

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

2015–16 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2015**

**SESSION FIVE
PUBLIC TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

Members

**Hon Ken Travers (Chair)
Hon Peter Katsambanis (Deputy Chair)
Hon Martin Aldridge
Hon Alanna Clohesy
Hon Rick Mazza**

Hearing commenced at 7.01 pm

Hon JIM CHOWN

Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Transport, examined:

Mr REECE WALDOCK

Chief Executive Officer, examined:

Mr MARK BURGESS

Managing Director, examined:

Mr KEVIN KIRK

Executive Director, Finance and Contracts, examined:

[Hon Martin Aldridge took the chair.]

The ACTING CHAIR: On behalf of the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, I would like to welcome you to today's hearing. Can the witnesses confirm that they have read, understood and signed a document headed "Information for Witnesses"?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The ACTING CHAIR: Thank you. Witnesses need to be aware of the severe penalties that apply to persons providing false or misleading testimony to a parliamentary committee. It is essential that all your testimony before the committee is complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. The hearing is being held in public, although there is discretion available to the committee to hear evidence in private either of its own motion or at the witness's request. If for some reason you would like to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question. Government agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting the Parliament to scrutinise the budget papers on behalf of the people of Western Australia and the committee values your assistance with this.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The ACTING CHAIR: Do the witnesses wish to provide an opening statement?

Hon JIM CHOWN: Yes, I am more than happy to provide an opening statement.

Over the past 12 months the Public Transport Authority has continued to provide safe and efficient public transport services to the people of Perth and a range of regional and remote locations across the length and breadth of the state. In accordance with the government's vision that public transport become the preferred travel option to Perth's CBD, strategic centres and throughout the metropolitan area, the authority has also continued to acquire and construct new assets and resources to ensure that it continues to meet the public transport demand now and into the future.

Transperth, Perth's integrated public transport network of bus, train and ferry services is expecting to finish the year with patronage levels slightly above the 147.6 million achieved last year, with the budget papers indicating a predicted growth of around 0.5 per cent in total boardings; but on the most recent indications that growth may be as high as 0.6 per cent. Of course, these are not the very significant growth numbers of a few years ago, but I think we have discussed before how public transport patronage has been affected by the slowdown in the CBD and some reductions in CBD employment which has flow-on effect to public transport trips to the CBD, in particular on the train

side of the business. Pleasingly, it looks like we have turned the corner to patronage growth again. I am very pleased to advise that our customer base is very happy with the services provided. I will be a bit discreet because the detail of the most recent annual Passenger Satisfaction Monitor will be announced by the minister shortly. This process has been underway for 20 years. It is done by an independent group and has been in operation since 1995. However, I am sure it is appropriate this committee be informed that this year the Transperth system has achieved some of the highest satisfaction levels ever recorded. It should be noted that this is the twenty-fourth year—so I was incorrect, it is actually twenty-fourth year of this quite independent market research survey, which engages more than 4 000 commuters annually in a lengthy face-to-face interview and is therefore considered to be a very accurate picture of the public transport user's view on Perth's public transport. It is the longest and most comprehensive passenger survey of its kind anywhere in Australia and so we can be justifiably proud of these latest results.

In the centre of the city, following the successful and early completion of the Perth City Link main rail works in late 2013, this major transport project is now in its second stage, with the construction of the Perth City Link underground bus station progressing on time and on budget, with a planned opening in 2016. This facility will boast a modern airport-style lounge for passengers and a state-of-the-art dynamic stand management system that will allow for bus movements in the facility to almost double from current levels, thereby providing capacity well into the future.

In terms of the government's exciting new project to build a railway line to Forrestfield and the airport, this project has commenced and is on target for award of the main design and construct contract in mid-2016, with construction to commence later the same year. This \$2 billion state government project will deliver a rail line to the eastern suburbs of Perth with stations at the airport, west Belmont, the consolidated airport and Forrestfield. The new 8.5 kilometre rail line will spur from the Midland line east of Bayswater station and journey underground for most of its length, including under the Swan River and the airport estate. It is an innovative solution to deliver a new rail service to the eastern suburbs which will include a range of efficient feeder bus connections. The project is expected to be completed in 2020.

In terms of the bus fleet, Transperth has taken delivery of 137 new buses this year, a record number of new buses delivered for this state and more than double the delivery of any other state. Although the majority of these vehicles replaced older vehicles, in keeping with the government's commitment ensure the whole fleet is ultimately modern and accessible, some 46 of the new vehicles were also specifically added to the fleet number in order to cater for the additional demand generated as year 7 students transitioned to high school this year.

One of the noteworthy investments announced in this budget is the government's commitment to further invest in the Transperth train fleet. Firstly, let me point out that we are still receiving trains from the government's last train fleet commitment. The government's \$244 million purchase of a further 22 by 3, B-series railcar sets is well progressed with 11 of these sets fully operational on the urban rail network, and the remaining 11 sets to be progressively placed into service through to late 2016. To provide for growth beyond 2016, \$1.14 billion has been announced in this budget for a new train fleet, including the \$60 million already recognized in the Forrestfield–Airport project—this in total amounts to \$1.2 billion. The 300 new C-series railcars will be delivered over a 10-year period, commencing in 2019. A great deal of planning has gone into the future railcar order to ensure that we will receive a state-of-the-art product with fast passenger unloading and loading at platforms. The order has been matched to future population and demand projections in order to ensure Perth's train service matches the needs of our growing city. Please note that these 300 new railcars will be configured as single six-car trains as opposed to the current three-car configurations.

[7.10 pm]

In terms of regional Western Australia, a replacement program for the Transwa road coach fleet commenced in 2014–15 and will occur over a three-year period. Funding of \$16.279 million

consists of \$15.073 million from royalties for regions and \$1.206 million as the sale proceeds for old coaches. These will be very high-class coaches and will ensure that our country travellers continue to experience quality coach services.

As a final point, I want to emphasise the ongoing commitment to investment in existing infrastructure. The Public Transport Authority is continuing its work on the Transperth urban passenger rail resilience package, which will see a suite of infrastructure and process improvements introduced that will reduce the likelihood and/or consequences of extreme equipment failure events. I am sure we will have a few questions on those issues tonight. It includes modifications to the power, track, signalling and communications systems, with these improvements set to ensure optimal configuration for service. The reliability and resilience of the train network is critical to the efficient and effective operation of our capital city and the metropolitan area. We will continue to improve the network so it can respond quickly if and when things go wrong.

The ACTING CHAIR: Just before I ask for questions, we do have a tight quorum in the committee tonight so it is my intention that we take a short break at 8.00 pm unless my committee members signal to me earlier. We will start with Hon Ken Travers.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I saw an article in today's *The West Australian* about an incident at the Warwick train station last month, where an escalator failed. Is that the only problem you have had with the new escalators, or have there been any other incidents or problems with the new escalators that have been installed across the network?

Hon JIM CHOWN: That particular failure was from the fact that a keyway to the electric motor which drove the escalator failed. This is a very unusual event. Anybody who knows anything about mechanics would know that key failure is quite unusual.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: My question was: have there been any other incidents or problems with the new escalators being installed?

Hon JIM CHOWN: Mark can probably answer that question.

Mr Burgess: There would no doubt have been some issues but nothing of that significance. The new escalators generally are performing well. I guess you can put our escalator issues into three baskets. I will perhaps deal with the most aged and then move backwards from there. We are doing a substantial replacement of escalators in the northern suburbs. If you appreciate the age of the northern suburbs, escalators and lifts generally have an operational life of around 20 years, so the northern suburbs is about to have its twentieth birthday, and a bit more, so just marginally older than 20 years. The one that the issue happened on was a relatively new escalator—2013. The first batch I will talk about is we are replacing all the escalators and lifts in the northern suburbs. That is occurring over a two-year program. That includes some at the old Perth station, so they are being replaced as well. Just normal asset replacement; good asset management being replaced at the end of their operational life. The one that we are talking about that was in the paper today was one of the new ones, a Kone product. I can go into it in some detail, with perhaps some words from Kone if you wish. I will come back to that.

I will just talk about the three phases of escalators. We are doing the ones that are at the end of their operational life—northern suburbs and a couple at old Perth station. We have some challenges with the escalators that were purchased for the southern suburbs railway, clearly a great project and a huge success—the new Metrorail project. We will give ourselves 95 out of 100 perhaps in terms of the new Metrorail but clearly, every so often, even in great success projects, there are perhaps small items within that project that are not great successes. I guess in the new Metrorail case, if I had to single something out, it would be the escalators that were put in at the stations on the Mandurah line—those that have escalators such as Murdoch, Bull Creek et cetera. Also, the escalators that were put in at the new Esplanade station and at Perth underground were an Otis

product. There are four big manufacturers involved around the world. We have had a lot of trouble with those escalators.

I think we have talked about this, if not here, then in the other house, before. The Otis escalators have taken a great deal of management that we worked through that as much as we could with the original manufacturer. We have now got other people working on those. We have replaced significant componentry. I know more about escalators than I ever probably thought I would. I have been down into the bowels of escalators. We have replaced handrail drives, step chains, everything. If you strip an escalator down, you have almost got a skeleton, something out of a sci-fi movie, and we have replaced very substantial proportions of those escalators. The ones at the Esplanade and Perth Underground are perhaps the biggest issues, because we have the very long ones. If you are familiar with Perth Underground, they are very long, to get you up to Murray Street level. It is not just the fact that they are very long, but they have much higher volumes of use. We are struggling through with the ones on the Mandurah line outside the city, but there is an amount of money in the budget—I think it is about \$15.5 million—to do early replacement, and it is way beyond when you would expect. We are not going to get 20 years out of these; we will be replacing them effectively at about the nine-year, 10-year mark, which is obviously well short of where we would like to have been.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I appreciate the information, but my question was around the new ones that have been installed. Have you had any problems with them? Are they working regularly, or have we found them breaking down and not working? Have we had any problems with the new escalators? As someone who regularly uses the Joondalup station, I am aware of the new escalator there, and I am aware that it does not always work, so I am trying to find out how often the new escalators that have been installed as part of this program break down, and have there been any other problems—not of the same magnitude, I accept that—with the new escalators.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I am sure Mr Burgess is working towards that outcome.

Mr Burgess: I am getting there, because when you say “new escalators” and ask whether we have had problems, my point is that there is another batch of new escalators as well. I have talked about the ones that are being replaced for purposes at the end of their asset life; and we have talked about the Perth Underground and the Esplanade ones. The third batch are those that were put in for the Perth City Link project. They are new escalators, so I am not sure whether your question related to those as well.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: No, any of the ones that have been put in in the last couple of years, so the replacement program on the northern suburbs line, the Perth City Link —

Mr Waldock: So category 1 and 3, Mark.

Mr Burgess: Yes, so let me talk about category 3, I will get to that. Category 3, which is a different product again, has had some issues, but not around the escalator per se. It is part of the escalator, but they were power issues. There were power trips, and we were working closely with Western Power to determine why they were occurring. The escalators were not faulty as such, they would just turn off. We think that we have worked our way through that; it was a series of technical issues to do with the power supply and the escalator, and we think we have resolved those. To answer your question, the ones for PCL rail, the ones that come up onto the old Perth station from the new underground, have had issues, mainly related to power supply and turning themselves off. The new ones on the northern line, and not all of those have been put in—I have a list of those that have been put in—there have been no significant issues other than this issue.

Let me come to your question in more detail, if I can quickly find a couple of notes here from the manufacturer. The coupling between the brake and the gearbox failed. The failed part is with our fellow who runs lifts and escalators, a very well-credentialed gentlemen who was recruited from London Underground; he managed the escalators and lifts there. Obviously, he is a very high-

quality fellow. I have some notes from our manufacturer, Kone, who I think would generally think that their product is pretty good.

The ACTING CHAIR: Mr Burgess, is this specifically in relation to the incident in question?

Mr Burgess: Kone has formed the view that the incident was a consequence of incorrect assembly of the coupling between the motor and gearbox in our overseas factory, and specifically a failure to effectively secure the key in the keyway with the grub screw on the motor side of the coupling. This allowed disengagement of the motor and gearbox shaft, which permitted reversal of the escalator. People were on the escalator ascending, and in the escalator stopped and gravity plus the weight of the people is what caused the reversal. There were not a large number of people on the escalator, but a couple of them did fall over. Fortunately, no-one was seriously injured, and I think that was identified in the article today.

[7.20 pm]

I think the tone of the article was somewhat wrong. The article implied that we had tried to cover it up somehow, and that is certainly not the case. We have people trip over or fall somewhere on the system every day; it happens every day. If you go to the London Underground website, you will see they actually have videos teaching people how to use escalators. For anyone who gets into a modern train system and starts to build multi-level train stations and have escalators, they become one of your highest risk areas. They are a trip-slip-fall hazard. People may fall occasionally in department stores on an escalator—I am not sure—but the nature of people going into a train station is they always seem to be in a hurry, and they are in reasonable volumes at peak hour, people perhaps are not as careful as they should be. We have signs up telling people to think about whether it is appropriate that they use an escalator, because some people should use lifts if they have mobility issues. Occasionally we have people fall down escalators and we think you should not have been on an escalator, quite frankly.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: You mentioned the power problems—the tripping. How often have the new escalators broken down since you have had them? I am not talking about incidents like the one out at Warwick, but how often have the new escalators that have been installed over the last two years—I do not know what category 1 and 3 means—been out of service?

Mr Burgess: I cannot tell you the specific number of instances, but what I can say is that broadly, our escalator availability has not changed dramatically. It was around 92 per cent and I think we are just around 92 per cent or might be marginally down to 91 point something per cent for escalators across the system. I think we have supplied before, member, escalator availability by line and by station.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: You have mentioned the power. Is it just escalators that are causing power problems or are the new elevators that you are putting in also creating problems with power supply?

Mr Burgess: No. Lifts are a different issue. There have been some issues, but not with the lifts that you are talking about on the northern line as far as I know, other than people perhaps grumbling about how long it takes to do a lift replacement, but I think we are about normal practice in terms of how long it takes, and in the case of Joondalup I think we sped it up as fast as we possibly could. The only lifts that have been a bit concerning have been the new ones from the underpass in the Perth City Link rail project up to the old Perth station platforms. They have had some issues with water ingress, and obviously that is do with that particular site, and some issues around where the sensors for the motor were.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Have there been any problems with the new elevators and the new escalators impacting the power supply at train stations and causing problems to your fare gates?

Mr Burgess: No. If I can go back to the power supply issue, the power supply issue has not affected the lifts at all. It was really just related to the escalators from the underpass up to the old

Perth station. I mean, the problem has been solved, but it was really just a power supply issue to the escalators. It has not affected power to any other devices on our stations.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: So you are confident that there has been no impact and no problems with the new lifts or elevators drawing too much power and therefore having an impact on fare gates at any of your train stations?

Mr Burgess: No, not at all. That has not occurred. To the best of my knowledge there has been no impact.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: But you would expect that something like that would have been brought to your attention?

Mr Burgess: Absolutely.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: When the power trips out on an escalator or there is some issue, what is the normal process for one of your staff? What should they then do if they are on the line?

Mr Burgess: There is a reset button; they go and press it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Is that it? Is that all they have to do? If there are any other problems with the escalators or lifts, do they have to put it in—is it the IMRS report that you have?

Mr Burgess: There is an IMRS report, which is an incident management reporting system. But a thing such as an escalator tripping out is a relatively modest thing. I do not know whether every one of those would have gone into an IMRS; they may or may not have. We have resolved the issue that was the concern in the early days of the opening of the underpass and so on. It was actually a timed event, and that was the issue we raised with Western Power. It was at a specific time each week that these things would turn off. Exactly the same manufacturer's product was at the other end of the platform, only 20 years older, and was not turning off, so it was a very specific issue relating to some sort of sensor within the escalator or between that and Western Power.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What is a work request?

Mr Burgess: As the name implies, it could be to remedy any piece of infrastructure with a fault on the system.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: So if there is a fault on the system, if they push the button and it is still not working, would they then put in a work request?

Mr Burgess: Probably; yes.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Would it surprise you if there are instructions being given out to your staff not to put in work requests and to only phone through problems with lifts and escalators in the system?

Mr Burgess: It would depend on what the nature of it is. If it is a constant issue such as you have just got to press the reset key, there are different staff who have access to the escalators and who can be rotated through—so, customer service assistants and so on—who would typically have the key to go and do the reset function. If they are not all aware or have not been made aware before and it is a simple process, a work request generates a whole train of activity. If it is as simple as making a phone call and that gets the escalator fixed again because they get told what to do, that would not surprise me at all.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What about an instruction for all new and old staff that all issues regarding lifts and escalators must be phoned through and not to put it in writing?

Mr Burgess: It is possible that that would occur.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: And why would that be the case?

Mr Burgess: I do not know. I would need to have a look at the incident you are talking about. As I said, we have got a very well qualified new fellow who runs those facilities. It could have been

an instruction that was put through because he was trying to respond to the issues more quickly. A work request, just by even the sound and the name of it, as you can imagine, is a systematic approach to it, but it is not going to get you the fastest response. By phoning something through, you are going to get a faster response.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I understand why you might want a phone call as well as a work request, but why would they be instructed to specifically not put in a work request?

Mr Burgess: I do not know the instance that you are talking about, but I imagine it generates all of its own activity.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: This is a general instruction to your staff.

Mr Burgess: It cannot have been, because I guess a general instruction might come from me or a member of the executive. So it might have been a very specific instruction to a work group, I guess.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: How high up is the facilities control officer?

Mr Burgess: That is the person I am talking about. No, that is not the person I am talking about; that is actually a relatively low person in the organisation.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Does that cause you concern that they would be telling people to only ever ring things through and not put it in writing?

Mr Burgess: That person sits right at Perth station 24/7, 365. So the advantage of him knowing straightaway is he will ring the on-call lift or escalator maintenance people and have them there in no time at all. A work request by its very nature is going to take a while to generate through the system.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I understand why you would ask people to also make a phone call, but not to not put it in a work request or in writing if there is a problem with them.

Mr Burgess: I do not think there is any Machiavellian intent where we are trying to hide stuff. When people or members have asked before, “Tell us about all your escalator incidents and lift incidents”, that has been a very thorough and accurate list of all the incidents. We are not trying to hide anything.

The ACTING CHAIR: Hon Ken Travers, I am going to move on to other members. Do you want to finish off this line of questioning so I can do that?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: No. I will come back to the issue about whether you record all the incidents correctly.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: I would like to talk about the new Perth Stadium transport project. I note there on page 832 that the \$336.2 million transport package to service the new Perth Stadium is advanced and on schedule. Things are happening there. There is an expectation that in 2015–16, there will be \$117.1 million expended. Included in those works we know is the Victoria Park Drive bridge, the Swan River pedestrian bridge, the station and associated infrastructure. Do you have a time line that you can provide to the committee for those works as they are going to be done and the expected completion? I note the stadium is due for completion itself for the beginning of the AFL season in 2018. So I am just wondering will the bridge be opened prior to the opening of the stadium as that comes on or what will happen there. Can you give us a time line of those works?

[7.30 pm]

Mr Waldock: Mr Kirk might have some more details, but certainly different projects will finish at different times. As you have mentioned, Victoria Park Drive bridge is just about to finish in the next few months. That is an example of how we are rolling this out. The Victoria Park bridge had to be done and out of the way before we in fact built the stadium railway station. That is due to start

construction onsite in the next three to four months. At the same time, of course, we are looking at the pedestrian bridge, the iconic pedestrian bridge —

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: It is beautiful. I love the design; I think it is great.

Mr Waldock: It is beautiful. That will be finished, we hope, at the end of 2016, so that will be finished early. As you see, we are rolling out. In fact the critical part will really be the stadium station. That will certainly have to be built before the end of 2017. We would hope that it may be built as early as mid-2017 because clearly we need to do lots of commissioning and operational issues before the first event, which could be late 2017, maybe more likely in early 2018. There is a whole range of different projects. We have got, as you would expect, critical path charts to show each stage, each project, and when they will be commenced and finished. We can supply that at its highest level. That would not be an issue for us.

[Supplementary Information No E1.]

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: If you could, that would be great.

The Swan pedestrian bridge in particular, will that open at all for any foot traffic prior to the opening of the stadium?

Mr Waldock: Yes, definitely. The bridge has to be finished, and the landing particularly on the Burswood side, to allow Brookfield to finish their stadium. As I say, that should be finished by late next year; so the end of 2016.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: So it will open and pedestrians —

Mr Waldock: It will open, yes, definitely.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Presumably there will not be any public transport coming to the bridge until such time as the stadium is opened.

Mr Waldock: Until we get customers.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: You have released some figures in relation to expected movements from the stadium across the bridge afterwards and for buses to come and pick people up. I want to know about the modelling you have done for that; if you could talk me through what you predicated that modelling on, what you took into account? Was it done on the stadium at capacity or do you have different modelling if it is this full, if it is full or if it is not? Is it 100 per cent of people coming out of the stadium and walking across the bridge and taking public transport, or is there a percentage that will hive off and go to the casino or other facilities that might be out that way? Will 100 per cent of people be expected to take public transport or have you taken into account that some people will drive their cars and park them at the casino or other areas that might be around there? Can you put some figures around all of that modelling that you have done?

Mr Waldock: Sure. It is quite complex. As you should, and we did, in modelling, we looked at the worst possible scenario when we had a capacity crowd of 60 000. We determined then that we would like an 80 per cent market share, which is just over 50 000 people who will need to be moved out of the stadium in non-car mode. In fact what we have done there clearly is we have looked at the public transport—let us take it step by step. Coming onto the railway station at the stadium, there will be 28 000 people coming through. This is all within one hour after the event. All the modelling, both pedestrian modelling and transport modelling, was based on one hour after the event. As I say, the stadium station will take 28 000 people: 3 000 going in the Armadale direction and 25 000 going to all the others. In fact for the northern suburbs direct, to Fremantle direct, and all the people going on the southern line, the Mandurah line, we are doing a transfer in Perth. That is 28 000 of that 50 000. Across the pedestrian bridge—the iconic bridge we talked about—that will take a maximum of about 14 200 people. That will be made up of 6 200 going on the shuttle bus service. We are putting in a bus facility over there and we will be running 90 buses within the hour, moving people to the city. Of course when I say “moving people to the city”, a lot

of people will prefer to park in the city where they have car bays and far greater access to car bays. The other, I think, 8 200 or 8 600—one of those—they will be moving off to car bays in the area. We have actually looked at car parks within a ped shed of the stadium and the bridge and so that will be where the rest of the 14 200 are—so 6 200 on buses and the rest of them will be taking cars. Then there is another bus station in the stadium itself, so a bus station within the stadium that will still take the bus movements, particularly both east and south, and that will take over 8 000 people as well.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Sorry, you did say 6 200 buses.

Mr Waldock: On the East Perth side. But on the stadium side where we have a bus station —

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: No not on the stadium site, but at the pedestrian bridge side, it is called the East Perth site.

Mr Waldock: Yes, 6 200.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: What did you say about the number of buses?

Mr Waldock: About 90 buses in an hour.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Ninety buses in an hour.

Mr Waldock: In that hour after.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Do the maths for me, how long will it take to clear 6 200 passengers with 90 buses?

Mr Waldock: One hour; everything is based on one hour.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: So, we are talking about the disruption of one hour.

Mr Waldock: That is it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: That means 66 people on every bus.

Mr Waldock: You have done the maths, that is good, that is right!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Hopefully someone will be articulate after.

Mr Waldock: Yes, 66 for a short trip is well within Mr Burgess's capabilities! The rest, the balancing item, is the number of people who will walk over both the Windan and Goongoongup Bridges, which is the rail bridge, over to the East Perth station.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: I know there is a bit of concern among some of the residents in the area that you are going to be disrupting their amenity.

Mr Waldock: I actually chair group of all stakeholders, including the residents, and we have a meeting every few months. We have already had the inaugural meeting and we are working through with them on options, but, importantly, also to understand how the operational aspects might work. Before all this is finished, you would appreciate, once we have worked out and agreed on the bus route, and some of those concerns are about Nile Street, we will need to have a very clear transport and traffic management plan for the area. That will include not just bus movements, but car movements, taxis, drop-offs, parking, pedestrians, bus layovers—all the issues that need to be considered in a full traffic management plan. We cannot really do that one until we identify the bus route, because that is important for where the bus stands sit, but probably more importantly the real responsibilities for that in due course will be with the stadium operator, and the stadium operator will not be appointed until early next year. That is the process moving through with the stadium.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: What you have put on the record tonight will, I think, give some comfort to those people who are probably getting a bit worked up about it too soon—that you have really got those plans in place and you are going to take all those into consideration. Just on the expenditure side of that, I notice that on page 833 we have works in progress and the expenditure of that

\$336.2 million across. The funding is actually coming for the majority of that from Treasury. If we look under the heading “Funded By”, the line item is “Funding Included in Department of Treasury New Perth Stadium”. In the 2015–16 in the out years, the amount coming from Treasury matches what your expenditure is, but in 2014–15 the estimated expenditure on the Perth Stadium transport project is the \$59.12 million, but there is only \$58.474 million coming in from Treasury. I know it is only a difference of \$646 000, but where will that go to?

Mr Waldock: That maybe a cash flow issue, but I know Mr Kirk could answer that very easily.

Mr Kirk: I would have to have looked at it. It has possibly come down from the other, which covers various things like the Perth parking fund, although it would not in this case. It is a relatively small amount and I do not know off the top my head, but I can certainly find out.

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Could you take on notice where that \$646 000 might be coming from, please?

[Supplementary Information No E2.]

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: On a totally different thing, on page 836, under non-current assets under intangibles, there is an amount there budgeted in 2014–15 of \$21.039 million, but the estimated actual is only \$5.467 million. I am not sure, and there is no footnote to it, what those intangibles might be and why there is such a great variance in that amount. It seems like quite a large variance.

[7.40 pm]

Mr Kirk: Off the top of my head—so we are looking at the intangibles amount, are we?

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Yes, apart from it being a cartoon serious I am not quite sure what else the intangibles might be.

Mr Kirk: Again, I will have to take that on notice. As you can appreciate, there is a whole range of items —

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: Okay, if you could take it as what those intangibles and provide what they are, and why there is such a great variance and between the budget and the estimated actual.

[Supplementary Information No E3.]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Thank you for answering my questions on notice prior to the hearing. I have a few follow-up questions. Bus stop accessibility works program, question 48: can you tell me how I can express this in a different way so that I actually get the information about —

Hon DARREN WEST: It is called perseverance, member.

The ACTING CHAIR: So you are asking them a question to ask a question?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: If at first you do not succeed, try and try again.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: It is about where the scope of works are located, and how many. So, for example, how many bus stops, train replacement bus stops, regional town bus stops and special request bus stop upgrades were provided, and where were they provided? Similarly with points (d) and (f): how many and where?

Hon JIM CHOWN: Mr Burgess is happy to expand on the responses given in the questions on notice on those particular matters.

Mr Burgess: Yes, this is a program that has obviously been going for a number of years now, and as it is, as I recall, about an 18-year program, so it is over a very long period of time. We are well into it and it is progressing well. Typically there are around 600 bus stops a year as an average, to give you a feel for that. The answer then to (b)—so 2014–15—is 610. That would be supporting bus routes 98 and 99, so the circle route in both directions; 555, 556, 557, 106, 441 —

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Maybe I could have that tabled or get taken on notice what you are reading from because that will speed it up.

The ACTING CHAIR: Is it in a format, Mr Burgess, that you are happy to table?

Mr Burgess: I just have notes, and it is probably easier to —

The ACTING CHAIR: Take it as supplementary?

Mr Burgess: Yes.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Yes.

[Supplementary Information No E4.]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Similarly with answer to question on notice 49—the metropolitan and regional passenger services country and railroad coach services—can I have the answer to (d) provided in a more explicit way? Where are the station works planned? That will do, because that is just for 2015-16. So your schedule of works for 2015-16; perhaps that is a different way of expressing it.

Mr Burgess: The stations involved are Bayswater and East Perth. The scope is similar, obviously, on both of them. You can imagine that both are involved in the wider works: Bayswater in the case of the airport line, and East Perth, obviously, as part of the stadium project. The timing of those would be fitted in with those other projects.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can you tell me what is going in at Bayswater, East Perth and Merredin? I am happy to take that on notice. Similarly, can you tell me where —

Hon JIM CHOWN: Do you have the answers to your questions on notice?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: “The following station works are planned to commence in 2015.” Yes, but I do not know what will happen at Bayswater.

Hon JIM CHOWN: In Bayswater there will be a new platform surface with compliant tactile pavers, platform surface and grading, extended platform to cater for longer six-car sets, a new station canopy, DDA compliant ramps, new lighting, CCTV.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Is each of one of those is happening at each stations?

Hon JIM CHOWN: This is for the Bayswater upgrade and the East Perth upgrade is still being finalised, including DDA compliance and a footbridge.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: There is a budget allocation for East Perth.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Is it higher up the sidings?

Hon JIM CHOWN: The scope of the works is still being finalised.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Is not the money for East Perth to go to additional stowage areas for the stadium trains?

Mr Waldock: No; that was East Perth. We have additional money for East Perth under the East Perth upgrade program, rather than the stadium.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Do you have additional money to upgrade the station?

Mr Waldock: It is part of the capital works program for East Perth, yes.

The ACTING CHAIR: Hon Alanna Clohesy, is there anything you want to take on notice as supplementary there, or is the information provided sufficient?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: No, the information provided is not sufficient. I would like to know what is happening at what station.

Hon JIM CHOWN: We will take the question on notice.

[Supplementary Information No E5.]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Similarly, for the answer to question (f), what stations are planned to get those items that have been answered in question (f)? Which stations will get those?

The ACTING CHAIR: We will take that as part of E5.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: As part of that, can we get an explanation of the total amount of works being done at East Perth?

Mr Waldock: Sure.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Not on just disability access, but all the work.

The ACTING CHAIR: That will form part of E5.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: On page 828 are the key effectiveness indicators. How is the key effectiveness indicator measured for accessible public transport? What does 86 per cent for the 2014–15 budget mean? Does that mean that 86 per cent of the Transperth stops will be at an acceptable level?

Hon JIM CHOWN: The acceptable level is within 500 metres of a Transperth stop providing an acceptable level of service.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: In 2014 there was an aim to have the proportion of street addresses within Perth public transport area which were within 500 metres of a Transperth stop providing an acceptable level of service at 86 per cent.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Are you not going to strive for anything better than that?

Mr Waldock: We are constrained by the network and certainly the low densities and areas without certain services. Eighty-five or 86 per cent is what we have said is extremely high and we are improving that as we rollout more service kilometres. Mr Burgess might want to talk about future targets.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is okay. You have answered that for me, thank you. That indicator is called accessible public transport. Why is there no indicator for accessible public transport as in public transport which can be accessed by people with a disability?

[7.50 pm]

Hon JIM CHOWN: Mark, do you understand the question?

Mr Burgess: I do. I guess it is something that is asked fairly regularly in both houses and we are more than happy to report on it. Perth is well advanced. I think in *Hansard* you would find quite a bit of information on it. The train fleet is particularly well advanced, and obviously Perth took progressive steps many years ago in terms of going to a modern train fleet. There are gap issues. On the train side of the business, the main issue—there are many; it depends on the nature of the disability that someone has—I think you would agree, is the gap issue, which is the vertical–horizontal gap as someone approaches the platform between the train and the platform level.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: It is one of these, yes.

Mr Burgess: We are well advanced. If you go to Sydney or Melbourne, you will find stations where there is still a big step up or a wide gap.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Yes. We are not in estimates with Sydney or Melbourne; we are in estimates with Perth.

The ACTING CHAIR: Mr Burgess, I think the question went to not so much what the issues were, but the reporting of them as key efficiency indicators. Is that correct?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Correct.

The ACTING CHAIR: And if they are not reported in the budget papers, where are they?

Mr Burgess: It sounds like a harsh comment, what I am about to say, but it is not an efficiency indicator, if I can put it that way—efficiency by the nature of the word and the way it would be described in a Treasury sense or budget papers. So, an accessibility issue is much more reported, I guess, in the general flavour of our business. For example, in our annual —

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I would like to disagree on that, but it is also called an outcome, so why are outcomes for accessible transport not provided there?

Mr Burgess: In our annual report you will find very substantive amounts of information year by year on every aspect of our system in relation to accessible public transport—that is, how much of the bus fleet is accessible nowadays; how much of the train fleet is accessible; how many of our stations are accessible? So it is very extensively reported in our annual report. I guess I do not have an answer to your question, member.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I also think that there is an onus on the department to provide that in terms of financial accountability as well: how much is being spent on each of those as well? Nevertheless, in the interest of time, I will move on. I refer to page 833 and the number of accessible parking bays, and I am happy to take this answer on notice.

The ACTING CHAIR: Sorry, Hon Alanna Clohesy; I just forgot that Hon Martin Pritchard had a question on your previous line of questioning. Would you mind if I just go to him?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Sure.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: In regard to the 500 metres, first of all, why was 500 metres chosen? Is it just an arbitrary distance? Is it as the crow flies, is it circular or is it by street route? Also, what responsibility do you take, if you pick a particular distance away, with regard to how safe it may be to actually traverse that distance with lighting and such, and whether people have to go through parks and that type of thing?

Hon JIM CHOWN: I do not think that lighting in regard to accessing bus stops is the responsibility of the PTA.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: You do not? Okay; that is fine.

Hon JIM CHOWN: No. I think that is a local government issue. In regard to that particular distance, I do not know if it is a given distance or an average distance, but I will let Mr Burgess respond.

Mr Burgess: To answer your question, clearly, with the number of residential addresses in the Perth metropolitan area, it would be impossible to go and individually measure the walking distance to them. So it is very much based on GIS systems and, fortunately, WA has some pretty good ones, such as, out of the Department of Lands, the SLIP system and so on. We have layers in that system, so all of our stops are located, and our train stations and all of our bus stops. I am happy to be corrected, but I am 99 per cent sure that the measure is bus service frequency of 20 minutes or better in the peak period. So that is the measure of whether it is a good level of service. What we do is essentially plot what is technically possible with a GIS system, which is to plot every PSA, or Perth street address, to every one of our stops or stations that meets that criteria, and that is where the 86 per cent comes from. To answer your question, naturally enough with the GIS system, it is as the crow flies. The 500 metres is generally a distance that is often used around the world in public transport for the tolerable distance, if you like, or what is a reasonable distance, for someone to walk to get to public transport. But I appreciate your point, which is that if as the crow flies it does not work for you, then it will be longer than 500 metres. We often talk about a ped distance of a kilometre. People are often prepared to walk a kilometre to a train station. A lot of people do that quite willingly because of the other benefits that it provides; it gets their walking bit into their day.

Hon JIM CHOWN: It gets their 15 minutes in!

Mr Burgess: Yes, it gets their time in. For a bus service, we think using 500 metres is the right number.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: I presume then, as new suburbs come on, that the system you use would indicate that you are starting to get away from that percentage, so you have to look at a bus route that will actually move further out into those new suburbs?

Mr Burgess: Very true.

The ACTING CHAIR: Hon Alanna Clohesy, I will come back to you, just because we have a few more members to get through and I am mindful of the time.

Hon ADELE FARINA: My first question is about safety on buses in Bunbury. There have been three assaults in the past three months on Bunbury buses and there have been other assaults previously to that. There is a call for cages to be installed in the buses and for car security similar to the ones that operate in Perth. Is there any funding in the budget for that; and, if not, when is it likely that they can be expected to be provided to the Bunbury buses?

Mr Burgess: Member, yes, the Bunbury situation was raised in estimates in the other house. For purposes of being clear, there is CCTV on those buses. It is not on all the buses in Bunbury, but on the 10 buses that do the town services rather than the school services. That in itself raises an issue because I know that at least one of those assaults occurred on a school bus and it was the most serious assault, as I understand it. That is somewhat an unpredictable occurrence. Typically, that is what we would expect. We are advancing, obviously, in the regional towns, so we have CCTV in a number of the major regional towns on the buses. The cages are available, so there is no real budget issue; they are only a modest cost. They are available to be put on those buses. The minister indicated when it was raised in the other house that we were more than happy to go and look at that situation. It has only very recently, as you know, been raised, and I think he has corresponded with people indicating that. As it stands right now, we are engaged with the contractor, and we are organising to go and talk to the driver workforce, and I think also engage with the community. I guess we will probably be more interested in what the drivers have to say. It is not a great look, I do not think, in the community. Many people thought it was a negative step in the metropolitan area, but it is fair to say that when a serious incident occurred in 2009 in the metropolitan area and a driver lost his eye, that was the stimulus for putting in a lot more. We already had some cages in buses at that point, and we went to all buses operating at night time basically having cages, which is the vast majority of the fleet now in Perth. I do not do think it is a terrific look when someone gets on the bus. It is very unfortunate that the nature of modern buses means that it is very hard to put glass or heavy-duty plastic protective screens in. We had them in and the union, quite rightly, raised some serious concerns about reflection issues. When you were pulling up to an intersection, you could not tell where the lights were coming from. That is what led to the cages in lieu of the screens. The screens, I think, are at least a more reasonable look. We had them in for some years, but then the safety issues were raised about them, so we have headed towards the cages. To get to the point on the Bunbury buses, I think we would only be looking again at the main town service buses putting in the cages, but we are going to do a risk assessment with the contractor, with the drivers. If there was a view that the cages needed to be in the school buses, we would take that on board as well, but I think it is a pretty ugly look.

Hon ADELE FARINA: I do not think the look is a big issue here; it is about the safety of the bus drivers who are more and more being subjected to people who are intoxicated or under the influence of drugs and not behaving rationally. It is a matter of their safety, regardless of the look.

[8.00 pm]

Mr Burgess: I think they are very valid issues on the town services perhaps. It is a bit of a worry that we have to worry about that on the school buses. As I say, it will not be an issue —

Hon ADELE FARINA: I know but there was an assault on a school bus.

Mr Burgess: That is what I say. The most serious assault was on a school bus but it is hardly something you would expect.

Hon ADELE FARINA: What is the time frame for that and will you include the union in those discussions?

Mr Burgess: Certainly the union delegate will be involved in the discussions, and the driver staff themselves will be involved in the discussions. We will put more cameras into Bunbury but the intention is not to do the entire fleet. As I say, a bus that gets used for only a couple of school runs a day—and we will look at the risk, in other words, a history of what has happened on those buses. That is the way modern businesses tend to do risk reviews. They look at incidents and react appropriately. But I think we will certainly take a strong view on the cages on the town services. It would be a very quick job to put the cages on if that was the decision taken—I am saying within weeks once the decision is taken.

Hon ADELE FARINA: What do you see the time frame as being? When will those consultations take place, how long do you expect they will take and when do you expect a decision might be made?

Mr Burgess: I think the consultations are happening within the next few years, and if the decision was taken to put the cages back in, again, it would be a matter of weeks after that.

Hon ADELE FARINA: What about the provision of a security car as you have here in the metropolitan area? The issue in that incident on the school bus, you actually need to have someone able to make a call to the police and then you have to wait for them to turn out, so there is quite a significant time delay issue.

Mr Burgess: Obviously the buses have radios in them, and, typically, the way it occurs here in Perth is no different. They radio to their traffic control, which would be their depot. In Perth, the security contractor has the bus radios going in their security vehicle. From our point of view, we would still consider Perth to be somewhat different to the regional towns at the moment in terms of the level of incidents, and certainly we review that level of incidents. At the moment we only do ad hoc patrolling within Bunbury. If the level of incidents rises dramatically then it is something we would consider in the future.

Hon ADELE FARINA: What level of incidents is the tipping point for that decision to be made?

Mr Burgess: I do not think there is a specific level. It is perhaps a question I can go away and provide more information on. Maybe the way to do that is to reflect the level of incidents occurring in Bunbury relative to the level of incidents occurring in Perth. The other key point is that we had a much lesser level of bus security, mobile patrols and so on, here in Perth until the 2009 incident. Because of the specific issue that from a whole-of-society, whole-of-government perspective there is this other body called the police force whose job it is to really respond to such incidents and —

Hon ADELE FARINA: But you have a lot more police officers in Perth than we do in Bunbury, and they have to cover a greater area in Bunbury so response times are not anywhere near as good as they are in the metropolitan area.

The ACTING CHAIR: There was an offer to take something on notice there.

Hon ADELE FARINA: I am happy to take that on notice.

The ACTING CHAIR: Just to clarify, that was on whether or not the PTA had thresholds or points at which it reassesses the security provided to its transport fleet.

[Supplementary Information No E6.]

Hon ADELE FARINA: I recently wrote to the minister in relation to concerns about security at the Bunbury central bus station. There is an increasing element of antisocial behaviour at the bus station and also criminal behaviour, and a number of constituents have raised with me their concerns about

having to go to the central bus station to catch a bus. At any point there is always an exchange that occurs there and if there is a bit of a sometime delay, it is not a nice place to be hanging around waiting. Is it possible to get static guards at the Bunbury central station as we do at bus stations in the metropolitan area?

Mr Burgess: It is probably worth pointing out that we do not have static guards at all of the Perth bus stations —

Hon ADELE FARINA: You have them at a fair few. They are always there at Morley.

Mr Burgess: Really just the major ones, so you are talking about Morley, Mirrabooka, and only at certain times of the day and so on at places like Booragoon. It is really horses for courses. In a sheer volume sense, the number of passengers going through there and also the level of incidents again—so it is about risk assessment process, that sort of analytical view of how many incidents occur. I can assure you that the central bus station in Bunbury is viewed from our central monitoring room. It is another set of cameras which is viewed from our central monitoring room, which occasionally is shown on television. It is a pretty state-of-the-art central monitoring room, and those cameras can be watched here in Perth and police respond to it if an incident is occurring, which would typically be advised by either a member of the public calling—calling the police or calling us—or one of the bus drivers saying there is some unruly behaviour.

Hon ADELE FARINA: Yes, but the problem with CCTV cameras is that they are great in terms of providing evidence in a prosecution; they are not exactly a great safety device because there is a time delay. You are assuming there is someone watching the monitor at the time that the incident is occurring and then they need to phone the police and the police need to be available to come out and deal with the situation, so it is not actually a safety measure; it is a good measure in terms of prosecution later on.

Mr Waldock: Although we have what we generally call communication at the station platform that goes back to our central room so we can actually respond if somebody in the public advises us; but I take your point, it is not quite the same as having somebody there.

Hon ADELE FARINA: Could you give consideration to having a static guard at the Bunbury central bus station, even if it is not 24/7 and it is just at certain times, and take that on notice?

Mr Waldock: As Mr Burgess said, we will have a look at the whole issue in terms of risk assessment and we will respond back and see how it looks.

Hon ADELE FARINA: Another issue that has been raised with me by constituents is that since you have closed your offices at the Bunbury central bus station, they now need to go to Wollaston train station to actually get a hard copy of a bus timetable, which seems a little bit ridiculous to me, and to make bookings, and that is a significant problem. There are a lot of people in Bunbury who are not connected to the internet so they cannot simply download the timetables, and if you are dependent on public transport, getting around Bunbury it is not that easy because we do not have a great public transport system in Bunbury. Having to tell people you do not have that information and that booking capacity at the Bunbury central bus station—you have to go to the train station, which is a fair way out of town—is just unreasonable. I am wondering whether you can make some other arrangements, whether perhaps you could have the timetables available at the visitor centre and maybe make arrangements to have some booking capacity through the visitor centre.

Mr Burgess: Thanks member. Can I check that I think you must be talking about bookings for South West Coach Lines?

Hon ADELE FARINA: Yes.

Mr Burgess: South West Coach Lines has been sold, which we had no real relationship with, other than we use them periodically for contract support if a coach was to break down somewhere. We do not have any specific contract relationship with them on their coach services, so that was sort of an

independent business decision that that business was sold, and they have closed that office, which we did not have a lot of say in.

Hon ADELE FARINA: But they did have your timetables.

Mr Burgess: Yes; I take that on board, member. But it is unusual we have not got timetables on the buses, so I will take that on board and check why that is not the case.

The ACTING CHAIR: I need to move on. In the previous question there was a request to take information about the appropriateness of security at Bunbury bus station. Are you happy to take that as supplementary?

[*Supplementary Information No E7.*]

The ACTING CHAIR: Was there supplementary information requested from the last question?

Hon ADELE FARINA: No, but I have one more.

The ACTING CHAIR: You have already gone over time; so I have to move on. Hon Darren West.

Hon DARREN WEST: I want to ask a quick question about the decision made last year or the year before to close the service up through the wheatbelt to Mukinbudin. Every time I visit that area I am asked about it and to find out. I know it was not a well patronised service but it was a very important service to the people in many of those small communities. Has there been any thought to reconsider that decision?

[8.10 pm]

Mr Burgess: It is difficult one because obviously the patronage was quite low. I think maybe you may have asked a question about it and I might have given you numbers before; if not —

Hon DARREN WEST: I just thought given the fullness of time and the amount of contact—I am sure you have had contact, because I certainly have—about it. I know there are services that cost the taxpayer a lot of money, like, for instance, the *AvonLink* is a very highly subsidised service, and I just wondered how this one stacked up, given that that has had a reprieve. Whether there is any thought to services further into the wheatbelt?

Mr Burgess: With the decision to obviously, as you say, give the *AvonLink* a trial, part of that decision was whether a range of services from various towns in that general area were appropriate to be looked at. I think the government's intent there largely would have been for the community to contribute. So there would be a community contribution and that might be by way of using an existing community bus with a contribution from government. Our general manager from Transwa is closely involved in discussions in a number of towns in that sphere. I do not know that that one has particularly got up, but there are others which look reasonably positive. That is the only advice I could give. The challenge is: it was a review of coach services around the state and a number that were underperforming, I guess, in a fewer patronage sense—if that sounds cold and harsh, I guess it is—were removed.

Hon DARREN WEST: Yes, because it is the only form of public transport available to many of those communities and their challenge is to attract and retain people in their communities because they are dwindling in number and it is a bit of a vicious circle. As far as you are concerned, it has not come back? It has not been reconsidered?

Mr Burgess: It has not come back, but I know it is one of the issues that was being discussed with communities in that area with regard to the injection, I guess, of funds back into the *AvonLink* and whether trial bus services back out in that area were going to occur with, as I say, some community input. If there was say a community bus available, and government helps subsidise it.

Hon DARREN WEST: On a related matter that we have mentioned: the *AvonLink*. Has the subsidy required dropped in the trial of the *AvonLink* with the extra services, because clearly the cost would

have increased somewhat as well? Has the lift in patronage matched the lift in costs or is the *AvonLink* still costing the taxpayer as much as before in subsidy?

Mr Burgess: It has not, unfortunately. There has been certainly a lot of effort by particularly the Toodyay community to crank up the level of support for the train. They have taken a very positive set of steps to try to engage with their own community and there has been advertising at both ends—whether it is Perth people going out that way or vice versa. But we have substantially, as per the agreed trial arrangements, increased the level of service. So, on a weekday, for example, instead of in and out, there are three return trips. It is a substantial increase. The level of patronage has not matched that. I think last time I checked, we were typically, we had sort of gone from mid-20s occupancy on the train or thereabouts, because there are now more trains, down to about 17 per cent occupancy—that is off the top of my head. Yes, 16.8 per cent. So average patronage per trip over this current 2014–15 period compared with the period last financial year, we were at 23.9 last financial year average people per trip and now because we have got lots more services on, we are down to 16.8. That is a three-year trial, but with a review period by government mid next year and it is possible there might be tweaks, but hopefully it will increase between now and then.

Hon DARREN WEST: Should that patronage continue, does that sort of fall under your magic number? I mean, if it was unviable at 23.9 or the figure that you just gave us before, presumably you could make the same statement at a lower figure. When you say there is a review; will that review to change the service or will that review potentially end the service?

Mr Burgess: It will be a decision for government. Obviously, the reason it was up in headlights before was there was a view that the *AvonLink* was questionable and whether it should be replaced by coaches. The *AvonLink* is very similar rolling stock; essentially, it is the same train but without some fruit on it—for example, without a passenger kiosk or anything like that on board. It is the same rolling stock as the *Prospector*. The *Prospector* has very high levels of occupancy and, arguably, that was one of the options—whether we should be putting more rolling stock in the longer trip out to Kalgoorlie and putting coaches on for Toodyay–Northam but, as you know, there was a government decision to promote this better in the community. As I said, the Toodyay residents in particular have very much jumped on board that campaign. I guess the question will be: is it sufficient and should it not be just tweaked a bit? If it is three return trips at the moment, perhaps tweak it back a bit so the costs are reduced.

Hon DARREN WEST: Briefly, and related, the *MerredinLink* has gone the other way. It has had a reduction in the number of trips per week. Are your figures doing the converse there or are they also in decline?

Mr Burgess: I think it is fairly static, the *MerredinLink*; it is only one trip a week now. For last year, the 2013–14 period, the average number of passengers per trip was 19.6 and for the equivalent period this year, it is 23.3. Again, that is fairly modest given the size of the train.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: On this issue, are the access fees that you paid Brookfield Rail to run those services fixed for the length of the trial or when they are up for review? When do they get renegotiated?

Mr Burgess: They are not specifically negotiated for this trial, to answer your question, member. A fee is charged to us for access, which is obviously subject to normal escalation. I cannot remember how long the access agreements are for. I think they are typically for a number of years. We will be getting charged the same rates as if the *AvonLink* had stayed in and out. Whatever it is on a per kilometre basis for that window, we would just be getting charged three times that.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Can you provide for us, maybe as a supplementary, when it is next due for renegotiation, what we are currently paying both on a per kilometre basis and also the total amount paid for each year so far and the last two years in the budget papers and what we expect it to be over

the forward estimates. And broken down by service, so the *AvonLink*, the *Prospector* and the *MerredinLink*.

Hon JIM CHOWN: We will take that on notice.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: If the *Australind* is tied in as part of that agreement, throw the *Australind* in for good measure, or even if it is not, throw it in.

Mr Burgess: It definitely has an agreement with the same operator, obviously—the same provider.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: If you could give us the total figure for each of the different lines, how much for each train and what it is per kilometre.

Mr Burgess: The only question we may not be able to answer is the forward estimates because it may be subject to whatever that new negotiated agreement is.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What you have got locked in the forward estimates so far.

[*Supplementary Information No E8.*]

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: I just wanted to ask a question with regards to the \$2 fee that is paid at the train stations. What was the total revenue for the last financial year, where is that directed and what is it used for? Is it cost recovery or another source of revenue?

Hon JIM CHOWN: Part of the policy for the \$2 fare is trying to alleviate people who were using these particular parking areas and not catching the trains. That has been very effective at this stage. To further expand on the answer, Mr Kirk will give a response.

Mr Kirk: I can tell you what the budget is. The budget for 2014–15 was \$8.2 million, bearing in mind that that includes the previous —prior to 1 July, a number of parking bays were already paid parking and we extended it to all of them. About \$8 million per annum is the budget for that.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: The question was: is that just revenue or is that put to a particular reason?

Mr Kirk: That is revenue that just goes into that general fund. It reduces our operating subsidy, if you like.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: I understand that there is a commitment not to increase it this year. On what basis will it be reviewed or when will it be reviewed?

[8.20 pm]

Mr Waldock: It will be part of our ongoing annual revision of fees and charges. It will be part of that, so it is an annual cycle.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I just want to turn to some of the questions you provided me. Question 35, the business case that was done on the Butler to Yanchep extension. In that you estimate 39 250 daily boardings. Is that as at 2031?

Mr Waldock: That is a very good question, because we have not answered that part of it. Generally we do talk about 2031, but I would like to take that on notice, because I think we should get it right.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes, if you could just confirm that, whatever it is. The 39 250 daily boardings given in answer to question on notice 35. What year is that figure at?

[*Supplementary Information No E9.*]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The other thing I wanted to confirm, because there is often different terminology here is: is the 39 250 daily boardings across the whole network or just at those stations north of Butler? I think it says “excluding the Butler station”, so it would be at the stations north of Butler. Is that boardings at those stations, or is that across the whole network?

Mr Waldock: Again, my understanding is that it would be at the northern stations, but we can confirm that as well.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: In terms of boardings across the whole network, we would be looking at about 80 000 boardings.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Do you mean on the northern line in total?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The Yanchep extension.

Mr Waldock: I will certainly do that, and it is on the record that this was early work. As it says here, it was in July 2011. We are revisiting these issues. I do not think that when we did this, we even used step modelling per se. We used a different approach, but we will have to revisit that. The business case for this is still in its early days. It is not a project on the forward capital works, but we will continue to review it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Can you provide us information about whether or not those daily boardings are just those stations, or if they are network wide? As you can imagine, it basically doubles if it is network wide.

The ACTING CHAIR: We will take that as supplementary information E10.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Even network wide, 39 000 is significantly higher than you are expecting on the airport line. Is that right?

Mr Waldock: Yes, we know what the airport line is; we have discussed it in great detail.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: It is 29 000 as at 2031, and that is across the network.

Mr Waldock: That does seem a little bit high to me, but we will come back with it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: In question number 36 you say no alternatives were considered in the original business case. I find that hard to believe, because I would have thought there would have been a base case of what needed to be done, possibly in terms of what roadworks would need to be done. That is my experience of business cases. You would have some sort of base case that, in this case, I would assume to be road, and that there would therefore be a whole range of options. If you think about it, if you do not build a railway line north of Butler—anyone who goes up that road knows that the area is just growing like Topsy every week, literally—it would strike me that you would have to, in any business case, have considered the alternatives, which may have been road, or it may have been a combination of road and additional parking at Butler, so I find that answer hard to believe.

Mr Waldock: Maybe Mr Burgess or Mr Kirk may be able to correct me if I am wrong, but as I remember it, if we go back to 2011, we were far more primitive and unsophisticated in our views of life. We used to do what we called master planning and preliminary master planning. Certainly business cases in recent times—you know, the last three —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I thought you were more sophisticated back then, in some ways.

Mr Waldock: Not at all.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Less symmetrical than you are now.

Mr Waldock: What we do now as a matter of course in both our business cases and project development plans is we do a whole lot of options analysis and BCRs. We could not even spell a BCR in those days, so we have come a long way.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Oh, no; you used to do BCRs back then.

Mr Waldock: Not very good—not really!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I would be very surprised if this business case did not have a BCR in it.

Mr Waldock: I do not think it has. In fact I think it was based on the early work of John Symes, and I think it was fairly preliminary. We certainly will work that up and we will do it properly and we will look at options, because as you say there are other options.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: In fact I think at question 39 you confirmed that there was a BCR. It said that while demonstrating a positive BCR, it was preliminary in nature”.

Mr Waldock: That is how unsophisticated it was, you see!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Is that right? You should not sell yourself down like that, Reece; you have always been a good performer in this area!

Mr Waldock: Maybe it is that time of night!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Sometimes the advice is not accepted by government but the PTA also provides good advice.

Mr Waldock: Thank you.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I would have thought that at that time there would have been some sort of base case. So do you want to reconsider your answer to question 36 and maybe take it on notice and tell us what alternatives and what sort of base case there was?

Mr Waldock: I am more than happy to look at all of that. I think I have already said that we will come back and indicate what we said on boardings and what we said in terms of what it was based on, and we can certainly do the rest.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: And also what the base case was, and what was the estimated cost of those alternatives—so, if you do not build the rail, what do you need to build in terms of road and additional infrastructure at, say, Butler, and maybe even Clarkson. I do not know if you expect them to come down that far.

[Supplementary Information No E10.]

The ACTING CHAIR: Just to clarify, I had already assigned number E10, but Hon Ken Travers asked two parts to the question on daily boardings, so they will form part of E9.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: At question 38, I asked did you do mode share between public transport and private motor vehicles, and you said yes; mode share varies depending on household proximity to rail. That is a very good answer.

Mr Waldock: That is a true statement.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: But it does not actually my question, and that is if you build the rail, what mode share do you get of people using public transport, and if you do not build the rail, what mode share will use cars and whatever else they will use? If you did do that work, can we get what different mode shares you estimated in total regardless of where people live—that is, aggregated up to what the total mode share was?

Mr Waldock: I will have another look at those questions that you have raised and the responses we gave.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Again for the Thornlie to Cockburn line, you say you did a draft business project case as part of an early-stage submission to IA, but then you do not answer any of the questions. Are you able to go back and look at providing actual answers to all of the questions of a similar nature regarding the Thornlie to Cockburn extension?

Mr Waldock: We certainly answered some of the questions on cost.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes. It is funny which ones you do and which ones you do not answer! So maybe you could go back and look at all of those for us.

[Supplementary Information No E11.]

The ACTING CHAIR: Before we move on, there have been a couple of requests for information. Just to clarify, was it in relation to question on notice 38?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes, 38, but it was also—maybe we will do it as a separate question—to provide detailed information, in a similar format to what I have just asked for the Yanchep extension, with regard to the Thornlie to Cockburn line, and that relates to questions 40 through to 47.

The ACTING CHAIR: I will assign E12 to the second part.

[Supplementary Information No E12.]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I note that in one of your answers you indicated that you have got provision for \$3 million for stowage facilities at Forrestfield for the new railcars, although I suspect it will be the old three-car sets that you will keep out there.

Mr Waldock: Yes, it will be the old three-car sets.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Where are we going to stow, maintain et cetera—where will be the main depot for the C-series railcars?

[8.30 pm]

Mr Waldock: The C-series railcars? I think you did ask a question regarding where in the budget is the depot.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: But you have now committed to buying them and you still do not have a depot.

Mr Waldock: No; if I could just finish. We have undertaken to come back to government later this year with a project definition plan for the depot strategy, so we are working through all those issues. Now, if you are asking the question about particularly the new depots, the new depots will certainly be Nowergup—we have expanded Nowergup—but also we will be looking at an interim depot, perhaps not for another, I think, about eight years, is it not, Mark, at Hillman? I think that is about the time line. We have got depot strategies but we also need them, I suppose, where the delays are coming. We just need to understand better how we are going to manage the heritage lines, particularly at Midland, so that is where some of the issues are coming.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: So are you saying that you will not need a new depot? I would have thought the C-series trains will be different technology and they will need their own maintenance centre. I assume, even though they are permanent six-car sets, you will still, for maintenance purposes, be able to break them into two three-car sets or will they be full permanent —

Mr Waldock: No; they are six-car sets with —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: With no ability to break them?

Mr Waldock: No. It will be a different configuration.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: In that case, you will need a whole new maintenance depot where you have got new lifts and everything else from the day that the first ones arrive in 2019.

Mr Waldock: Yes, so our current work is we can reconfigure Nowergup and we have got expansion capacity at Nowergup and certainly, as I say, the supporting depot for the south line will be at Hillman as well. That is the work we are doing now.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Does that require any contractual renegotiations with EDI, because they currently run Nowergup for us, do they not?

Mr Waldock: It will be full protocols because if we can divide the site at Nowergup, we will actually have a divided site and we will run it, as I say, under agreed protocols.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: So two separate operators, potentially?

Mr Waldock: It is certainly not beyond our wit.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: No, nothing is beyond your wit; I have noticed that. I still cannot understand why we have made a decision to order railcars, and that is in the budget now, but there is no provision for the construction of a new depot and maintenance facilities. It might be on the site alongside the existing Nowergup depot but it will still require —

Mr Waldock: I think the answer to that is reasonably simple. We need to do a lot more work and that is what we are doing now. We had to sort of understand the utilisation strategies; we actually had to understand all the options, and it is taking longer. But we do not see that as an issue because it is not the critical part. The critical part is the railcars.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: But when people are looking at our forward estimates and they see what they think is a decline that we go over a peak in terms of debt and things start to get better, and of course your debt is still included under the general government sector as I understand it, even though you are on the public non-financial corporations side for the operating account, I would have thought—from my recollection it is something like \$50 million or \$60 million, without the land, just for the operational costs—that we should add some figure in the budget notionally for that cost to give a true picture of what we are going to have to spend by 2019 because we are going to have to have the depot by 2019.

Mr Waldock: I am the first to admit that I asked for further consideration because I was not confident that we had actually done enough work in planning, so we are actually doing that hard work to make sure we get the right concept plans and the right projects to go forward with. There were too many unknowns and too many options and not enough clarity and scope, so that is what is being done now.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Going back to the issue I raised at the very beginning about the escalator incident at Warwick station, can we request on notice a copy of any CCTV footage or audio logs that were made of that incident?

Hon JIM CHOWN: We missed the question; I am sorry, member.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: In regards to the incident that occurred on the escalator at Warwick train station, can we request a copy of the CCTV footage and any audio logs that were made of phone calls from staff to your control room or radio contact, which I understand should have been recorded?

Hon JIM CHOWN: The release of this sort of information is not normal. Normally, the PTA does not comply with these sorts of requests.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Maybe it is not normal but I am asking for it.

Hon JIM CHOWN: The answer is no.

Mr Waldock: We have a significant ongoing dialogue in this space. A lot of it is to do with privacy and public disclosure. It is very traumatic for people who are hurt on these things to be seen on television, even if their faces are masked. There are many reasons why we need to be very careful, so we do not provide that information.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Why do you, when it suits you, release video footage of these incidents —

Mr Waldock: It depends what you mean by —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: — because you have in the past in certain instances?

Mr Waldock: It depends what you mean by “suing us”. Certainly, if it is a good-news story, like rocking a train to get a leg out, of course we will do that, but when it is a traumatic event, we are very, very cautious, and so we should be.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I am interested in the marginal cost. How many passengers do you need on a train to break even?

Mr Waldock: That is a hard question!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I would have thought it is a pretty simple question and a pretty fundamental question for an organisation like yours to know.

Hon JIM CHOWN: You mean to break even without subsidised fees?

Mr Waldock: Do you mean to cover operating costs?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The operating cost—to break even on the marginal cost. If you were sitting down there doing the sums to say, “We can put on five new trains and we need to get X number of passengers on them”, what is the point where the train service is breaking even on its marginal operating costs?

Mr Waldock: Mr Burgess would be delighted to answer that question!

Mr Burgess: I think it is an excellent question, member, because I have asked it many times myself! It is a very difficult one.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: You and I are very alike sometimes, Mr Burgess!

Mr Burgess: It is a very difficult one. I am not actually just regurgitating the answers provided to me; it is an internal thought process we have gone through many times to try to work this out. It would need to be a fairly full train. But the challenge is you never bring a train driver in to do one trip. It is a bit like a bus driver. I know you know this business well in terms of understanding these cost structures. You bring a train driver in, let us say early in the morning, who runs some early services well before the peak, where you have very low numbers of people, and then he is providing some peak and then some core-of-the-day services. How do you spread the cost structures for that sensibly? When CSA staff come on, they are in low numbers, then they get into larger numbers; fair gate attendance; the cost of power—all of these things vary over the course of the day. It is very hard, therefore, to say what costs are attributed to that specific train journey and what revenues. It is easier to say what revenues can be attributed to that train journey, but how do you sensibly allocate the cost when staff and other costs are over a much longer period of time? It is challenging to give a rational and sensible answer.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I reckon most businesses in your —

Hon JIM CHOWN: That has not really answered your question.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I reckon most businesses, and any bus operator, would be able to give me that answer in terms of their operations, or any private operator of train services around the world would be able to answer that.

Mr Burgess: They would, but it would be full of assumptions and caveats.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Do you not have a figure that you can work to in terms of what the marginal operating cost is?

Mr Waldock: It depends on time of night and the rosters, the support staff and all the rest. What we can say is we all look forward to nirvana when we have six-car sets with one driver with full loadings both ways. On the Fremantle line, although it is not the most modern, loadings both ways certainly helps our ability to run high cost recovery rates.

The ACTING CHAIR: Hon Ken Travers, have you finished on that because two more members want to ask questions? I will come back to you if there is time.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: All right; no worries.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Most of mine I can, and will, put on notice to allow more time.

I just wanted to quickly know how the ACROD parking project 2015 is going.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Could you repeat the question; speak up a little?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: How is the ACROD parking project 2015 going?

Mr Burgess: I am not aware of the program you are speaking of. We have got ACROD bays, obviously, at our station car parks and so on.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: When I last asked about the number of accessible parking bays at train stations, the answer included that there would be an ACROD parking project 2015 to look at accessible parking bays.

[8.40 pm]

Mr Burgess: I understand what you are saying. We have done an analysis. What happened with the paid parking program is that because we have gone to a centralised pay station, the vast majority of people, hopefully, instead of standing and buying a cash ticket in the rain or cold, or the sun, whatever it might be, can tag with their SmartRider card as they get to the station. That infrastructure had to be put near the station entrance to make that program sensible. Therefore, in a couple of cases or a number of cases it affected the ACROD bays that tended to be right there, so we had to move them slightly sideways and away, but still very close to the station entrance. I think what you are referring to is that we said we would go back and check the number of ACROD bays we had at stations and if we needed more, but I think across the board we are well above the standard and what we wanted to check was whether we had any instances of demand for ACROD exceeding supply. I am not aware of any instances we have had, but I am more than happy to take it on notice, Chair, if that is suitable, and come back and identify whether we have had any. That was the project we were undertaking, to see whether we needed to do more anyway, and you have our firm guarantee that if it is identified that demand is exceeding supply anywhere, we will put more in.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Similarly, I was able to get the number of accessible parking bays as well as the total number of parking bays by station. If there is any variation to that, could I have that as well?

Mr Burgess: Yes.

[*Supplementary Information No E13.*]

Hon ADELE FARINA: My question is in relation to the Perth to Bunbury fast train. Can you tell me where things are at with that?

Mr Waldock: I think that is a Transport question!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: You would not believe it that the DG of Transport flicked it over to you! He is not your friend, I can tell you! I do not know what you did to upset him, but he handpasses a lot of stuff on to you!

Mr Waldock: He is not a very nice person! It is fair to say that we have done a significant amount of work on this and that was some time ago. It has not progressed very far because it is not seen to be a high priority. Certainly, with my discussions and externally, what we need to do, and I think we have done a very good job, is to define the corridor. Certainly, we are still working through the challenges there will be to make sure we get past Eaton and past the LandCorp development into the city, into the major town. I cannot say too much about it and really I think it is best to say that the project has gone to a level. We have done enough, as I say, work to maintain it, look at the corridor, understand the corridor, and it will probably sit there for some little time until, I guess, government want to reactivate it, because it is certainly not high in government's priority list.

Hon ADELE FARINA: What are the reasons for that?

Mr Waldock: I think it is expensive, it does not seem to have enormously high patronage —

Hon ADELE FARINA: That is because we currently only run two trains a day, it is a really slow service and it breaks down all the time.

Mr Waldock: I think that is a different issue. If you remember, we did try at one stage to try to put a direct fast coach service, not through the hinterland, and we almost got destroyed. In fact, I never raised it ever again because certainly we have two sets of customers. We have customers on the Australind line who do demand that sort of service, and of course, we would see a whole new set of customers coming in as we try to join two major cities together. I do not think that anybody questions that it is certainly something we should look at in terms of the busting Bunbury area growing to be the second largest regional centre in WA—it is already there—and having recently fast services between them. But, I know it is not a high priority and that is why it is not going anywhere the present moment.

Hon ADELE FARINA: Is there any money in the budget to improve the bus service in Bunbury?

Mr Waldock: We have actually done a fair bit of improvement there.

Hon ADELE FARINA: No, you have not really. You have realigned some routes and you have made them longer so kids have to sit on the buses for a longer period of time, and made it more unbearable for people who have to get from the beginning to the end of the route because it is now a hell of a lot longer, so that is not really an improvement. It may be a cost improvement from your end, but it is certainly not an improvement for the people relying on the buses, and we certainly do not have greater frequency of service, which is really critical.

Hon JIM CHOWN: Mr Burgess will give an explanation in regard to improved services.

Mr Burgess: Sure. Maybe, to benefit the question, member, it is something we can supply some more supplementary information on. I think tracking over time—there may not have been in recent years—not too many years ago there were some definite improvements to Bunbury services. It is probably fair to say that when we made some substantive changes to the management of the regional town bus services collectively, Bunbury was probably a higher level of service than a number of the other major regional towns—I am talking about even on a per capita or size basis—and so some of the other regional towns have probably had more significant growth and investment. But perhaps if I can supply you that as supplementary information tracking back a number of years; I think it does indicate that there has been growth in the Bunbury services. Clearly, we never satisfy all members of the community—it is no different to Perth—but as Mr Waldock alluded to, there has also been good investment in better fleet and SmartRider has been put into Bunbury. So we have not sat on our hands; I think there has been a good demonstration of commitment to improving services in Bunbury.

Hon ADELE FARINA: May I suggest that it is time to have another look and invest a few more dollars in improving the bus service, because you are not going to increase patronage if you do not actually increase the frequency of the services.

[Supplementary Information No E14.]

The ACTING CHAIR: Before I return to Hon Ken Travers, I just want to be sure that no-one else had any further questions to ask.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: I have one, but I will go after Ken.

Hon JIM CHOWN: You might not get a chance.

The ACTING CHAIR: If you have one, I would rather you go now.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: SmartParker issues. How can you be absolutely confident that you do not have a problem with your technology in terms of sending information through?

Mr Burgess: We actually are able to do system checks on a daily basis and see how long transactions are taking because they do bounce back to Europe, believe it or not. They do bounce back to Europe —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I understand the internet; it could be bouncing anywhere!

Mr Burgess: We can check how quickly when someone tags their card for parking that is received in real time and put into the system. When the parking inspectors later come along and check, in the back office they will have a verification that that card has been tagged, related to that car. So we can actually check that and do system checks. Perhaps, if it gives you any comfort, member, as the parliamentary secretary indicated, we do not want to steal the minister's thunder in terms of the passenger satisfaction monitor, but it is an interesting one. There are 1 000 surveys—you are familiar with the passenger satisfaction monitor; it is quite independent market research—and 1 000 train passengers, approximately, are asked a lot of questions; it is a face-to-face survey and takes a long time. The market researcher travels with the passenger or sits with them for quite a lengthy period of time, asking about a whole range of aspects of the train service in the case of the survey —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I understand that; I am not worried about the passenger satisfaction. What I asked you was: how can you guarantee that there is not a fault, and how does the passenger prove that they did it when you do not issue a receipt under SmartParker? They have no way of being able to prove to you that as far as they were concerned the green light came on and they met all the requirements.

Mr Burgess: I think if you just indulge me for one minute the PSM. The PSM asked people, and approximate two-thirds of the train passengers said they used Park 'n' Ride sometimes or all the time, so we are talking about 600, roughly, people who said they use it all the time. A specific question asked of those people—so a very broad and very large base, which statistically would be very accurate—was: What do you think of the technology? Have you got any problems with the equipment? There were 10 comments; 10 people.

[8.50 pm]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: That could be that your machines failed 10 times. I am not trying to be smart. You are prosecuting people; you are taking people to court for a system that I do not know how you can guarantee is working, particularly when people have a record of having paid the days leading up to the day they got a fine and the days after they got a fine.

Mr Burgess: Again, we do not rely on a PSM that is done once in a while. If people ring up with an issue with SmartParker, we walk them through the process of what occurred. It is amazing how many times the issue becomes “I forgot to change which car I was using today.” Obviously, they can have up to three registered vehicles.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: No; I have referred people in and suggested that might be the problem.

Mr Burgess: It generally is.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I am talking about the people you are taking to court. I am sure you get complaints. My understanding is—you can confirm this for me or not—that you have had staff assaulted by passengers who got very angry about the SmartParker.

Mr Burgess: I have never heard of a staff member being assaulted about SmartParker.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I have got advice that you have.

Mr Burgess: In fact, the car park attendants have done a remarkable turnaround. I am not making a comment about that group, but their average age is in the 60s. They are quite an elderly group of people. They were a bit daunted by the technology initially. It is amazing the turnaround from that group of employees, who now actually support the system and say it is a very good system.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I accept that you have great staff, but I am asking: how do you guarantee that there is not a failure of your system before you prosecute someone?

Mr Burgess: All I can say is that we test it numerous times. It is tested by, I think, about 83 per cent of transactions are now on SmartParker and we have broadly got 20 000 bays, and I think we fill about 19 000 on a typical day, or thereabouts. Some of the big stations where we have put lots of car parks now are entirely full. So, we have 19 000 people a day, and 83 per cent of them using SmartParker and the level of complaints is very modest. I think if there was a systemic problem —

The issues you are talking about where people say, “It didn’t work for me”, we can go to videos and show, “This person tagged just before you and this person tagged just after you, and the system worked for them.” As you know with SmartRider, because this is just another derivative of the SmartRider product, which is a very good system; we have not had too many issues with it. If you do not go close enough to it and tag properly and check what the message says, “You correctly did it”, then there is an issue.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I will give you an alternative suggestion. I asked you a question about whether you had any faulty SmartRider terminals at Edgewater train station on Thursday, 30 April and your answer was no. I rode on that day and you had a faulty SmartRider. It happened to me. That is why I put the question in. I know when I went to tag off, one of the terminals would not let me tag off. Your answer was that it works; there were no faults. If it was not working on that day for me as a SmartRider terminal how can you be sure and guarantee to a level that you will prosecute someone in court for a fine that the SmartParker technology is working? That was my own personal example. I have to say that the Edgewater train station is one I get regular complaints that a couple of tag-on-tag-off machines there do not work.

Mr Burgess: We have a live monitoring system. SmartRider has been going for a very long time. If there were compelling and systemic problems with it, I think we would hear a lot about it. A lot of people would be fined for fare evasion who would be going to court, but that is not the case. I think if there was a systemic problem with SmartRider, we would know about it. We have a live system that says, “Is a ticket machine out or a fare gate out or a SmartParker processor out at this time? People are looking at that live system all the time.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: You are not aware of any of your staff being assaulted as a result of angry customers due to the SmartParker technology.

Mr Burgess: I am not aware of it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Do you want to take on notice whether that has occurred?

[Supplementary Information No E15.]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I note from the answers you provided, I think the highest you had was 20 of your 238 transit officers off on workers’ comp, which still seems to be extremely high. We have raised this before. What can we do to try to lower that figure? That seems to be extraordinarily high. As at the date, I think there were 17, and a couple of others when you had 15 plus two on this and two pending—still quite a few up around that, which is almost 10 per cent of that section of your workforce. What are we doing?

Mr Burgess: I think I just heard Mr Waldock say that it is not easy, and I concur that it is not easy. These are very well trained people. I think Channel Seven did a bit of an exposé of the training regime they go through. It is approximately 12 weeks and then they do on-the-system training. It is a very good course. A lot of it is very similar to a police officer. We do a lot of training where they talk people down and talk people around, and then they do, obviously, the other training, which is how to defend themselves and how to put someone under arrest without, hopefully, injuring them. They have obviously got pepper spray, they have got batons if they need them. But it is a difficult environment, particularly some services; you know, the night services tend to be obviously much

worse than the day, but things can happen actually in the middle of the day as well. Theirs is a difficult job because they face those potential situations. Unlike, say, a police officer—we all have great respect for police officers but police officers are not looking at someone on their entire shift—these guys get onto a train or onto a station platform and are looking at people and dealing with issues and waiting for radio calls to go to problem situations from the time they come on shift. It is definitely a challenging environment. The only thing I would say about the level of workers' comp issues is that quite often it will be long-term injuries as well. The fact that someone is off right now could well be an incident that occurred quite some time ago, and obviously those occasionally get a bit of —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Maybe you could finish that debate by taking on notice to give us a breakdown of how many of those people, say, in those two areas you gave us earlier at the peak at 20, and the length of time each person had been off; and for the 15, the snapshot you gave and the length of time.

Mr Burgess: Sure

[Supplementary Information No E16.]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: My understanding from a number of conversations is that the new buses that the parliamentary secretary gloated about earlier require us to basically build a new bus depot every year. But there does not seem to be any money for new depots. When do we need the next depot; why is money not allocated for that in the budget; and what is the average cost of a depot?

Mr Burgess: The depots vary obviously as to whether the land is available. I recall you earlier at a community meeting, member, of the Beenyup depot up towards Ocean Reef way, so that is obviously one just coming online very shortly. That is one which is positively obviously. Where we have the depots is quite strategic in the sense of saving the taxpayer money, because dead running is a significant cost for bus services, so I think Beenyup will be number 22, or depot 22, and if you can have them in all the right locations you save a lot of money in providing your bus services when they run on and run off trips. You are right: every so often we need another depot, and we have been able to expand some of the depots in various locations.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Are we going to need another one over the forward estimates over the next four years?

Mr Burgess: We are looking at the opportunity; we actually have some more pressing needs in the regional areas in terms of depots, so we are actually looking. We have bought land down at Albany and we in fact used that depot site for the Albany Anzac services last October–November. We put some hard stone down and used the site, but we have not built the depot yet. But we are looking at some land sales opportunities where we have an agreement with Treasury that we can turn that money back into building some regional depots. We are certainly looking at Albany as one of those and potentially another regional town where we would like to get hold of the depot.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What land do you have to sell for that?

Mr Burgess: In Albany we have bought the land.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: No but you said you are selling land, that Treasury said if you sell the land you can keep the proceeds.

Mr Burgess: We have an agreement with some land we have in Geraldton, which has been there a long time, as you know. We are trying to sell it and direct that money towards bus depots.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: So we will not need another depot in the metropolitan area over the period of the forward estimates?

Mr Burgess: I would not guarantee that. I think, depending on things such as the timing of Yanchep in the future and so on, we may need to bring on a depot in the far north.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Alkimos?

Mr Burgess: Yes, they are the sorts of opportunities we are looking at. We would always try to find government land if we can, because the price of the land is obviously —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What is the cost of a depot without the land?

Mr Burgess: They vary a bit. We have done them for as low as \$3 million and \$4 million depending on the size, and up to \$8 million and \$10 million.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: I will put this question on notice, but I will say that Hon Ken Travers has a very thick skin because he raised a concern with regard to SmartRiders. I was going to raise a concern on behalf of my daughter who explained that very same problem to me, but I did not raise it on the basis that I was not there. If Hon Ken Travers said it happened, it happened.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: If you do not want to ask a question, I will ask the last one.

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: There you go; I will leave you to it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What is happening with the big tunnel from Perth to Morley? Clearly the planning now is based around that, the rail tunnel to Morley. Clearly all the other planning is now based on a tunnel to Morley. How are we progressing it?

Mr Waldock: I thought I explained earlier in the transport section —

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes, that you have a railway line that starts north of Mirrabooka and you have no way of getting there other than a tunnel out through Morley.

Mr Waldock: I thought I explained that we are actually doing an enormous amount of work to come back to government with a \$3.5 million plan, which will answer all of your questions, member.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: So you still will not tell us about the big tunnel!

The ACTING CHAIR: Thanks, members. The committee will forward any additional questions it has to you in writing in the next couple of days together with the transcript of evidence, which includes the questions you have taken on notice. Responses to these questions will be requested within 10 working days of receipt of the questions. Should you be unable to meet this due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met. If members have any unasked questions, I ask them to submit these to the committee clerk at the close of this hearing. On behalf of the committee, thank you all for your attendance this evening.

Hearing concluded at 9.00 pm
