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I am sure he does that when he is dealing with people such as the opposition in this place on matters of such importance as this ridiculous and juvenile motion.

Hon Ken Travers: No wonder they call you "Jim Clown"!

Hon JIM CHOWN: Mr President, you know you are winning the argument when the opposition starts to get personal; they have no other argument. We have just had a very good example of that.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! Hon Jim Chown has quite a large voice that carries —

Hon JIM CHOWN: I have a minute left, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You do not talk over anybody in the Chair. I am just trying to say that you have a voice that carries, but if there are so many interjections that I cannot hear you properly, there is a problem.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Thank you, Mr President. As always, your advice is gratefully received by me and other members of this place. I will try to lower my voice. However, when idiocy such as this motion is presented in such an important place as the Legislative Council, I get a bit emotional. When I hear blatant lies about very important issues, I have to respond. I will leave further responsible responses to this motion to other members on this side of the house.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural) [10.40 am]: What a performance! I rise to speak in favour of the motion. I have something to tell Hon Jim Chown. This will come as a complete surprise to Hon Jim Chown, but the earth is not flat. I will let him think about that for a while. When he gets past that idea, we will have a talk about railway lines and road safety in the wheatbelt. Hon Jim Chown's contribution to the debate was a performance by a politician with little talent, little knowledge of his electorate and little care for his constituency; he was attempting to defend the indefensible. The motion quite clearly states —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Look, just settle down. The debate has been conducted in a very civilised manner with members able to put their points of view largely without interruption. Let us keep it that way.

Hon DARREN WEST: Thank you, Mr President. The comments of Hon Jim Chown are recorded in *Hansard*, including the bit where this parliamentary secretary showed his lack of knowledge of his portfolio when talking

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about which lines are actually in use. I thought that was quite extraordinary. I look forward to reading the *Hansard* that points that out. I might even post that on my Facebook page and quote it to a few people, so that people can see exactly how little knowledge and talent the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport has. I am glad it is on display for all to see.

The motion specifically states —

That the Council —

- (a) condemns the Barnett Government for —
 - (i) closing the Quairading to York and Trayning to Merredin rail lines;

It is quite clear. That is written in point (a)(i). I would have thought that Hon Jim Chown might have read that before getting up to make his rather strange contribution to this debate. The fact is that this government alone, the Grylls-Redman-led National component and the Barnett-Buswell and anybody else who has a say-led Liberal component, has closed these two tier 3 railway lines. That is a fact. They were closed on 31 October 2013 by this government. One reason they were closed was as a result of the debacle caused by the signing of a lease, of which I have a copy, in the dying days of the Court government. Leasing these lines to private operators was a last hurrah attempt by the Court government to cause a bit of carnage for the incoming Labor government to deal with. What has happened since—members do not need me to go into detail—is nothing short of a debacle. Members can ask anyone in the wheatbelt, or anyone in local government, about the implications of this for them.

The other part of this is that, prior to the closure of these rail lines, the government has failed to upgrade the roads that will now carry the grain freight. That is also a fact. As Hon Ken Travers pointed out, he has much photographic evidence of this. We took a lot more photographs than he showed. We could have pulled up every two kilometres and found a fault to photograph! I urge Hon Jim Chown to have a look at those roads, because he clearly has not done that.

Hon Jim Chown: I am out there regularly. As a practising farmer, I have carried thousands and thousands of tonnes on roads in far worse condition than those roads out there.

Hon DARREN WEST: Hon Jim Chown has not been a practising farmer for a long time. When he was a practising farmer, the lines were not under threat of closure.

Hon Jim Chown: Didn't you hear my speech?

The PRESIDENT: Order! We all heard your speech; now we want to hear his!

Hon DARREN WEST: Thank you, Mr President. It is quite clear that these roads have not been brought up to the standard required to carry an extra 85 000 grain trucks per year, alongside school buses and cars carrying mothers and their kids going off to sport, school, boarding school and different places. All that traffic exists on the road today. Often there are slow-moving farm vehicles on the roads, such as tractors moving farming implements. Often there are mobs of sheep or other livestock on the roads. The government is going to add 85 000 trucks a year to these roads. Hon Jim Chown dismissed this. He trivialised it. He called these issues irrelevant.

Hon Jim Chown: I think I called you irrelevant.

Hon DARREN WEST: Hon Jim Chown may think I am irrelevant, but I am speaking now about his inadequacy. He should perhaps listen to me. The earth is not flat. I am wearing on my lapel today something that I was given. This was not arranged; this is how things are. I am wearing a white ribbon for road safety.

A government member: It was arranged.

Hon DARREN WEST: It just turned up; I do not know. The message behind the ribbon is: safe drivers in safe cars on safe roads travelling at safe speeds. Last week we had yet another funeral in Calingiri. It was the funeral of a young man who was taken from us in a road traffic accident. He had a young family. It is a story we are all touched by. In the wheatbelt, 49.5 people in every 100 000 people die on wheatbelt roads, and many, many more than that are traumatised.

Hon Dave Grills: Why?

Hon DARREN WEST: That is a fact. It is not something to be proud of. It is double the figure for the midwest and triple the figure for the Pilbara; 49.5 people per 100 000 die on wheatbelt roads. That is among the highest road fatality rates in the western world. That does not take into account the trauma, injury, hardship to families and grief caused by accidents in which people are not killed. This is a significant issue in my electorate. I do not

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think trivialising this issue in this house helps anyone. This is something that Hon Jim Chown needs to face up to. The government is putting more trucks on roads that are not prepared for the task now that the rail lines have been closed. Government members need to go and find a mirror so that they can have a good hard look at themselves and why they are doing this. That is the reality. This motion addresses that. It does not talk about Grain Infrastructure Group reports from 2003, or recommendations from reports; this is a very real issue affecting my electorate. I feel very strongly about it. I have been to dozens of funerals of people who have been killed on wheatbelt roads and I want to go to fewer.

As Hon Ken Travers pointed out, there is a solution. At the last election we went to the electorate and said that we had \$30 million to spend on wheatbelt railway lines. Our vote went up in the seat of Central Wheatbelt. There are some people who thought that this was a big enough electorate issue to vote for us. This was clouded by the fact, as Hon Jacqui Boydell pointed out, that the Liberals went with a big blue wraparound in the *Farm Weekly* in the week before the election and announced that it would support viable tier 3 lines. It gave the electorate the impression that it was prepared to support viable tier 3 lines.

Hon Kate Doust interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: It is one of the 41 broken promises on the website www.brokenpromises.org.au. The Liberal candidate for Central Wheatbelt, Stephen Strange, was a vocal supporter of tier 3 rail. The government gave the impression that it would support viable tier 3 rail. How is this? The most viable tier 3 railway line, according to the Strategic Grain Network Committee report, which was very, very close to being classified as a tier 2 railway line at \$2 per tonne loss compared with road, was the Quairading to York railway line. It was the first line closed by the government! If the government had been sincere with the electorate about supporting viable tier 3 railway lines, and given that CBH invested \$175 million in more efficient lightweight, powerful locomotives, I would be very surprised if, under the same criteria used in the SGNC report, those lines did not come up to a tier 2 standard and were therefore viable. The National Party similarly made a disingenuous promise to the electorate that it would allocate \$300 million for agriculture and that \$75 million of that could go into tier 3. As I have said before, the electors of Central Wheatbelt are conservative in nature. Around 85 per cent of them vote for a conservative party. I would say that it does not really matter which of the conservative parties they vote for, because they will get Premier Barnett and Troy Buswell. That has proved to be the case. This was clearly an issue that concerned the conservative parties enough that they ran around and made these disingenuous and silly promises that they well knew they would not commit to. Hon Jim Chown rightly points out that grain gets to a wheat bin on a truck—that is true. The average distance that trucks travel to a bin, given that most bins are about 25 kilometres apart, is about 12 kilometres.

Hon Jim Chown: That is absolutely incorrect.

Hon DARREN WEST: I will address the member but I only have a minute to go.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I remind members who feel they have been misrepresented that there is an opportunity—if they check their standing orders—to rise at a certain time and request something be done. That has to be the way it is done, not by continuous interjection.

Hon DARREN WEST: I would appreciate a clear run at this in the minute that I have left. The average trip is about 12 kilometres and all the roads share the load. What the government is proposing to do is cart that grain a second time up and down one road. There is a predicted 215 000 tonnes coming out of the Quairading area, along the York–Quairading Road, then through York because the bridge where one turns left to go over to the CBH facility is also not upgraded, just like the rail bridge that the member pointed out. The government has let both of those get to the state of not being up to the job. This tonnage will then travel down to Perth; down the Great Eastern Highway, through the traffic lights in Mundaring, down Greenmount Hill and around to either Forrestfield or Kwinana. If those opposite think this is just a wheatbelt issue, they need to think again. This is a city issue as well. Because of the government's ineptitude and mismanagement, and the culvert with a six-tonne limit, it will have all these trucks coming through Perth. It is not prepared; it is not ready for the job. It is a bad government trying to defend the indefensible. It has failed the electorate on this issue.

HON COL HOLT (South West — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.51 am]: I follow on from some of the comments made by Hon Darren West. I agree that there is a road safety issue in the wheatbelt region of Western Australia. I will concentrate on this for a while and I will read from a 2013 discussion paper from the RAC called "Where We Stand: We need to talk about the Wheatbelt". I am sure most members will have seen this but I will highlight some of the factors of road safety in the wheatbelt that this very recent RAC report has come up with. There is a section at the front on the report titled "Fact or fiction?" and I will point out some of the things that are highlighted —

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Myth: The Wheatbelt's road safety record is no worse than other WA regions. Reality: In 2012 the Wheatbelt fatality rate was almost seven times the State rate, more than double the fatality rate of nearby regions and more than double the fatality rate of the next worst performed region.

It is pretty clear that we have some issues in the wheatbelt. Another myth —

Country roads are particularly dangerous at night. Reality: Almost two in every three fatalities in the Wheatbelt occurred in daylight hours (6am–6pm), well above the metropolitan rate of around one in two.

Myth: Wheatbelt residents are more experienced at driving at high speeds. Reality: Four out of five deaths in the Wheatbelt occurred on roads with a 110km/h speed limit. More than one in every four deaths involved excessive speed as a factor.

Myth: The major problem is city-based drivers who don't know how to drive on country roads. Reality: Two out of three road deaths in the Wheatbelt between 2007–2012 were drivers from the local area.

Myth: Country people are taught when they are growing up about how to handle alcohol. Reality: the percentage of road deaths involving alcohol in the Wheatbelt (2007–2012) was above both the State and near-Wheatbelt result.

Myth: Head on crashes are a major cause of deaths in the Wheatbelt due to overtaking of grain trucks. Reality: More than 70% of fatalities recorded in the Wheatbelt between 2007–2012 involved only one vehicle. Head-on crashes accounted for just 16% of fatalities with just 5% as a result of overtaking.

Myth: It's just the roads are not as good as they should be. Reality: At least 65% of fatal crashes in the Wheatbelt can be attributed to deliberate driver choices, alcohol, speed, drugs, contravene signs and signals, turn in front and careless.

Myth: Most Wheatbelt road deaths happen on busier arterial routes. Reality: Almost two in three road deaths in the Wheatbelt happen on local roads, not the highway network.

I am getting there. It continues —

Myth: Most crashes on country roads happen on dangerous bends. Reality: Three out of every five fatalities in the Wheatbelt from 2007–2012 happened on straight road segments.

Finally —

Myth: Wheatbelt residents know when to use their seatbelts. Reality: Almost one in three deaths of drivers or passengers in the Wheatbelt was someone not wearing a seatbelt.

While we are talking about grain trucks and the non-use of railway lines, I think these excerpts of myths and realities show that it is a much more complex story than that.

Hon Darren West: There are more trucks everywhere.

Hon COL HOLT: I am not denying that; I am saying that there is more to be done than just taking the trucks off the road. I find Hon Ken Travers' photos quite interesting because in talking about single vehicle road accidents, there are some notes in the same RAC report, which state —

Wheatbelt like other non-metropolitan aggregations is characterised by a relative high proportion of single vehicle run-off-road crashes (Hit object, Non collision). Wheatbelt and Near Wheatbelt are notable for their high Hit object rate.

The photograph of the trees encroaching onto the road reserve that Hon Ken Travers showed is totally and absolutely unacceptable and we should be jumping up and down when we see incidents of that kind as well as how it is blatantly reported that that often results in deaths on our country roads. We should be going out there, putting up our own cross and saying, "cut this tree down and clear the road lines." It is just not acceptable and I totally agree. We have also heard some commentary about dangerous curves. According to this report we also have to worry about the straights, because we are told that "Wheatbelt fatalities (59%) are most likely to occur on straight road segments" as opposed to curves. We should also realise that most of the road deaths, particularly in the wheatbelt, do not happen on the major highways and I have to say that the major highways are where most of the heavy traffic is. Major highways such as Great Northern Highway, Brand Highway and Great Eastern Highway actually carry the greatest volume of heavy traffic movement. But that is not where most of the fatalities in the wheatbelt are occurring; they are occurring on the back roads and streets where there is less heavy vehicle traffic. I am not denying that it might increase, although I do not think there is any evidence of that yet. We have to work out strategies to bring those results down as well as where we broadly target our money— road building, education or wherever it might be.

Extract from Hansard

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 21 November 2013]

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To back this up I have some more figures from the RAC report. The Great Northern Highway has a greater volume of vehicles of which 33 per cent are heavy vehicles. Brand Highway has 2 500–3 000 vehicle movements every day of which 24 per cent are heavy vehicles. Whereas for some of the smaller arterial roads, for example Goomalling–Merredin Road, there are only 620–700 vehicles a day—fairly low volumes in comparison—with only 13 per cent to 19 per cent being heavy vehicle movements. It is not always the interaction between the number of vehicles and the number of trucks that is causing these accidents. I also quickly highlight that wheatbelt districts statistics show that most people speed over the limit by 10 kilometres an hour or more. We are really talking about driver education as much as improved road safety and if we concentrate more funds that way we may get just as good a result in terms of road safety.

I do not have much time left, so I will flick to the end of the report. In the summary of conclusions in the report, it states —

The key to understanding Wheatbelt’s high fatality rate could be contained within driver attitudes and driver behaviours. At least 65% of fatal crashes in the Wheatbelt can be attributed to deliberate driver choices, alcohol, speed, drugs, contravene signs and signals, ... and careless. A further 15% are attributed to inattention and fatigue.

That is 80 per cent of crashes that were under the control of the driver. I have two 16-year-olds who are learning to drive now and the first thing I teach them when we drive around is to drive to the conditions. Everyone in country Western Australia should know that. If people are driving on a gravel road, they should drive to the conditions that the road presents. It might be the weather, the condition of the road or kangaroos, open fields or forested areas along the side of the road. It is about driving to the conditions that the driver is presented with. Although I agree that country roads can always be improved, and that would help the fatality and accident rates, especially in the wheatbelt given the high collision rate—I have already said that we should concentrate on removing trees from the road reserve—in actual fact there is much more to be done to address the accident and fatality rates in the wheatbelt than just talking about taking grain trucks off the road, which still may not happen, and using rail instead. This is a much broader debate that we in the National Party know very well. We will continue to work on those things that we have control over to address the fatality rate in the wheatbelt region.

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan) [11.01 am]: I also rise today to support the motion that Hon Ken Travers has put forward this morning. We have heard some really interesting contributions so far, particularly from members on this side of the house. Hon Ken Travers and Hon Darren West put together some well-thought-out and articulate contributions that focused mainly on the first part of the motion. I want to focus on the second part of the motion and give a metropolitan perspective and an east metropolitan perspective. The motion states that the Legislative Council condemns the Barnett government and expresses its grave concerns that these decisions will have significant impacts on road safety across the wheatbelt and increased congestion on metropolitan roads.

We have not yet spoken about traffic congestion. It is a significant issue in the metropolitan area of Perth, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region. Many Perth drivers experience bumper to bumper traffic every day trying to get to work. It is not easy and it is only getting worse. The RAC has put out some interesting material on congestion and the impacts it has on people and businesses. I will read some information on the RAC website from a media release published on 7 March this year. It states —

For anyone lacking firsthand evidence, new research from the WA RAC has found that speeds can be reduced to a crawl of 20 km/h, in 100 kilometre zones.

The Travel Time report looked at 21 key commuter routes—covering more than 500 kilometre of road, including the three freeways, seven highways and several major arterial links.

RAC ... said an extra one million vehicles would be on WA roads in 2020, which meant it was critical to increase investment “in more efficient roads and better public transport”.

“Rapid population growth, major developments around the CBD and our strong economic performance have created the perfect storm in terms of traffic congestion.”

There is no doubt, and I do not think anyone would disagree, that traffic congestion is a real issue in metropolitan Perth. In terms of the impact that traffic congestion can have on WA businesses, the RAC’s media release from October this year states —

Perth businesses say traffic congestion is continuing to cut into their bottom line and its impact is now being felt more widely by workers.

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The second RAC BusinessWise—Chamber of Commerce and Industry Congestion Survey has confirmed traffic congestion is taking an increasing toll on the productivity and profitability of business and is impacting their ability to recruit, manage and maintain staff.

More than 400 small-to-medium businesses contributed to the 2013 survey, which revealed 83 per cent of respondents believe traffic congestion is having a negative impact on their operations, a result virtually unchanged from the 2012 survey.

External Engagement Manager Liz Carey said over the past 12 months, nearly all respondents (97.3%) reported traffic congestion had increased the time their workers spent on the roads, up from 90 per cent in 2012. Businesses are facing higher fuel costs, lower productivity and the inability to take on more work.

“Of particular concern are the implications for the safety of drivers spending longer hours on the road,”

...

It was not that long ago, during the election campaign in March this year, that each party made massive commitments about ways to ease traffic congestion. The Labor Party had the Metronet plan and the Liberal Party had the Metro Area Express light rail link. It was pretty obvious that each party took this issue seriously. It will not go away in the near future; this is a real issue that both parties worked really hard during the campaign to distinguish themselves on. With that in mind and the fact that there is a traffic congestion issue, it really does not make a hell of a lot of sense to close these rail lines. It will increase traffic, particularly on metropolitan roads and particularly in Forresterfield in my electorate. It does not make sense. I would like a commitment from the government that the closure of these rail lines will not have an impact on roads and that it will not impact on the people of the East Metropolitan Region because of its poor planning, poor implementation and poor governing.

In terms of road safety, the RAC has also put out some media releases that state that it is a reality that an average of around 200 people are lost on WA roads every year. That cannot be ignored. That is a reality and that is a fact. More trucks on our roads will only increase the traffic congestion that drivers are already facing. I am not sure that anyone on the other side of the chamber has thought about that impact on traffic congestion in the Perth metropolitan region. I appreciate that in addition to the member who holds the shadow transport portfolio, a number of the members who spoke today are from regional areas, but it is also a metropolitan issue. It is not constrained to just country members in the chamber. I ask whether the government can make a commitment that the closure of these rail lines will not affect the East Metropolitan Region or other metropolitan areas.

HON BRIAN ELLIS (Agricultural) [11.08 am]: I will keep my comments brief and to the point as I know that other members want to speak on this motion. I am probably on record as saying that I would prefer to see grain on rail, and I stand by that if it is possible. But there is no getting around the fact that a lot of grain is carted on road, even if it is just from the paddock to the bin. Roads get damaged at harvest time. I need to reinforce that: it does not matter where people are; roads get damaged at harvest time. The motion states that the Barnett government has closed the rail lines. It is Brookfield Rail that has mothballed the rail lines mentioned in the motion. I am hopeful that at some stage during the negotiations between the CBH Group and Brookfield, those rail lines will be used again. We did say that we would support commercially viable rail lines. These rail lines have yet to be proven to be commercially viable. Yes, I agree with Hon Ken Travers about the condition of roads and how dangerous they become at harvest time. I could go right around the state and take similar photos of damaged roads and plenty of roads that need to be repaired, not just in that area. I know that Hon Ken Travers is trying to give the impression that no money has been spent on roads in the wheatbelt. I have here some figures and some details that I will use to point out what has been done. These are road upgrades that have been provided for under the state government's \$118 million allocation. To date, over 95 per cent of the identified improvements to state roads and over 74 per cent of local government works have been completed. In addition to the \$118 million program, the state has allocated \$10.5 million from 2012–13 to 2014–15 for upgrade works on the York–Quairading section of the York–Merredin road.

For the Cunderdin–Quairading road, the length of which is 32 kilometres, the budget allocated was \$9.142 million, and \$5.708 million has been spent.

Point of Order

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Could I ask the member to identify the document he is quoting from?

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: They are documents that have been provided to me from the ministry.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I will ask at the end of this speech to have it tabled.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I understand that our standing order that relates to documents being quoted from is when an original document is used specifically to provide a quote. Hon Brian Ellis is not quoting from a document.

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Several members interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: He is referring to notes; he is not quoting from a document, as members opposite very well know. So I would urge you, Mr President, not to accept the point of order.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! If members refer to standing order 58, they will see that a member can ask, as Hon Ken Travers did, for identification of a document that a member was quoting from, and that may well be a form of notes or whatever. At the conclusion of the speech, it is within the rights of any member to ask a speaker to table the document. Of course, it is up to that member whether they wish to table that document or not. I hope that clarifies it.

Debate Resumed

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: The honourable member can get these notes quite easily, the same as I did, from the ministry.

Several members interjected.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: If I can progress, 78 per cent of the length of the Cunderdin–Quairading road is completed. There are some remaining works. Two sections of realignment within the Quairading shire will be completed in 2013–14 and 2014–15. There is an issue, which I think the honourable member mentioned. One large culvert on a section that will be realigned has deteriorated. The shire is monitoring the condition of the culvert and providing regular reports to Main Roads. There are no load restrictions over this culvert at this time. Should the condition of the culvert deteriorate further, propping will be put in place to avoid the requirement for load restrictions. Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd has confirmed that its preference for the out-loading of grain from Quairading is via the Cunderdin–Quairading road, which is in accordance with the agreed grain freight transport strategy.

I have some more figures for the other roads that have been mentioned. On the Kellerberrin–Bencubbin road, the length of the Kellerberrin–Trayning section is 60 kilometres. The budget allocated is \$7.7 million. An amount of \$5.93 million has been spent. Work has been completed on 93 per cent of the length of the road. The remaining works are four kilometres of reconstruction in the Trayning shire. The shire plans to have this work completed in March 2014, before out-loading of the Trayning bin commences. On the Goomalling–Merredin Road, the length of the Nungarin–Merredin section is 37 kilometres. The budget allocated was \$5.218 million and \$3.218 million has been spent. One hundred per cent of the length has been completed. On the York–Merredin road, the length of the York to Quairading section is 65 kilometres. The budget allocated was \$10.5 million. So far, \$650 000 has been spent. Four kilometres have been completed. There are some remaining works. A 10-kilometre section, Quairading westwards, will be completed this financial year. The remaining works will be completed progressively over the following years. The existing budget allocation will enable approximately 40 kilometres of the 65 kilometres to be widened. Additional funds will be sought to complete the full 65 kilometres of widening.

I pointed out those figures to put into perspective the assumption that nothing is being done in the wheatbelt. I also have doubts about the projected figures for trucks coming into the city, as has been mentioned today. Farmers will always cart to the most economical and viable turnaround for them, whether it is in the metropolitan area, Northam or a local siding. I have done it myself. I carted to the metropolitan area and it became uneconomical because the wait was too long. In fact, I have not had time to research what is happening now. How many trucks are coming into the metropolitan area now because the lines are not being used?

Hon Simon O'Brien: No more than normal.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: No more than normal, Mr President.

Several members interjected.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I see that that touches a chord. Farmers have always carted to the metropolitan area and they always will. I suspect that there are no more than normal.

Hon Ken Travers: Until this policy, they never carted to Kwinana. They have actually put the capacity into trucks that unload at Kwinana as a result of your policy.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: As I have said before, they will go where the most economic return is, and if some have gone to Kwinana, so be it. I do not believe that the numbers have increased, as has been claimed.

I think that everyone in the country is aware that at harvest time they have to take care—this is trucks, cars or whatever on country roads at harvest time, whether they are good or bad roads. Hon Col Holt has pointed out some of the myths around the bad driving or the accidents that happen when only one truck is on the road. It has

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been claimed that these particular roads will cause deaths. They may. That can happen on any road in the state. It comes down to driving according to the condition of the road. It is not always the fault of the road; it is the fault of the driver. On my farm, I know that I will be undertaking repairs where the trucks come out of the paddocks and damage the road throughout the farm. The situation is the same with the shires. After harvest, as usual, all the shires will be repairing roads that have been damaged by truck movements.

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [11.19 am]: The Greens heartily support this motion. It is very rare that we support motions couched in terms that condemn the government. I have spoken before on several occasions when I have thought condemning the government was too heavy a hammer to use, but in this case I commend the member for the way he has worded the motion.

Hon Ken Travers: That's because you're the soft, cuddly Greens!

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I believe it is something we need to speak very strongly about to express our grave concerns about the significant impacts on road safety that closing the Quairading–York and Trayning–Merredin rail lines will have. Several members have mentioned—I very much appreciate the contributions from both Hon Colin Holt and Hon Brian Ellis—the role of driver behaviour in road safety. In fact Hon Col Holt quoted from an RAC report, which was very enlightening and we should all be aware that driver behaviour causes problems. That can happen anywhere, on any road. However, both honourable members were with me on the committee that looked into the petition about the closure of the tier 3 lines.

Hon Kate Doust: A unanimous report.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: The result could be no clearer because the committee recommended that we allow those tier 3 lines to remain open until the end of 2014 to enable time for a business case to be done. This is why I am very concerned about this. The careful work we did and, as Hon Kate Doust, who was also on that committee, has rightly said, it was a unanimous decision to allow time to investigate whether the tier 3 lines were viable. I was shocked to hear the announcement that the Trayning–Merredin rail lines and Quairading–York rail lines would be closed well before the period in which we hoped to do the business case. As a city member and someone who includes the areas of Kwinana and Fremantle in my region, I am well aware of the sensitivity to any increase in trucking. Since the World Health Organization report that identified that diesel particulates are a particularly dangerous carcinogenic, my electorate is increasingly concerned about any increase in trucking. I take the point that additional trucks are not going to Kwinana right now, but I can tell members that they are very concerned in that area —

Hon Simon O'Brien: I know you've been to Fremantle and Kwinana, but have you ever been to Quairading?

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Yes, sir; I have.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Good.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I thank Hon Simon O'Brien for allowing me to express my knowledge of the wheatbelt region; yes, I am aware of it. I want to raise a point—Hon Samantha Rowe made this point clearly, so I do not want to labour the point—that these are health matters. Until our trucks have better filters for diesel emissions, any amount of increased trucking will increase air pollution to an extent that it creates a health impact.

Several members interjected.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: The Hansard reporter is probably finding it difficult to record what she is meant to; which is my speech, not members' interjections.

Several members interjected.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: However, I will try to speak to Hansard to assist her in that.

Hon Brian Ellis mentioned the expenditure on these roads and I say that money should be spent. I think the roads need some upgrading. Once those roads are carrying grain-laden trucks, the roads will require increased maintenance. It will increase the financial liability required to maintain those many kilometres of roads, when it would be better to focus the revenue on getting the rail line up and going because I, for one, and many people in Western Australia agree that state infrastructure is not just for the mining resources industry but also for the agricultural industry. This is essential infrastructure to get grain to port and therefore we condemn the Barnett government for closing those lines.

HON PAUL BROWN (Agricultural) [11.23 am]: There has been a lot of debate today. I thank Hon Jim Chown and Hon Brian Ellis for highlighting the spending that has been done on country roads. I will spend the remaining time on the fact that CBH Group and Brookfield Rail, the users and operators of the country rail lines,

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are in negotiation with each other. That is where the commercial priorities lie. They are the users and the operators of the rail system at the moment, and they are in negotiations.

Hon Darren West: Who's the owner?

Hon PAUL BROWN: Hon Lynn MacLaren made some errors in her statement just then. The two lines, the York–Quairading line and the Training–Merredin line, have not closed. They are open; they are non-operational for safety reasons, and it is quite within Brookfield's right to do that. The other four lines are still open and negotiations have been undertaken recently for them to remain open and in use until the end of June 2014. I am sure that within that time frame, CBH and Brookfield will come together to negotiate a suitable access agreement that they will collectively bring to government and we will peruse their business case, so they can tell us which lines are viable that they will use and which lines are not viable that they will not use. That is the right and proper thing to occur in a commercial sense.

Point of Order

Hon KEN TRAVERS: During the debate I asked Hon Brian Ellis to identify a document and I would appreciate it being tabled at the end of his speech. I am not sure whether he is prepared to table it.

The PRESIDENT: You can request.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I do not have the notes now; I have given them to Hansard.

The PRESIDENT: Can you answer the question: are you prepared to table the document?

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I don't think there is any need, Mr President.

The PRESIDENT: I will take that as a no.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The only reason he can deny to table it is if he claims it is confidential. Earlier in the conversation he said it should be available publicly, so it cannot be confidential. I thought the member would indicate that he would therefore table it.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: If I may, it might clarify some understanding or, if to the contrary, clarify a misunderstanding on my part. My understanding of this particular standing order is that when a member relies upon an original document to establish a point by quoting from a document, which he must identify, the purpose of identifying the document is to establish that what he is quoting is in fact real; that it is backed up by the genuine document. The purpose of tabling it is to prove the existence of that document. When a member reads from a document, that does not of itself mean he is quoting from it; he reads from a document for the purpose of an aide-mémoire.

Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It struck me that Hon Brian Ellis was reading from a document and that is quite distinct from quoting from a document.

Hon Sue Ellery: He denied that when I said that.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Mr President —

The PRESIDENT: That is fine, but I will not open up a debate on a point of order.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: There is precedent on the matter that Hon Simon O'Brien has raised. Hon Sue Ellery will know this better than most. The member did not indicate that he was only using notes; he indicated he was quoting from them. He did not claim that he was not quoting. It goes back to the same circumstances when Hon Sue Ellery was required to table documents in this place.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Did he say he was quoting? He did not.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The matter is quite simple. The member was asked to identify the document he was making some statements from. He did that. The member has been requested to table that document. Standing order 58(2) merely states —

At the conclusion of a speech in which a Member has quoted from a document, the document shall be tabled upon the request of any other Member, unless the Member states the document is a confidential document.

That is the end of the matter.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I was interested in the toing and froing. I have no real problem with tabling the document except that I have given it to Hansard. It is not confidential.

Extract from *Hansard*

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 21 November 2013]

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The PRESIDENT: You are prepared to table the document. The document is tabled.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: Yes.

Hon Ken Travers: Thank you.

[See paper 1032.]

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

The PRESIDENT: That debate lapses, according to standard practice. I congratulate members on a quality debate with thoughtful contributions from all speakers about different aspects of the issue.