

COALFIELDS HIGHWAY — UPGRADE

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

I refer to proposed roadworks on the Coalfields highway.

- (1) How much of the funds allocated for the Coalfields highway will be spent this financial year?
- (2) What is the total amount of funding allocated for the Coalfields highway; and, of that amount, how much is funded by the federal government and how much is funded by the state government?
- (3) What planning has taken place to date?
- (4) When will the roadworks begin and when will each section be completed?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN replied:

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

- (1) A total of \$4 million will be spent.
- (2) A total of \$14 million is currently allocated in the 2010–11 budget and forward estimates to upgrade the Coalfields highway, all of which is state funding.
- (3) Planning and preconstruction for a major upgrade between west of the Wellington Dam turn-off and Collie commenced in early 2009. Design for the 7.5-kilometre stage 1 upgrade is currently being finalised, and environmental and heritage approvals are being progressed so that construction can commence during summer. Planning and preconstruction activities, which will include land acquisition from state forest and national parks, are continuing.
- (4) Subject to all preconstruction activities being completed and within current funding availability, it is proposed to deliver the highway upgrade in a number of stages as follows. In 2010–11, the current financial year, a \$4 million allocation will widen the highway from the Allanson town site through to Collie, a length of 7.5 kilometres. That is stage 1. We anticipate that construction will commence in December 2010, with works being completed by March 2011. In the 2011–12 financial year, \$10 million is allocated to upgrade the available areas between the Wellington Dam turn-off and Allanson that do not require state forest acquisition. That is approximately five kilometres and forms stage 2. Following this, the upgrading of areas between the Wellington Dam turn-off and Allanson that involve state forest acquisition will be tackled. That is approximately six kilometres. I should point out that part of the planning that has gone into delivery is based on the fact that when we need to acquire some parts of state forest and national parks, it takes up to two years to complete that process. That fits in with the overall timetable.