

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

**659. Mr S.N. AUBREY to the Minister for Local Government:**

I refer to the Cook Labor government's record investment in road infrastructure across Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how this government is supporting local governments to deliver even more investment in WA's road network?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this investment will create local jobs and support small business across our state?

**Mr D.R. MICHAEL replied:**

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question and for his continued close working relationship with his local government, the City of Stirling, on roads and all of those other matters he deals with on behalf of his community.

As a former local government councillor, along with several members in this chamber, one of the first things I learnt in local government was about roads. I learnt about the importance of not cutting the road budget and making sure that we continue to seal and maintain those roads where we can because if we do not, they cost more in the future. I remember being at a really early stage in my career at the City of Stirling. I was shown a couple of road profiles and told that the road base would be ruined if water got in. Because of that, and because of the importance that roads have to local governments across our state, I was very proud yesterday to attend the Western Australian Local Government Association state conference and witness the signing of the latest State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement. This agreement, which is the sixth of its type, reinforces the strong working partnerships between the state and local governments, and was signed by the Premier; Deputy Premier; WALGA president, Karen Chappel; and the director general of Transport. The agreement was first negotiated in 1995 and provides a vital funding source to local governments in WA for the improvement and maintenance of our state's roads and bridges. The five-year agreement guarantees councils 20 per cent of the revenue collected from the state's motor vehicle licence fee collections to be allocated to local roads. It will deliver a record \$1.38 billion investment in local road projects to be allocated over the next five years. The agreement is intended to ensure that the available funds are allocated right across our state, focusing on areas of strategic importance that will provide maximum benefit. Funding will be split into two categories. Local government-managed programs will receive 67 per cent of the annual funding in direct grants, road project grants, state black spot allocations and remote Aboriginal community access roads. The remaining 33 per cent will go to Main Roads-managed programs, which include state initiatives on local roads, bridge works, bridge inspections, traffic management signs and pavement markings. Under this new agreement, there is an increased focus on the government and community priorities of road safety, increasing Aboriginal employment and the use of recycled materials in road construction. There is also a strengthened focus on road safety, aligning with the national road safety strategy, which aims to reduce the annual number of fatalities by 50 per cent and the number of serious injuries by 30 per cent in a safe system treatment approach.

In addition, over \$5 million per annum has been allocated towards active transport, which is infrastructure currently administered by the transport portfolio. I am proud to be part of the Cook Labor government, which is committed to working closely with local governments to deliver this record funding. The continued commitment and collaboration between both levels of government provides certainty of funding to meet the ongoing challenge of maintaining and improving the road network.

While I am on my feet, I also congratulate WALGA, which ran the conference yesterday where this agreement was signed. There were nearly 600 delegates. Several members here witnessed some incredibly good presentations on the future of our state, our communities and local government, and had the good opportunity to see me and the Leader of the Opposition, two good-looking lads, up on stage for half an hour having a panel. Congratulations to Nick Sloan, Karen Chappel and everyone at WALGA; and congratulations to the Premier and Deputy Premier on signing a road agreement for the next five years.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for North West Central with the last question.