

BYFORD RAIL EXTENSION

**739. Mr H.T. JONES to the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's unprecedented investment in job-creating, economy-driving public transport infrastructure. Can the minister update the house on the delivery of the Metronet Byford rail extension, including the new Thomas Road over-rail bridge, and outline to the house any attempts to obstruct and stop this important local project?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

I am glad the Premier raised the electorate of Darling Range, because it allows us to focus on what a good member for Darling Range we have, compared with his predecessor.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Such a change!

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Positive!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Positive, engaging, delivering for Darling Range —

**Ms A. Sanderson:** Pleasant.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Pleasant.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, this answer is being given by the Minister for Transport; she does not need your help.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is quite enjoyable, though!

This member for Darling Range is a very positive change, and he is delivering for his electorate. Of course, there is no better sign of that delivery than the Byford rail extension. This commitment was given by the Labor Party in opposition and is now being delivered in government. We are already seeing some of the benefits of that project, with the opening—a single lane currently—of the Thomas Road Bridge. Another level crossing has been removed; it is now a bridge over rail. What this will do, as part of the Byford extension, is completely transform that area.

I was watching a show on the weekend on some of the transport issues of people who live in the outer suburbs of Melbourne. These people, who are not connected by rail or buses, take an extraordinarily long time to travel from A to B. What we are doing with Metronet is delivering world-class public transport while the suburbs are being delivered. In Byford, we will see a brand new station. There will be a new station in Armadale, member for Armadale, as well as elevated rail. Eight level crossings will be removed across Armadale, which is incredible.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Well done.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** That is just in Armadale, let alone Cannington.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I will stick with Armadale. We are completely transforming Armadale. There will be a new station in Byford. Of course, there will also be all the benefits that that rail line will bring. Because of our two-zone cap, it will cost \$5 to travel across the network. Along with the Thomas Road Bridge, we have new paths, we have the ability for people with horses to use some of the underpasses —

**Mr P. Papalia:** You are accommodating the horses—the equestrians.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We are in Byford because the equine industry is very big in that area. We are delivering to the community.

Stage 1 of the bridge opening has seen the installation of 417 precast concrete panels, 370 tonnes of reinforcement, 1 900 square metres of concrete and 1 300 tonnes of sand. We have seen enormous improvements already. We have road improvements throughout the whole area with the Thomas Road Bridge over rail. A level crossing has been removed, which will improve safety and reduce congestion. The whole of Thomas Road will undergo a significant transformation. We are delivering for people in the outer suburbs. Of course, when that station is up and running, people who use the rail line will have a capped transport fare, which will also assist with the cost of living. There has been great progress, and it is great to see a member for Darling Range delivering.