

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS — REVIEW BY OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Statement by Minister for Transport

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan — Minister for Transport) [2.04 pm]: On 15 September 2009, Hon Ken Travers, MLC, asked question on notice 1200, which related to the Alexander Drive transit feasibility study and requested supply of the Public Transport Authority's contract documents with Parsons Brinckerhoff for this study, as well as a copy of the inception report. On 10 November 2009, Hon Ken Travers, MLC, asked question without notice 1069, which asked me to table a copy of the Public Transport Authority contract for the provision of bus security officers. On this date the member also asked question on notice 1373, which asked me to table a contract entered into with Baulderstone Clough Joint Venture for the maintenance of the Northbridge Tunnel. For all three parliamentary questions I did not supply the contract documents on the basis of commercial confidentiality between the PTA, Main Roads Western Australia and their suppliers.

As required under the Financial Management Act, I advised the Office of the Auditor General that in three instances I had declined to provide to Parliament information for these parliamentary questions on the basis of commercial confidentiality. The Office of the Auditor General is required under the Auditor General Act to form an opinion on whether such decisions are appropriate or reasonable. The Office of the Auditor General has now advised me of its review findings, which identifies that the decision not to release the contracts to Parliament as requested was not appropriate and not reasonable. The Public Transport Authority had advised me not to table the contracts because they were considered commercial in confidence and Main Roads WA had asked to delay the Northbridge Tunnel contract's release until May 2010 because of probity concerns with the metropolitan integrated service arrangement procurement process. The Office of the Auditor General, after examination, has identified this position is not supported. In neither case was the assertion supported by the evidence provided to the Office of the Auditor General. To that end, in relation to questions on notice 1200 and 1373, and question without notice 1069, I now table the information requested.

[See paper 2005.]

Consideration of the statement made an order of the day for the next sitting, on motion by **Hon Ed Dermer**.