

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT — REGIONS

**725. Mr K.J.J. MICHEL to the Minister for Ports:**

This is a much more interesting question than the previous one.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please! Member for Pilbara, it may be your opinion that this is a more interesting question than the previous one, but I do not need commentary on the question. I really just want the question. Thank you.

**Mr K.J.J. MICHEL:** I refer to the McGowan Labor government's significant investment in economy-driving infrastructure across regional Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on this government's investment in infrastructure in Port Hedland, including the Spoilbank Marina and the proposed Lumsden Point development, and outline what this investment means for local jobs and the local economy?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house how this government's record of investing in the regions compares with that of the previous Liberal–National government?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Pilbara. When we go up to the Pilbara, there is the energy of the member for Pilbara delivering for Western Australia and delivering for his electorate. That can be compared with the six opposition members. As I said, in government they were very good at bumper stickers. They stuck them on Transwa buses, which I realised only recently, although some of their royalties for regions stickers have been pulled off. They were very good on bumper stickers, but they did not deliver much. That is why we now have the excellent member for Pilbara; it is because his predecessor did not deliver.

Let us go through just some of the projects—a morsel—that we looked at last week. We opened stage 1 of the Hedland road and rail improvement project. That is level crossing removal in the Pilbara, members. Basically, we have built a bridge over the rail at one intersection, because sometimes when the boom gates went down, trucks and cars would have to wait for seven minutes for those trains to go through. That was a partnership between BHP and the state, and I thank BHP for its contribution to that project. I also thank the commonwealth in relation to stage 2. That project is underway. That is the deviation of Great Northern Highway and another level crossing removal in that district. Again, significant work is happening there.

We then went to the Spoilbank Marina. The member for Pilbara was a strong advocate for that project. He really made it happen. Significant progress has been made, with 80 per cent of the marina now dug out, and we can see it shaping up. I also thank the Pilbara Ports Authority and the contractor, who is working really strongly.

We then went to Pilbara Ports Authority—the powerhouse of the national economy. We sat there and looked at all the ships coming in and out and at the proposed Lumsden Point expansion. The state has committed funding to that project. Some funding has also been committed by the federal government—not some, over \$500 million; that is quite a bit!—between the Pilbara, Port Hedland and Dampier. These are exciting initiatives that will continue not only the expansion of trade, but also the diversification of trade in that area. It will also help with the decarbonisation program that many companies have put forward. These projects will continue to drive both the Western Australian and national economies. It is so pleasant being with members who have energy and drive and are getting things done, and who are, as I said, focused not on bumper stickers but on delivering real projects for regional WA.