

## **ROE HIGHWAY EXTENSION**

*Statement by Minister for Transport*

**HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan — Minister for Transport)** [10.03 am]: There is considerable public interest in the progress of the Roe Highway extension, particularly from people in the southern suburbs who are keen to see the project progress. As the planning for the Roe Highway extension progresses, it is becoming increasingly clear that the extension is needed to accommodate projected population growth, ease congestion and create capacity for an anticipated increase in future freight and private vehicle movements in the southern suburbs. Independent advice provided to the government by GHD Meyrick backs up these assertions. Its report states that the road transport network in the south west metropolitan area is already inadequate to support the expected strong growth in population and industrial, commercial and residential developments in the area over the next 20 years, and if Roe Highway is not extended beyond Kwinana Freeway, severe congestion and restricted traffic flow will be widespread on the major routes by 2031. In short, advice received to date states that Roe Highway's extension would support demand for up to 79 900 vehicles per day by 2031, and reduce traffic on critical sections of South Street by nearly 20 per cent and Leach Highway by around 10 per cent by 2031. It will also result in time savings and reduced travel time variability because of improved levels of service on key east-west routes, and in some cases shorter trips, which in turn should lead to a reduction in freight transport costs and vehicle emissions. The report also states that if this road is not constructed, then there will be traffic leakage from South Street and Leach Highway onto even less capable roads—roads where our children play.

Main Roads' modelling suggests that the construction of the Roe Highway extension will also result in a minimum of 200 heavy vehicles per day being removed from Leach Highway by 2021, which is a seven to 11 per cent reduction, with 500 to 600 heavy vehicles per day being removed by 2031, which is a 15 to 19 per cent reduction. In relation to South Street, up to 1 300 heavy vehicles per day will be removed by 2021, which is a 16 to 48 per cent reduction, with 1 600 heavy vehicles per day removed in 2031, which is a 33 to 52 per cent reduction.

Since taking office, I have established a planning system and community consultation process that will take into account concerns people have over the road's impact on the surrounding environment. I am pleased to note that independent public opinion research conducted by an expert consultancy has found that there is widespread public support for the extension of the Roe Highway, with a recent survey showing 73 per cent of people living in the southern metropolitan area supported or strongly supported its construction. Similarly, I have made clear that the government is committed to a final road design solution that ultimately leaves the natural environment around North Lake in a better condition than it is at present. I now table the GHD Meyrick report.

[See paper 1957.]

Consideration of the statement made an order of the day for the next sitting, on motion by **Hon Ed Dermer**.