

Division 37: Commissioner of Main Roads, \$1 337 380 000 —

Ms J.M. Freeman, Chair.

Ms R. Saffioti, Minister for Transport.

Mr R. Sellers, Commissioner of Main Roads.

Mr P. Woronzow, Managing Director.

Mr P. D'Souza, Acting Executive Director, Finance and Commercial Services.

Mr D. Snook, Executive Director, Metropolitan and Southern Regions.

Mr M. Cammack, Director, Budget and Investment Planning.

Mr P. Abromeit, Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item, program or amount in the current division. Members should give these details in preface to their question. If a division or service is the responsibility of more than one minister, a minister shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask the minister to clearly indicate what supplementary information she agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 31 May 2019. I caution members that if a minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice through the online questions system.

I give the call to the member for North West Central.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I refer to page 526, volume 2 of the *Budget Statements*. Under "New Initiatives" is the item "Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Routes". This project is costed to be around \$500 million, and has been funded so far from the federal government to the tune of \$70 million and the state government has made a contribution of only \$16 million over the forward estimates. Can the minister please detail how these initial works will be prioritised to fit the current budget?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This project was allocated \$70 million by the federal government, but \$57 million of that was outside the forward estimates—from 2023–24 onwards—so only \$13 million is in the forward estimates. We will work with the Wheatbelt Regional Road Group to allocate our contribution as part of the overall strategy. This is not the only money that we will spend in the area. We have funding to be announced for the commodity routes. We will make some further announcements on the commodity routes very soon, plus other commitments across the area. Other projects under the wheatbelt road investments in the 2019–20 budget include the Bindoon bypass, the wheatbelt secondary freight network and the Walgoolan to Southern Cross section of Great Eastern Highway.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Will the wheatbelt secondary freight network working group be part of the decision-making process in prioritising what needs to happen?

[10.40 am]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Absolutely. The wheatbelt secondary freight route working group met with me and developed the list, which has also been fed into our revitalisation strategy, which is the wider strategy that has been developed by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and includes ports, rail and roads. The government will soon release that strategy for consultation. Of course, we will work closely with that group, which, as I recall, represents 42 shires throughout the wheatbelt.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Is there a funding obligation on the 42 local governments for the project?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We will work through it. There is a contribution from the commonwealth and the state and there will be some contribution from the councils, as I understand. These announcements were made by the federal government a week before it called the election. It sent us cash flows, but we are now negotiating some of those cash flows to see what is possible, because we want to get going as soon as possible. The cash flows for Albany ring-road are very bad and will not allow us to do the project. We have already made contact; Peter Woronzow has made contact with the federal government agency and we will have further discussions about what we can spend as

quickly as possible. There is probably room for movement depending on its budget situation. We do not know who the federal minister will be, but we have been informed of a transport ministers' meeting in August, I think, which presents another opportunity to negotiate other projects. The Royal Automobile Club of WA and Main Roads are particularly passionate about the regional run-off program. We did not secure any funding for that through the federal budget round or in the lead-up to the federal election. Main Roads and RAC are backing that program 100 per cent because of the return on a minimal investment, in a sense. It is not minimal, given the lives we save and the number of single vehicle run-offs we reduce, which seem to be a big issue, particularly in the wheatbelt.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Is the minister able to advise whether the orange route is included in that; and, if so, has there been a funding allocation? I know that federal member Ken Wyatt committed money to the orange route. Is there a time frame on that?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As I understand, some money was put forward by the federal government. We are still working through that. Again, as part of our negotiations with the federal government, we will look at that project. The planning and costs will be significant. It is something that we will follow-up with the federal government.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: I refer to page 535 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and specifically to the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, which comes under the asset investment program. Can the minister provide an update on the progress of this really exciting project?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I thank the member for Bunbury for his proactive approach to this project. It has created a lot of discussion in the south west. What I find with some projects is that a lot of people call for them but when we go to deliver them, they say it is all too hard. That is not this member, who has been proactive and very keen to support the continuing dialogue to make sure that the project works for the entire community. To those in the south west who knock this project, it is a significant investment of both commonwealth and state money. We want to make it work; we want to engage and make sure that we serve the entire community. As the member knows, the project has been discussed and has been on the scene for many, many years. We have received a lot of feedback from our discussions with the community, which we are working through, and we will make some announcements in the next few weeks. The issue of north-facing ramps at Raymond Road, for example, has been raised in particular by the member for Murray–Wellington, who is very keen on the project. Bunbury is very keen to make sure that everyone knows its location, so that it does not miss any visitors to Bunbury. We are very keen to make sure that everyone who wants to visit Bunbury can easily access Bunbury and, of course, we are working hard to facilitate that.

Another issue relates to Bussell Highway. We are looking at the project overall and getting feedback from all members, including the member for Bunbury and the member for Collie–Preston. We are looking at how we can incorporate Bussell Highway in the Capel area as part of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road project. We will talk to the federal government about slightly increasing the scope of the project to facilitate Bussell Highway works. We believe that it can all be funded from the existing budget. Main Roads has already found out that we can do that, so we just need the federal government's sign-off. We will approach it to do that. An amount of \$4 million will be provided by the state government for minor works to preload the first five-kilometre stretch, which will happen this year. That needs to happen in advance of any construction work and it is underway.

The environmental issues have been deeply considered to make sure we get an alignment that works for everybody. We want to continue to make Bunbury an easily accessible place to visit, support businesses in the area and move freight, trade and commuters easily around the south west.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I refer to page 536 and to the line items “Metropolitan Intersections Crash Program” and “Run-Off Road Crashes Road Improvements”, which are about two-thirds of the way down the page under the Road Safety Commission section. These programs are not being funded anywhere near the levels that they are usually funded. As I recall, in 2016–17, \$65 million was allocated to the run-off road crashes road improvement program and \$20 million was allocated to the metropolitan intersections crash program.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sorry, can the member say those numbers again?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am talking about 2016. I want an explanation of the figures in the budget for the metropolitan intersections crash program—\$4.3 million in 2018-19, \$3.84 million in 2019–20 et cetera—and the money allocated for the run-off road crashes road improvement program. Is that money funded from the road trauma trust account?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, but can I clarify those figures. The member for Scarborough said that \$67 million was allocated in 2016–17

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: In 2016, \$65 million was allocated to the run-off road crashes program and \$20 million to the metropolitan intersections program from the road trauma trust account.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Where is that?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: That was in December 2016. That allocation was put in at the midyear review, but it has dropped off significantly.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: For one year?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Yes.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: In the 2016 midyear review, \$65 million was put in —

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: — for the run-off road crashes program and \$20 million for the metropolitan intersections program, which is a significantly lower investment.

The CHAIR: I need to point out that based on the estimates process, members need to stay in the current estimates. That is what Erskine May tells us to do. Try to stay within the estimates before us.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am interested to know whether this is the only allocation that Main Roads is getting from the road trauma trust account for the metropolitan intersection program and the run-off road crashes program or whether other investment will be made in those critical areas.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: First of all, the negotiations for the road trauma trust account are done on an annual basis. The numbers here are set for only one year because we do it each year. That is why there is no funding in the forward estimates for some of the projects. They are accounted for in the road safety account but, as the member would be aware, they are allocated on an annual basis. We are getting similar levels for road safety as we have in the past for Main Roads projects. There has not been any drop-off from the road trauma trust account.

[10.50 am]

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Page 535 of budget paper No 2 refers to the Karratha to Tom Price road. I understand that the federal government will contribute to the project \$235 million and the state will contribute \$50 million, which will complete the 155 kilometres of road that needs to be sealed. Can the minister provide me with an updated time frame for sealing this project—the start time and obviously the completion of the project with the federal funds that are available?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I think we discussed last year the fact that we needed funding for it.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: That is right, and I advocated strongly and we got the money for it from the feds!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was very effective. In the end, if that is not funded, I will blame the member! We expect to start stage 3 in the middle of this year and to finish at the end of this year. The government has been dealing with the management of asbestos. In the next stage, the government will go through the environmental approvals. With many of those projects we have to go through the environmental approvals process for stage 4. That will be both state and commonwealth. We have seen a disturbing trend in relation to some of the commonwealth approvals in particular that do not seem to be well resourced to facilitate some of our projects. That has held up a project in the eastern corridor. We will do what we can to make sure we get the commonwealth approvals in time.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: That road is known as the Roebourne–Wittenoom road. Has a tender won the contract to seal the road? Can the minister elaborate on that? I understand that the contract puts the onus on the contractor to take responsibility and liability for any asbestos it comes across on the road.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, the tender documents include a requirement for an asbestos management plan. That is part of the process. Remediation works commenced in November 2018. During that time additional areas of contamination were discovered and they will be worked on. I will ask Peter Woronzow to answer the more detailed question about the obligation of the tenderers.

Mr P. Woronzow: As part of doing the due diligence to get the contract documents together for stage 3 we engaged GHD to do an asbestos survey. It identified about 300 cubic metres of asbestos along the alignment of stage 3. Subsequently we engaged Thuroona Services, a well-known Aboriginal-owned company, to do the remediation. It has recently finished that remediation and has found and dealt with in the order of over 10 000 cubic metres of asbestos. We are reasonably confident that between GHD and Thuroona the majority of asbestos that needs to be dealt with has been found. However, as the minister said, once the contractor submits its tender and before it starts works, it is required to put in place an asbestos management plan to deal with any asbestos it may find subsequently.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Does the asbestos management plan mean that the onus is on that contractor to dispose of it and take liability for future issues that may arise with workers who may contract asbestosis or mesothelioma? Is there a contract that puts the onus on the company to take ownership of any of those issues that may arise in the future, given that 10 000 cubic metres of asbestos has been removed? I imagine there are still quite a few fibres in the road. What protection is the government offering those companies to do that work?

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Mr P. Woronzow: The contract documents require the contractor to provide an asbestos management plan. That plan will contemplate those things that the minister talked about. We will engage with the contractor to come up with a fair risk allocation. We have worded the document such to try to get a competitive field for the contractors dealing with what might potentially be an unknown risk, as the member said. We made it clear at the industry briefing that we will contemplate discussions around how those things may be dealt with going forward.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Page 534 of budget paper No 2 refers to the Tonkin Highway corridor upgrade. I am sure the minister is not surprised that I am asking about this. The corridor upgrade involves quite a few projects, such as the extension of stage 3 of Tonkin Highway from Thomas Road to the South Western Highway in Mundijong. It includes also interchanges at Hale, Kelvin and Welshpool Roads. Has a business case been finalised for all of those projects? If so, will the minister provide a copy of those? If not, when will those business cases be finalised?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We will provide by way of supplementary information an update of the business cases for the three sets of projects.

The CHAIR: Minister, are we clear about the information being provided?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will provide a status update of the business case for Tonkin Highway.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Tonkin Highway, extension 3, and all the gap projects along there as well.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will provide information on the Tonkin Highway gap, Tonkin Highway extension and Tonkin Highway interchanges at Welshpool, Kelvin and Hale Roads.

[*Supplementary Information No A29.*]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: More generally, this is an exciting set of projects, something that we are keen to implement. We need to go through all the processes—environmental clearances and so forth—but these are projects that will transform the eastern corridor, particularly in relation to the gap. I have already received a lot of feedback from people enjoying the run from Morley to Gnangara Road. However, heading south past Collier Road and onto the existing Tonkin Highway is an issue because of congestion, so we are keen to proceed with that as soon as possible. The overpass/interchange projects at Hale, Kelvin and Welshpool Roads will address significant congestion. The Tonkin Highway–Welshpool Road intersection has now jumped to number one as the most congested intersection across the network. I think we have all experienced significant delays there; primarily turning right from Tonkin Highway to Welshpool Road is very bad.

[11.00 am]

Of course, there is the extension of Tonkin Highway. The last time Tonkin Highway was extended was under the previous Labor government, so we are happy to be the next government to undertake the further extension.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I, too, acknowledge the great work done on Tonkin Highway north, which started under the previous Liberal government, and the Gateway project, which is the big upgrade on Tonkin Highway past the airport. I agree that the next steps are vital and I think, apolitically, we need to continue with these intersections. The federal government, and federal members Ken Wyatt and Andrew Hastie, allocated over \$900-odd million towards this project. Have those funds been allocated in the budget papers, because only \$500-odd million is allocated over the forward estimates? I believe only half of that \$900-odd million has been allocated. Has the federal money or the state money been allocated?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As I said, the federal government allocated money to our projects in the federal budget, and there was a mixture of outside forward estimates and within forward estimates. In the time that we have had to process that information, we put that funding and our matching funding in the budget. These projects are all fully funded. In most cases—I think in all cases—we have taken the federal cash flows. That is what we have done. We have reflected all the federal funding and put in our matching money.

If the member wants to go through the projects, Gateway and NorthLink were started by federal Labor. I am actually really excited about getting on and building these roads and it is the state that has to do it.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Is the minister saying that the federal funding is allocated in this budget, yet the full amounts are not in this budget? What are the estimated completion dates for these projects?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What is the premise of your question?

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: The full funding to 2020–23 is not in the budget.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Did the member hear my answer?

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I am trying to finish my question. Money is still going out past 2023. Can the minister indicate when each of these projects will be completed?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We have taken the approach, and I have instructed my agencies, that we have a window to try to get as many jobs on the ground as possible. What we will do, and this is what we are doing, is work through all the information through the budget process and work with the federal government on the projects and how quickly we can deliver them. Regarding the cash flows, even though the federal government funded a lot of these projects outside the forward estimates, I have said that we should get the approvals in place, get Infrastructure Australia to tick them off, and then get on and build them. That is what we are doing. Over the next six months, I will be working to get the approvals underway and the projects well progressed so we can start the contracts. That is what we are doing. Although the cash flows are in the budget, we think there is an enormous opportunity to get on and do the projects, but we need all the right approvals.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: The minister does not yet have a completion date set for any of these projects?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As I said, we got the information about six weeks ago. We are working through the process and, with the federal government, we are going—let me explain that again: the federal government—to start negotiations to see how fast we can build these projects.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Further to that, has the government planned the final route for the Tonkin Highway extension and/or acquired the land? Quite a few landowners are in limbo waiting to see what happens. They want some certainty about any land acquisition that may be required. What is required for the Tonkin Highway stage 3 extension?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I understand the alignment has been finalised and we need to negotiate with about four or five existing landowners.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Have negotiations started with those landowners; and, if not, when does the minister anticipate that will happen?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We will probably be making contact in the next month or two, as we start finalising all the details.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Can the minister provide a list of the projects being funded under the federal government's urban congestion fund and the state government's contribution to each of those projects? I understand that \$35 million is available for the Mitchell Freeway widening from Hodges Drive to Hepburn Avenue and from Reid Highway to Erindale Road. Where is that project in the budget?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: How does the member understand that \$35 million is available for the project?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Alan Tudge has put out some information that that project will be funded under the \$4 billion urban congestion fund.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have the Liberal Party statement by the Minister for Cities, Urban Infrastructure and Population, Alan Tudge, that was released during the caretaker period. I think it mentions \$35 million of funding—or was it in another statement that the minister released? I have not seen that funding in the budget. Can the member refer to where the \$35 million is in the federal budget?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I was advised that it is under the \$4 billion urban congestion fund and that not every individual project was listed. There is a bit of confusion in the community about the project, so I just wanted to get some clarity.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Liberal Party has created the confusion, because it said that the funding was in the budget when it was not. We sought confirmation from the relevant department about whether this project has been specifically committed to or defined in any document anywhere, because we cannot find it. We have been referred to Liberal Party election statements. We cannot see the funding in the budget. If it was in the budget, we would have matched it.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: In your correspondence with the agency, has the agency confirmed that the funding is available or said that it is not available?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I can only go with what is in the budget. We have all the information from the budget. As I have said a few times in this place, \$50 million was allocated to Kwinana and Mitchell Freeways projects, which we matched. That \$50 million allocation was described on the federal government website. It stated that the projects would be determined in consultation with the WA government, including coordinated ramps, additional lanes, and an intelligent transport system. We matched that funding, so there is \$100 million for those works in the budget. Alan Tudge and, I think, Christian Porter said that on top of the \$50 million, there was \$35 million for this project in the budget, and it is simply not true. I will be writing to the federal minister about that, once we find out who it is, asking the federal government to provide us with \$35 million for that project.

The CHAIR: It is nice to be discussing the federal budget, but we have a limited amount of time and a number of divisions to get through in this session. If members could keep their questions to a particular item contained in this division and identify what that is as we are going through, that would be great.

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Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Further to that, could the minister provide by way of supplementary information the projects that are being funded in collaboration with the federal government under the urban congestion fund?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I was sent a budget letter but the projects are also in the budget. The Mitchell Freeway extension from Hester Avenue to Romeo Road, the Stephenson Avenue and Tonkin Highway interchanges and the Tonkin Highway stage 3 extension are funded under the congestion package.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: This is a big issue for people in my electorate, and in many other electorates in the south, who use Kwinana Freeway. I refer to page 536 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. About one-third of the way down the list of line items is “Kwinana Freeway” and, specifically, “Russell Road to Roe Highway—Widening Northbound Lanes”. It is my understanding that when we came to government, no money was allocated for this important project, even though it was a huge issue with the community. That bottleneck heading north every day really impacted on quality of life, so I am glad to see this money there now. Maybe the minister can confirm whether any money was committed previously. There is \$29 million forecast to be spent in this budget period. Can the minister tell us what progress has been made on this project and whether we will see the notorious Cockburn bottleneck fixed as a result?

[11.10 am]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I thank the member for Baldivis for this question. He is right; when we came to government there was no funding for these projects in the forward estimates and they were not seen as a priority by the previous government. I actually recall a couple of phone calls from the member for Baldivis, outlining the feedback he was getting as a newly elected member about the congestion in that area. When we were negotiating the funds from Perth Freight Link, it was one of those projects that I thought deserved to be looked at and to be prioritised because of the congestion around that area. We have made a number of commitments through that area—a combination of election commitments and priority projects that we are implementing. Of course, the first one is \$49 million to widen the city-bound Kwinana Freeway to three lanes between Russell Road and Roe Highway. This is employing 340 people, and the project is well underway, as the member would know. It is due for completion later this year. The extra lane capacity will accommodate an additional 1 800 vehicles per hour.

We also understand that the issues do not stop there and that we have to continue to work further north along Kwinana Freeway, between Farrington Road and the Narrows Bridge. The government is investing \$47 million in Perth’s smart freeway initiative, using intelligent transport systems. The provision of infrastructure will support all-lane running, with the creation of an additional lane using the existing emergency stopping lane between Canning Highway and the Narrows Bridge; the use of variable speed limits to improve traffic flow and to get away from the stop-start that really infuriates drivers; the creation of coordinated ramp signals to meter the flow of traffic onto the freeway during peak times; and the use of electronic signage. Work began late last year on that project, which is employing 245 people and will be completed midway through next year. These projects will really reduce congestion across Kwinana Freeway.

The member talked about Cockburn Central. Again, all the data and figures show that to be a huge choking and congestion point. We will soon announce the start of works for the Armadale–North Lake bridge, which will be a big project of, off the top of my head, \$240 million. That will help with flows onto and off the freeway in that area and the connection from Armadale Road, linking into the other side. It is an incredible project. The Armadale Road duplication will also finish relatively soon. A significant amount of funds—hundreds of millions of dollars—has been committed to the reduction of congestion through that entire area.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I have a follow-up question.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: This is important to my community, members.

The CHAIR: Members! Members, you are wasting time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Excuse me. The member for Dawesville has not been in here for most of it. The opposition has had 90 per cent of the time.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Thank you, minister. My follow-up is of importance and interest to the people of Baldivis, whom I represent. The much-advertised point of this project was to provide a third lane, but I understand that what is not known is that a fourth lane is being provided as a way of getting between on and off-ramps so that traffic does not have to merge with the freeway at all, which has been a major cause of the bottlenecks.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: That is well known.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, it is not well known. The member for Baldivis is right. It will reduce congestion for more people than just the people of Baldivis. Anyone living to the south of Baldivis will also appreciate that, member for Dawesville, or so one would think. It is a great project for the southern suburbs. Thank goodness there is

a Labor government delivering these projects; otherwise, the member for Dawesville's constituents would not get anything, I suspect!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I refer to paragraph 10 on page 535, under the heading "Albany Ring Road". As part of the works for providing a sustainable transport route to the international export facility at Albany port, can the minister confirm that those works will include a truck-braking bay to alleviate the safety concerns of the heavy haulage operators?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I thank the member for North West Central. We are currently going through the final details of planning for the project. It is something that has been considered as part of the overall scope of the works as they are being finalised, and we will take it on board as part of our considerations.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The minister cannot confirm whether it has been included?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We do not believe it is currently included within the scope.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: So it is currently not in scope—is that right?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, but we will take it on board.

The CHAIR: Committee members, we have a question from a non-committee person, which I do not think anyone will have an issue with, and will save us swapping out for one question.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: From the government, is it?

The CHAIR: No, from the member for South Perth.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Thank you very much. During the wait I have lost the page! It is to do with the Manning Road ramp and the funding that is in the budget for 2019–20. There is \$15.2 million for 2019–20, but \$1.4 million for 2020–21. We were of the belief that the Manning Road ramp would be completed sometime in 2019. My constituents, like the member for Baldivis's constituents, are very interested in this great project. Could the minister give us some idea of the time lines? I notice that all the buildings have been knocked down and that some work has started, but when does the minister expect it to be completed so people can drive down that ramp? The reference is on page 536.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is a project that we have committed to. Again, member for South Perth, it is a Labor government delivering for the good constituents of South Perth! Look at that; it is a good government!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I should have worn a red tie!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes! I know the member for South Perth has wanted this project for the past eight and a half years, but the previous government would not deliver. This project is expected to commence in September this year. As the member knows, a lot of forward works and preparation needed to take place with regard to negotiations with the landowners and the tenants. From all reports, Main Roads should be congratulated on its negotiations, because they seem to have gone very smoothly, given the number of tenants involved. I was a little apprehensive about this project for that reason. We have been through the land part of it, we will be starting in September and we will be due to finish in mid-2020. More generally, I have asked Main Roads to analyse the pressure it will take off Leach Highway and Shelley Bridge, because I think there will be wider network benefits from this project. As I said, the project was one that we brought to government; it was not an election commitment but, as part of our negotiations with the commonwealth government, we put this on the list to secure some other projects, and this is what the negotiations ended up with. As I said, I think it will benefit primarily the member for South Perth's constituents. I think also there will be wider network benefits due to the lack of opportunities to enter the freeway from that area.

[11.20 am]

Mr J.E. McGRATH: A lot of people coming from Curtin University in that area go down Leach Highway because of the problems at the end of Manning Road. I think they will now come down Manning Road and use the ramp.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Exactly. As I said, we have been doing some monitoring of, I think, Leach Highway and Canning Highway, because a lot of people go back to Canning Highway. I think it will deliver some wider network benefits. As I said, it is a significant project. Freeway projects are always significant because people are entering a high-speed area where construction has to be of a particular standard. That is one of the key aspects. I do not know whether discussions have been finalised with some of the local businesses in the areas just before the ramp but, so far, it has been a relatively smooth project given its complexity.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Residents were keen for an underpass or overpass to be built. In my discussions with departmental people, I think the underpass was out of the question, but there is some scope later for overpass access just up from the Mt Henry Tavern. It will be a very busy road and crossing to get to the Canning Bridge station will be an issue for pedestrians.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was raised and we discussed the crossing points. The determination was that there will be an earlier rather than a later opportunity closer to the freeway. However, those issues are still being finalised with local residents.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Thank you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I refer to the asset investment program on page 534 and note that there is no mention of the Dongara–Northampton corridor alignment study and there is no funding and no mention of it. The City of Greater Geraldton and the Shires of Irwin, Chapman Valley and Northampton all support the option 6 alignment, which includes the Oakajee–Narngulu infrastructure corridor. Obviously, the priority is around a Northampton bypass. What is the time frame and potential cost of the first stage, which I see as option 6, to build the much-needed Northampton bypass? Can the minister take that as a supplementary question if she does not have the information on option 6?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Thank you. I met with some of the relevant shires last year or maybe the year before. This has involved a longstanding discussion in the community about what to bypass and what not to bypass, as is always the case when looking at ring-roads and bypasses. I understand there has been consensus on the Geraldton–Dongara route. In a sense, two main options are being considered for the Geraldton–Northampton route.

Some planning work has been done and there has been some engagement by the regional office. We are continuing to negotiate to see whether we can achieve a consensus—I am not sure whether that will occur—between all the relevant shires in the community and Main Roads. Currently, there is no funding for construction. Due to all the other projects, some of our planning efforts have focused on some of the other projects throughout regional WA. We had a discussion about this yesterday and we will see what we can do about trying to land the route as soon as possible so we can then provide the proposal to the commonwealth to seek federal funding.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Regarding option 6—the Oakajee–Narngulu industrial corridor—obviously property owners are limited in what they can do because it is a corridor. I think over the last 15 years, the land has basically been sterilised and the landowners cannot do anything. Obviously, landowners would like to see certainty around option 6. Does the minister have an indicative cost for option 6, including the corridor and the bypass all the way to Dongara?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We can provide more information about this project, including any indicative costs and the next step in the process, by way of supplementary information. Is that fair enough?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Thank you.

[*Supplementary Information No A30.*]

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I refer to the “Thomas Road and Nicholson Road Oakford” upgrade under “Works in Progress” on page 537. I note the \$20 million allocated to this project—\$10 million from the federal government and \$10 million from the state. Has a business case been developed and finalised; and, if so, can the minister provide a copy? When does she expect the project to be completed?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is a project that we put forward in my negotiations with the commonwealth to get this issue addressed. The funding was finalised as part of the federal budget. I am not sure of the detail. There are a couple of issues on Thomas Road, and this is one, but more generally, we are working through a number of issues, including some funding issues in the area closer to the freeway. This should be relatively simple. I do not think we need a full-blown business case for this, rather a project definition plan. That is something we will work with. It will also be in conjunction with the council, as I recall. I understand the Armadale city council will also make a funding contribution because, in a sense, it is a more localised project.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: A few weeks ago, the minister put out a media release that said she would deliver on this and match the federal funding of \$10 million, which is greatly appreciated by Oakford residents. The minister might also recall that I tabled a petition here and put forward a grievance to the minister on that. I have not had a response yet, so if I can get some answers from her, it will save the minister time down the track. The community is really keen to find out what the minister has determined that intersection will be. It will be interesting to know whether the minister has that plan determined and what time frame she will be working to in order to deliver the intersection upgrade.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I understand this project involves significant service relocations, particularly power and water. I call rural projects like this one “roads that have transformed into major distributor roads in growing areas”. We will negotiate with Water Corporation and Western Power. Given the style of the intersection, most of the costs will be eaten up by service relocations. Now that funding is secured, which happened five weeks ago, we will work to see how we can implement it as soon as possible, but we will need to start with the service relocations.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A — Thursday, 23 May 2019]

p373a-382a

Chair; Mr Vincent Catania; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr Donald Punch; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John McGrath; Mr Chris Tallentire

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I am seeking clarity for the people who live in this area. As the minister will understand, it is quite a dangerous intersection and people have been tolerating it for some time. Funding is spread out to 2023 and \$1 million has been left until 2024. Can the community not expect this to be done until after 2024?

[11.30 am]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: In case the member did not hear it the first three times I said it, all this information was presented to us five or six weeks ago. We are working to see how we can deliver all these projects as soon as possible. Maybe that community, after eight and a half years of a Liberal government that delivered nothing to that area, understands that we cannot deliver it all overnight. As the member for that area for eight and a half years, she delivered nothing.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: In response to the last comment, the minister keeps rewriting history. We will not keep going over that, because the people of Darling Range totally understand what they get under Labor—that is why I am sitting here.

The CHAIR: The question, please.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: The question is: as the minister put out a media release prior to the federal election with the local candidate promising to deliver this road, when will the people in this area see her deliver this road, because no money has been fully allocated until after 2024 and she cannot tell me right now on what date she will deliver this road?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Member, I cannot wait for that redistribution to see you out there —

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Look at the last wins!

The CHAIR: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — losing all that good territory.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: This is estimates. You do not need to get nasty; we can all do that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I cannot wait for it. I will tell the people of Darling Range —

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Why don't you tell the people of Australia? What did they do?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — that it will be delivered a lot quicker than under you, who delivered nothing for eight and a half years.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: You did not do very well last weekend. What did you do?

The CHAIR: Member for Darling Range, you have already asked the question. Let the minister respond.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: She is not answering the question.

The CHAIR: She is getting there.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Tell the people of Darling of Range this —

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: They cannot trust Labor.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We will not ignore them for eight and a half years, like you did when you did nothing. You pranced around the hills on the cocktail circuit; that is all you did.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: You are totally misleading.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: This has nothing do with the budget.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: They do not trust you, they did not trust Barry Urban and they do not trust Labor.

The CHAIR: Thank you, members. Are there any more questions?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I was out that way about a month ago at a wedding at Yoothamurra Homestead, which is near this intersection. I am curious to know whether road reservation is already in place or whether road reservation needs to be acquired for the intersection upgrade.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am not sure whether we need any land acquisition, but given that it is a road safety issue and the member was the Minister for Road Safety, I am not sure why she did not do it in eight and a half years either.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: You have been in for three years. Do your job.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am just asking a serious question about the project, minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I cannot wait for the redistribution.

Chair; Mr Vincent Catania; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr Donald Punch; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John McGrath; Mr Chris Tallentire

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Take it seriously. Get out of campaign mode. You lost on the weekend. Get over it!

The CHAIR: Excuse me, members! Are there any further questions?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I think I might be getting an answer shortly. I thought the officers were going to give me an answer to the question about the road reservation. It is just an administrative question; it is not political.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We do not have the information at the moment. As I said, a lot of it is service relocation. It is a significant project involving negotiations with Western Power and the Water Corporation. The other issue about Thomas Road is that it is a rural road that is emerging as a key distributor road. There are issues along Thomas Road, so we are looking holistically at what can be done to ensure that the whole road services constituents now and into the future.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I agree 100 per cent with the minister about Thomas Road; it is a local road that has too much traffic. I know that the Shire of Serpentine–Jarrahdale has been asking whether Main Roads would look at taking over jurisdiction for that road. Have those negotiations started and where is the agency at with that?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We are looking at a number of roads across the metropolitan area, which, as we know, go from rural roads to key connecting roads. We have had initial discussions about roads across the area, but we have not specifically progressed that one.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I have a question about Aboriginal employment on Main Roads projects. I refer to paragraph 5 under the heading “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency” on page 527 of volume 2 of budget paper No 2. Can the minister advise how Main Roads is aligning with the government’s Aboriginal procurement policy to increase the number of Aboriginal employment and business opportunities on Main Roads projects?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is something that we have brought into government—that is, Aboriginal procurement on projects. On Tuesday we were in Bidadanga, where there is a \$4 million project to seal the airstrip and also to reseal, as I recall, about five kilometres of road. We engaged with the local Aboriginal community to get as many local workers as possible. Twenty-five workers are involved in that project. It is a small project, but we are working with the local Aboriginal community. Two and a half years ago, no Aboriginal workers were involved in the maintenance program throughout the Kimberley. We have got that up to 50 per cent in two and a half years. For the Cape Leveque road, we are gaining 50 to 60 per cent local Aboriginal employment. For the Broome to Cape Leveque road, 48 per cent of the workforce is made up of local Aboriginal people. For the Great Northern Highway upgrade from Maggie’s Jump Up to the Wyndham spur, 32 per cent of the workforce is from local Aboriginal communities and four per cent is from non-local Aboriginal communities, and 14 per cent of the contract spend is with Aboriginal businesses. As I said, for the project to seal the Bidadanga access road, 32 per cent of the workforce is made up of Aboriginal people and 14 per cent is made up of non-local Aboriginal people. Again, we are getting a lot of local Aboriginal employment. For the Muchea north section of the Great Northern Highway project, 24 per cent of the workforce is made up of Aboriginal people. We are also getting more Aboriginal employment in city projects and projects across the suburbs. For the Kimberley region maintenance program, 80 per cent of the workforce is made up of Aboriginal people, with 15 Aboriginal workers, while 20 per cent of the contract spend is with Aboriginal businesses. For maintenance contracts in the Pilbara, 32 per cent of the workforce is made up of Aboriginal people.

This is a huge success story for Main Roads. I congratulate Peter and all the members of the teams who have put a lot of focus on this. It is also about the contractors. In many instances, it is about Main Roads’ direct engagement, but, in other instances, it is about working with the successful contractors, as has been done for the Great Northern Highway project at Maggie’s Jump Up, and working with local Aboriginal communities. As part of these projects, we are trying to create three to four-year project expenditure and training on the job. In many instances, these people can work in other areas, in other employment centres across the regions and in resources centres. The maintenance contracts are ongoing. When local Aboriginal people are employed for maintenance contracts, they have long-term, sustainable employment. It is local employment and it is real employment. In the Pilbara and the Kimberley in particular, we are seeing huge success stories. In Wyndham, there were two workers on day release from the work camp. Peter can give us some feedback from Wyndham.

Mr P. Woronzow: On the Wyndham spur project, we were very pleased to negotiate with the Department of Corrective Services to release seven people from Wyndham Work Camp. Those seven Aboriginal people worked on the Wyndham spur project. It has been one of the great success stories.

The CHAIR: It certainly does sound great.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Paragraph 9 on page 535 of the *Budget Statements* refers to replacing Fremantle Traffic Bridge. That is a great project. As a Fremantle boy, I used to swim under the bridge. Infrastructure Australia put that forward as an important project. It also listed in its report Canning Bridge, which is alongside my electorate. I am

aware that Canning Bridge will eventually have to be replaced. What is the life span of the original bridge, which has to be replaced, and how long does it have to go? What are the plans for Canning Bridge in general and also for the new bus interchange that has been talked about for some time to get buses off the main road?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member has spoken about two projects. Main Roads did a business case for Fremantle Traffic Bridge that was put forward to Infrastructure Australia. It made the IA list and Main Roads was able to secure funding in the federal government's budget and we have matched that funding. The bridge was built in 1938 as a temporary bridge. We know that maintenance costs over the next five to six years will be substantial, as we have to re-lay pavement and do more structural support. Basically, the new bridge will improve the capacity for not only vehicles, but also bikes and pedestrians and freight on rail in that area. I recall that the Canning Bridge project was put forward by the City of Melville as part of an Infrastructure Australia process, and that was in relation to the new bus interchange.

[11.40 am]

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Several councils supported it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am sorry if I am not 100 per cent across all the detail. It was also put forward by the private sector in a project proposal with council. This is probably something we can talk about under the Public Transport Authority because it relates to a new project that will include a new bus interchange and some development on the river. I understand it was put forward by a third party. I am not sure who it was.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I have heard that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was then put to council, which then put it forward to be included on the IA list. That is what I understand that project to be.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Given the age of the old Canning Bridge, how long will it be before it needs to be replaced?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I understand that maintenance continues to be done on Canning Bridge, but its replacement is not a priority. It cannot be compared with the Fremantle Traffic Bridge or the 100-year-old wooden bridges on the Fremantle line. That is the priority. Currently, in Subiaco, the Hamilton Street Bridge is being replaced. That was taken away about two months ago. I went past it the other day, and the new bridge should be completed pretty soon. There is also one in Claremont that needs to be done. Priority is being given to 100-year-old timber bridges because of safety concerns.

The appropriation was recommended.