

INDUSTRIAL HEMP — FREMANTLE TRAFFIC BRIDGE

891. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

My question is to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Transport. I refer the minister to ongoing work to build a new bridge across the Swan River in Fremantle, noting that construction work is scheduled to commence this year.

- (1) What was the life span of the old bridge, and what is the projected life span of the new one?
- (2) Is the minister aware that bridges incorporating hemp concrete were constructed in France during the sixth-century Merovingian dynasty and are still standing and in use today?
- (3) Was any consideration of hemp-based building materials entertained during the planning stages of this project; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I, in fact, represent the Minister for Transport, so I will provide the answer. The short answer is no, but the answer provided by the minister is as follows.

- (1)–(3) The Fremantle Traffic Bridge was opened in 1939 with an expected 40-year life and has served its function well beyond that. The new traffic bridge will have a design life of 100 years. Planning, development and design for the new traffic bridge is ongoing but will use more-traditional building materials.