

RAILCAR MANUFACTURING — C-SERIES TRAINS

213. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's strong record on creating Western Australian jobs.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the development of the government's locally made Metronet C-series railcars and outline what it means for public transport and the Western Australian community more broadly?
- (2) Can the minister also advise the house whether she is aware of anyone who opposes this transitional investment?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Jandakot for that question. A few Sundays back we launched onto the public transport network the first locally made trains for 30 years. It was a great day.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! Member for Cottesloe, you have not asked this question. I am asking you not to interject.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is no wonder they did not preselect the member for Cottesloe again. Honestly!

The SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It was a great day for Western Australia as we brought train manufacturing back to Western Australia and the first new C-series railcars onto the public transport network. I remember that it was the Liberal and National Parties that closed down the Midland Workshops, which was home to hundreds of workers who learnt their trade and went on to work in other parts of the state. It was a major training ground that was shut down by the then Liberal government.

Our proposal back in 2016 was to rebuild our train manufacturing capacity. I went to Melbourne and saw what was being done there where there was a local content target of 40 per cent. We came back and, as part of our election commitment, we committed to not 40 per cent local content, but 50 per cent local content. We went to the election with that commitment. I very much remember the views of the Liberal and National Parties on the day we launched that commitment. The Liberal Party said that we should not bring back an industry from a bygone era and that we should not support locally made trains.

There we were, out at the Perth Stadium station with hundreds and then thousands of people from all over the state who were there to support our locally made trains. There were representatives from some of the heritage rail societies who are passionate about rail in Western Australia. They were very passionate people who honestly knew a lot about the network. There were people who won the ballots. We had to run another two special train services to make sure that the thousands of the people who attended had access to it. Also attending were some of the workers who work on our rail system and, of course, the train drivers who had been doing overtime to make sure that they could test the trains overnight on the network for us. There was a broad cross-section of people. It is an incredible outcome and the feedback has been positive. Over 150 people are working at the Bellevue facility and 15 suppliers throughout Western Australia supply key things like the bogies, pantographs and other components. It was a very, very proud day. Bringing back rail manufacturing is a policy that Queensland is adopting and New South Wales will be adopting too, because they know that locally made railcars deliver local jobs, traineeships and apprenticeships. More importantly, they bring pride to Western Australians who can see on those train tracks locally made trains once again.