

Division 38: Transport —

Ms M.M. Quirk, Chair.

Ms R. Saffioti, Minister for Transport.

Mr D.R. Michael, Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport.

Mr P. Woronzow, Director General, Transport Portfolio.

Mr P. Seares, Managing Director, Westport.

Mr P. Parolo, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr I. Cameron, Managing Director.

Mr P. Laing, Senior Policy Adviser, Minister for Transport.

Ms R. O’Toole, Chief of Staff, Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 31 May 2024. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

I give the call to the Minister for Transport.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is quite different; there are two ministers. David Michael is here as Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport and he will be focusing on driver and vehicle services and, in particular, maritime issues.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to page 576 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and, in the table under “Spending Changes”, the line item “Freight Infrastructure—Commercial Option Analysis”. It is a relatively small amount of money, but I am interested to know what it is and what options it is analysing.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is in relation to Arc Infrastructure and its management or ownership—sort of ownership—of the rail network. Working across government, the Department of Transport, the Public Transport Authority, Treasury, the State Solicitor’s Office and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development are all looking at the existing lease arrangements and how we can get better outcomes in relation to Arc.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Better outcomes in what way?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: A better deal for farmers, because when the previous government privatised the tier 3 rail lines, it gave the private owner at that time a lot of control over setting rates for moving product and control over the entire corridor. For example, every time we need to fix a footbridge in Toodyay, it becomes very difficult. The previous government gave the owner a lot of control and, as a result, we have had some serious issues across the wheatbelt and across the state as we try to encourage more freight on rail.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Further question.

The CHAIR: You are a sucker for punishment, member!

Mr R.S. LOVE: With the option analysis that the government is undertaking, is it in some way considering renegotiating or buying back the lease? What exactly is the government hoping to achieve?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You guys closed the tier 3 rail, which I know was a massive mistake.

Mr R.S. LOVE: No, we did not close the tier 3 rail.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, you did.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The PTA closed the tier 3 rail.

The CHAIR: Member, just ask the questions.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You actually needed ministerial approval, so, yes, as a cabinet and as a Liberal–National government, you closed the tier 3 rail.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It did not go to cabinet.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We are looking at all aspects of it and how we can improve performance for farmers. I have never had a meeting with anyone from Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd who did not describe some of the difficulties CBH has had. The mediation for setting a price to access the rail network went on for about six years. The state and federal governments are investing in the rail lines and we have major projects coming up in respect of, for example, how we can continue to support rail freight movements into Bunbury; that is an intersection with Arc. Everything we want to do in regional WA in respect of rail intersects with Arc, so we want to work with Arc, CBH and other users on how we can get a better outcome for the state in the longer term.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Is there any specific information the minister can give me about the types of changes the government would like to see, be they regulatory or contractual?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Not at this stage.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Not at this stage. When will that analysis be completed? Will the minister then make some further announcements around that?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes. This is the establishment of the working group. Once we get further advice, I will be able to inform the community. We also have to engage with the stakeholders, so the initial work will be engaging with the key stakeholders, such as CBH and others. The first meeting has already taken place, but we will continue to engage with all the key stakeholders.

Mr R.S. LOVE: When did that meeting take place, and who was involved?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I do not have that information.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Could the minister provide that information?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Okay; by way of supplementary information, I will provide the date of the first meeting of the working group and who was involved.

[*Supplementary Information No A21.*]

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to page 589 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and, under the table headed “Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies”, the line item “Western Australian Bicycle Network (including Principal Shared Path Program)”. What projects will be undertaken for 2024–25?

[12.10 pm]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There are a number of different funding sources for the principal shared path program and different forms of delivery. One of the things we do as part of our Main Roads contracts when we undertake major road upgrades is incorporate new PSP infrastructure. That is happening across the freeways and other major road developments across the state. For projects that are part of the principal shared path program delivery, we have PSPs along rail lines such as the Midland rail line, Armadale rail line, Kelmscott rail line and the Mandurah rail line. We have the Thomas Road upgrade. We have upgrades to Wellard and Rockingham stations. Further works are being allocated by Main Roads Western Australia. Main Roads will continue to undertake the Mitchell Freeway PSP and PSPs as part of other projects. We have Abernethy Road to Tonkin Highway and other various rehabilitation projects. We have some feedback from the cyclist community that not only does it want new PSPs, but also it wants some of the older ones upgraded. We are doing those works as well. Those are the types of works being done. In particular, some of the big projects that will be finalised in 2024–25 include, of course, the Mitchell Freeway projects, which are part of the freeway widening works.

Ms L. METTAM: What accounts for the drop in funding allocated to this program in this year’s budget?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I think it is probably as a result of the level of roadworks. As part of this, there is some big expenditure. Like I said, the Mitchell Freeway works in themselves will see a continuous path from the city to Reid Highway—someone help me out; is that where it is going to? It is going even further. The Mitchell Freeway works are being done as part of the widening.

We have three road projects: the smart freeways, the road widening and the Stephenson Avenue extension. There is a big expenditure coming to finish those works. There are also works incorporated in the new Fremantle Traffic Bridge. That is another expenditure that is likely to happen in 2025–26.

Ms L. METTAM: I am on page 592. I refer to the net appropriation determination of boat registration fees. I note that this issue was raised with the Leader of the Opposition’s office. It was also raised with me. What assumptions are made about boat ownership numbers and how are the fees set?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will ask Minister Michael to answer this one.

The CHAIR: Is this your first estimates, minister?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: It is.

The CHAIR: Welcome on board.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: We might take as a supplementary question the modelling of how we get the number of boats that might be registered in the out years.

Ms L. METTAM: This issue was raised with the Leader of the Opposition's office and my own office by a constituent.

The CHAIR: Just ask for the extra information you want please, member.

Ms L. METTAM: Is there consideration about having a set fee per metre?

The CHAIR: That is a question. We are still dealing with supplementary information.

Ms L. METTAM: It is as part of the supplementary information.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sorry to interrupt, but that is just a hypothetical. We can give the member the facts, which is the number of boat registrations that our forecast is based on. We can do that. However, the member cannot ask for a policy deliberation as part of supplementary information. Let us provide by way of supplementary information the number of boat registrations the forward estimates are based on.

[Supplementary Information No A22.]

Ms L. METTAM: What logic goes into the way that fees are set?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: Is the member talking about maritime fees or fees in general?

Ms L. METTAM: I am talking about maritime fees.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: In 2022–23, the Expenditure Review Committee approved the revised vessel accommodation cost modelling and a new benchmark fee of \$696 per metre of pen length, which is what the member was kind of talking about before. It was considered to better reflect the actual costs incurred in providing those services. Aligning with this approval, the benchmark fee has been retained at \$696 in 2023–24 to allow for the stabilisation of harbour occupancy and customer trust. However, from 1 July, the statewide benchmark target fee will be increased by three per cent to \$716.50 to continue the transition of vessel accommodation fees to a single statewide fee for each vessel accommodation fee category.

A lot of the fees that come in go back into providing some of those berths and the accommodation for boats at our marine and Department of Transport harbours across the state. I think the member will see elsewhere in the budget over the last couple of years and into the future some of those fees being used to improve the services to boaties out there.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I turn to page 578. There are significant issues there. The last paragraph refers to the Westport program. As I understand it, the Westport project falls under the purview of the Department of Transport. Can the minister give us an idea about how far the business case for Westport has progressed? If we do that, I will then maybe ask some questions around the sequencing.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Work on the business case has been undertaken for a number of months. We expect the finalisation of that business case in the next quarter. That business case will then provide the basis for the further work on the project development plan. In the meantime, we have started a number of the other parts of this project. In particular, the environmental process was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority two months ago. We are planning the landside logistics. Work is underway with Main Roads through Westport to understand and develop the Anketell Road–Thomas Road freight corridor, upgrades to the freeway and the last mile, in a sense, which is from Rockingham through to the coast. A number of different streams of work are happening.

Of course, federal government support for the planning for the project was really welcome. We expect to partner with the commonwealth, particularly on the land side, because that would all be available under the land transport infrastructure agreement. But we continue to do further design. We have been negotiating with businesses, purchasing land and, as I said, undertaking all the approvals processes to ensure that, first, we have a sound business case; then we can start making investment decisions, noting the land side of things will be one of the first investment decisions because to build the port, we will need to build the road to get to the port to take all the material to build the berths and the breakwater. That is the planning. As I said, the front end will be very much the land side and transport infrastructure.

[12.20 pm]

Mr R.S. LOVE: Do the expenditures that are earmarked for the business case development for Westport over the coming years include any of the approvals or preliminary designs? What is it envisaged will be delivered for that investment over the coming years?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Two years ago, I think it was, we allocated \$400 million to a special purpose account for Westport to assist in funding planning and other key components, such as land acquisition along Anketell and Thomas Roads in particular, to futureproof the alignment. We have been doing a lot of futureproofing and making sure that no decision of government would affect the delivery of the project. We have been doing detailed planning on the land side. When we look at what is happening with AUKUS and the significant developments that are happening in the industrial area of Kwinana, we see that a lot of different projects are happening down there. As a result, work has been underway to futureproof, do some early designs, lock in an Anketell corridor, do the road alignment and confirm the nature of the Anketell upgrades. There are also the rail alignments, the fact that we need to duplicate the line, level crossing removals and a number of other works. The other key component has been the intermodal terminals. We are drilling down and identifying where they will be located and the timeframe for development. All that work has been ongoing.

The business case will be comprehensive and look at the nature of the port and identify the key landside logistics. It is a comprehensive plan, noting that we do not want to create the same issues that we are moving from in Fremantle, which is a constrained site without dedicated freight networks that impacts suburbia. Kwinana will have a dedicated freight network. In relation to the freight networks, we are incorporating the Roe Highway works plus further works on Tonkin Highway. The extension of Tonkin Highway to Mundijong will assist with the planning and delivery of Westport.

On the landside logistics, I make this point: a lot of work needs to be undertaken regardless of Westport, in particular on Thomas and Anketell Roads where we are seeing a lot of east–west freight movements. With the further development of Kwinana as a major industrial base—of course, it already is—and the works being done in Henderson, the road network in that area will need a significant upgrade regardless.

Mr R.S. LOVE: With the timelines for the development of the business case, does the minister have any indication of when she expects that there would be a project ready to be funded and developed on the ground?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I would say through next year, I will have that detailed information. But, as I said, there are a number of components. In particular, we would progress the land side first. Upgrades to the freeway, Roe Highway and Anketell Road will probably have to happen regardless, so there may be some earlier investment decisions on road and rail upgrades because they are needed. Of course, the shape and size of Westport informs their design. The Tonkin Highway extension will help deliver Westport. The Tonkin Highway grade separations that we have done and that we continue to do help Westport. A number of different decisions are being made along the way that will all lead to supporting the Westport program.

Mr R.S. LOVE: What assumption is there in the planning around Westport for the eventual shift from Fremantle? Is it envisaged as being a hard switch from one site to the other? Will there be a gradual development? How does the minister see that working, because, as part of that, Fremantle will still have to be kept going for, presumably, decades?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The team has modelled a number of different assumptions, including a two-stage approach whereby we move one stevedore and then move the next one, but it is designed to be done in one move. The team looked at the operational impact of a two-stage move and it was decided, and the advice was, that a one-stage move would be cleaner, more cost-effective and operationally far easier. That is in relation to containers. Of course, further work is being done on the non-container trade, which is fairly separate in thinking in relation to movement from the container trade.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I refer to paragraph 12 at the top of page 578, which refers to the new infringement processing system and management functions moving from the WA Police Force to the department. Will full-time equivalents transfer from the police into the department and how will that play out?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will refer that to Minister Michael.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: We think about 65 FTE will come over from the Western Australia Police Force to the Department of Transport.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: This paragraph says that this —

... will enable the provision of more customer-focused services and flexible payment options for drivers who receive an infringement.

How will it provide a more customer-focused service?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: Obviously, with the support of Parliament, some months ago we passed the Road Traffic Legislation Amendment (Infringement Management Reform) Bill 2024.

The first part is that the police system that we currently use, in which people get—thankfully, not me for a little while—a green slip in the mail, is a legacy system. It is very clunky and unwieldy and it is on its last legs, so we are moving to a new system that the Department of Transport is in the process of finalising. It is getting ready to change over. It will bring a number of benefits. The member might remember from the debate on the legislation

that if someone is unable to pay their fine, the only way they can enter into some sort of payment agreement or defer payment is to allow it to go to the Fines Enforcement Registry. That incurs not only the humiliation of having to default the fine and getting another letter from the Department of Justice via the FER, but also being slapped with a somewhat hefty fee on top of it. By moving to the DoT system, people with a fine will be able to do one of three things: they can pay it, defer payment for a month if they just need a bit of extra time or enter into a payment plan, which will be set into regulations depending on the size of the fine, for no extra charge. There is no fee attached. That is one of the most important things that we are looking to do by bringing in the new system.

The second part is that at the moment when people get a fine, they can view the photo online and those kinds of things. Through the Department of Transport's DoTDirect, people can sign up and do their registration, driver's licence, skipper's ticket and a few other things online. People will be able to go on DoTDirect to view any infringements they might have and view the photo and conduct business, pay or do anything else they might have to do online, which we think will be much better than the system we currently have with the police.

[12.30 pm]

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Is that through the Service WA app or is it a separate online scenario?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: It is DoTDirect.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: How much extra revenue does the minister expect to gain from this new infringement system compared with the current green paper slip system?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: That is probably a question to ask me later, under road safety. I do have that; however, I will caution anything about revenue assumptions. It is tied to how many infringements come in. All camera infringements go to the road trauma trust account. I hope there is no extra revenue, because I want people to do the right thing on the road. We see terrible behaviour. I am sure we will talk about it with the member and his colleagues this afternoon when we talk about the new safety cameras that we will introduce next year. They detect seatbelt offences and mobile phone use. The number of people who did not wear a seatbelt during the trial floored me. I do not want to fine people for not wearing a seatbelt. Everyone should be wearing them. Although there are projections, I would treat them with caution. I hope we do not go anywhere near those projections, because although it would deliver more money into the road trauma trust account to be spent on black spot funding et cetera, I do not want people doing the wrong thing on the road.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Will the system developed for infringement processing be coupled with the existing transport executive and licensing information system within the Department of Transport, or will it be a separate platform?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: It will interface with TRELIS. It is its own system, but it will pull data from TRELIS to send infringements to people.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Myriad people have access to TRELIS. That has been well documented in the Corruption and Crime Commission's reports. Will the same people have access to the information that is on the infringement management platform?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: The staff who have access will have access to that information. After the issues the member has alluded to, the staff and their access to the system is highly controlled at the Department of Transport.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Will the contractors who have had access to that system in the past have access in the future? Will they all have access to this information?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I need clarification. Does the member mean contractors in terms of people working on the system or IT consultants?

Mr R.S. LOVE: I mean the people who log into the system—inspectors et cetera—who, in the words of the CCC, unlawfully accessed information on the system.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I am told that the people who access this information will be authorised to have access to that information. Access to information through TRELIS is monitored. When someone's information is accessed, it is logged, and those things can be checked.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Have there been any further improvements to the current TRELIS system to ensure that the access breaches, which were highlighted in the CCC report, have been addressed?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I am told that all requirements following the CCC report have been complied with and I think the CCC is aware of that and is satisfied with the Department of Transport's progress. I note there is another line item in this budget for cybersecurity programs. There are a number of items in the budget that will further assist the Department of Transport to strengthen its cybersecurity, including privileged access management.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to "Towing Industry Reform Program" under "New Works" on page 587. I note there is \$130 000 allocated to that this year. Can we assume that the legislation has been drafted? When can we anticipate seeing the legislation on this?

The CHAIR: That is a dangerous assumption, member.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I refer to Minister Michael.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: The legislation is almost with us. I have seen a draft. I think it is in its third draft and there is not much to go. I hope to bring it to Parliament shortly.

Ms L. METTAM: Will the legislation look at increasing standards and limiting caps or prices on towing and storage of towed vehicles? Are the objectives the same?

The CHAIR: Minister, I am not sure that can be answered, given it has to go to cabinet, probably, for approval.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: It has, but we have gone on the record about what is going to be in the legislation, so I am happy to say that the proposed legislation will include maximum charges for the towing and storage of crashed vehicles in Perth and Peel, the authorisation of tow truck drivers, towing assistants, towing service providers and storage yard providers that are involved in crash towing, including fit and proper person character provisions across the state. It will include the prohibition of crash spotting fees and other incentives, safety improvements for the crash towing industry and enhanced enforcement powers for government.

Ms L. METTAM: What is the \$130 000 for? What is its contribution as part of this?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: In starting the regulation of an industry that is loosely regulated, the department will have to build a system in which it will have to eventually register people involved in the towing industry. It is for the preliminary work to work out how the system may work.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to “Driver and Vehicle Services” on page 581, which refers to collecting revenue on behalf of government. The minister may not be aware, but a Department of Transport invoice for a zero amount, issued for a driver’s licence fee, was sent to one of my constituents. My constituent did not bother paying the account because it had a zero dollar balance; therefore, their licence lapsed and they were forced to pay a fee for registration plates and they had to put the vehicle over the pits. Is that system something that can be addressed, because it is confusing for people to have to make a BPAY payment for zero?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I refer that to Minister Michael.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: It is not something I have heard of before. If the member would like to give me that invoice, I can do two things. We can check to see why it happened and, if this person is still in some kind of confusion or limbo, we can try to work it out.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I have taken it up with either the minister or his office and was told that that is the system as it exists at the moment: if people do not pay their zero balance, they will not be listed as having renewed their vehicle licence. I will certainly take it up with the minister again.

While we are still on the matter of vehicle driver’s licences, the table on page 579 states that the estimated actual for “Percentage of driver’s licences issued that comply with the Graduated Driver Training and Licensing System (Safe Drivers)” is 97.5 per cent with a target of 100 per cent. Can the minister explain the 2.5 per cent? How can drivers’ licences be issued to persons who have not achieved graduated driver training, safe drivers, status?

[12.40 pm]

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: This indicator measures the extent to which licensing of drivers is conducted according to processes designed to establish levels of competence pursuant to provisions of the road laws as defined in the Road Traffic Act 1974 and its regulations. To measure the indicator, driver and vehicle services conducts a sample oversight of drivers’ licences issued, ensuring that each component of the graduated driver training and licensing system is completed and passed. The sample audit is conducted quarterly. The system is based on using automated reports that provide all drivers’ licences issued under the graduated licensing system in the past week, of which 10 to 20 are selected at random to a total of 100 per quarter. This gives a total random sample for the year of 400 out of almost 30 000 licences issued, and the sample size gives a confidence of approximately plus or minus 4.88 at a 95 per cent confidence level. In 2022–23, a total of 390 applications were found to be correctly completed. In 2023–24, the estimated actual is a total of 390 applications out of the 400 were found to be correctly completed.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Are these car licences or truck licences or are they any sort of licence?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I do not have that information. This is a process measure to make sure that the system is working.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Are truck licences issued for a higher level of truck—for instance, someone who has gone from a medium rigid licence to a combination licence—assessed through authorised registered training organisations, or are they all done through the department officers?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: They can be assessed with an RTO. I am told that due to integrity issues, body-worn cameras are used in RTO assessments.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Is the minister aware of growing concern amongst heavy vehicle operators that there is a lessening of vehicle licence requirements and that drivers who appear not to understand the road rules are gaining access to heavy vehicle licences. This has been raised with me by a number of people, including members of the union movement and trucking bodies. I am told that many experienced truck drivers are leaving the industry because of the concern over the level of danger that they see people undertaking. These people are presumably coming through the RTO system. Is that something that has been raised with the minister?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I have regular conversations with the Transport Workers' Union of Australia, the Western Roads Federation and the Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association on these issues. Federally, there is also some concern about—I have my road safety hat on—the national standard for driver training for truck drivers around the country. It has been put to me, and I will get this wrong, that some people can get their licence to drive a truck and then just wait out 12 months before they can graduate to the next level, and they do not actually have to drive a truck in the meantime, and those kinds of things. There are different standards across states. It is something that we are really keen to work on with our colleagues in other states, with the commonwealth's lead, to try to get a better system for these kinds of things.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Given that a lot of these trucks operate across state boundaries, will the minister undertake to have discussions at the national level and with other states, like South Australia, to actually get some confidence that people driving heavy vehicles have actually been through the appropriate training and have done the number of hours required to gain their licence?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: The infrastructure and transport ministers' meeting has already contacted Austroads, and I know the state has input into those things through the Minister for Transport and the director general of the transport portfolio. Austroads was asked to work with states on a national standard that we can all consider. The state will absolutely continue to talk about this with our colleagues east of our border.

Mr R.S. LOVE: On page 583, "On-demand Transport" refers to all sorts of things, including taxis. I have had, and I think both ministers have had, complaints from taxidrivers about the monitoring of some of the activities of on-demand drivers, especially around Perth Airport and the like. Is the minister aware of concerns expressed by taxidrivers about those types of issues. In particular, it appears that drivers who are international students are causing concern and allegations of meter tampering et cetera have been made.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: The Department of Transport has a whole team to look at complaints that come in through the on-demand transport area, whether it be taxis or some other rideshare situation. I have seen some of them through my office, but I think the Department of Transport gets them directly as well. All that is required is evidence of any of the things the member said. There are other things, including people or drivers from any service driving off when they should not be driving off or refusing to take someone when they should not be refusing to take someone. The department has a whole team to investigate any evidence that we can get.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Is the minister satisfied that the department finds that when it has audited the online on-demand booking services, for instance, there is only as little as 30 per cent that are compliant with the department's requirements? There is actually a figure on page 579, but I thought I might get away with it as a follow-up question. It is at the bottom of page 579 under "Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators".

[12.50 pm]

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: In terms of that figure, the Department of Transport has identified that safety management systems are a common area of noncompliance with on-demand transport booking services. SMSs are required to document procedures in writing and to review and update them to mitigate or eliminate risk caused by hazards to the health and safety of drivers, passengers or other persons in connection with the passenger transport service. DoT has developed and implemented an education compliance program that aims to increase the awareness and understanding of the legislative requirements concerning a safety focus to encourage compliance in particular regions or amongst a particular fleet size band of booking services.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I have a different question.

The CHAIR: New question for the member for Moore. You seem to be a one-man band at the moment.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is my shadow role.

I refer to the line item "Joondalup Driver Assessment Centre" under new initiatives in the table on page 576. What can the minister tell me about the development of the Joondalup Driver Assessment Centre? Why is the minister spending nearly \$10 million on that centre when I think she actually closed it not that many months or years ago? Can the minister explain the reversal of that decision and what effect that might have on the wait times for driver assessments?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will defer that to Minister Michael.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: The member would be aware that in 2023 the former Joondalup Driver and Vehicle Services Centre had its functions and staff relocated to the new purpose-built site in Butler. That move was based on information from 2018 that indicated that Joondalup would become problematic as a driver and vehicle service centre due to local government intentions to redevelop a nearby car park and the volume of general traffic in the area. Since that assessment was made, the expected growth in traffic around Joondalup and the redevelopment of the car park has not materialised. Therefore, it was considered that the Joondalup centre could be used for a further two or three years to trial a full-service driver assessment centre. It is not a full DVS centre. That centre is still located in Butler and is where people go to pay regos and things like that.

In the first six months of operation, DoT staff at Joondalup have processed nearly 30 000 transactions, including conducting more than 10 000 practical driving assessments, issuing nearly 7 000 new learners' permits, conducting well over 6 000 computer theory and hazard perception tests, and processing nearly 2 500 interstate and overseas driver's licence transfers. Given the demand for practical driving assessments, especially with the influx of people from overseas and interstate, the idea was to use that Joondalup site, which was already fitted out as a DVS centre, just for those services to take pressure off the other centres.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Do the allocations for that line item relate to the operational cost of that centre or the capital component? What do they represent?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I am told that it is largely the operating cost.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The centre has an allocation of \$6.38 million for this year, but nothing in the out years. Will the centre close at the end of this year?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: There is no money in the out years because the centre was reopened for a trial run. Obviously, an assessment will be made, but given those numbers, it has been pretty successful to date.

Mr R.S. LOVE: When will a decision be made on whether or not to keep that centre open?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: That will be made through the normal budgetary process. It has been open for only a little over six months.

Mr R.S. LOVE: If the decision is made to not continue with the centre, how will the demand that exists in that area for driver assessments be addressed?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will defer to the minister, but it is a hypothetical, and, as Ross Lyon says, we do not do hypotheticals.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: That is a very hypothetical question that will be dealt with during the budget process, but I have just given the member some numbers on how successful it has been.

The CHAIR: Any other questions?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Perhaps there will be. Just give me a second and I will think of something.

The CHAIR: Do not feel you have to ask any.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to the line item for the Carnarvon One Mile jetty and the \$54.5 million estimated actual on page 576. Are works complete and is this project on budget?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There are a couple of issues in Carnarvon. I was in Exmouth last week presenting a post-budget presentation and the mayor or the president told us how successful the works were that we did at the Carnarvon fascine. The dredging has completely changed the fascine, so they were very appreciative of that. Of course, a lot of other projects are happening in Carnarvon.

The Carnarvon One Mile jetty project has had a lot of consultation and a long history. Recently in February, a working session was held to look at the methodology and assumptions for the jetty repair. Further approvals are required under Aboriginal heritage consent, as is a native vegetation clearing permit to clear the mangroves immediately surrounding the jetty to enable core pole testing and geotech investigations. The approvals process is underway and we understand that written consent is pending. The planning, geotech and approvals process is ongoing to undertake some works.

As I said, I was involved in this project for a long time. There has been a lot of consultation and engagement with local community and with both the Carnarvon Heritage Group and the Aboriginal heritage group. A lot of the discussions have been held, but they are moving forward. The planning works are underway and we expect to commence works by the end of this year. There is a lot of good news in Carnarvon. The fascine is working and we have funded the airport, too, which is very exciting.

The CHAIR: We have time for one further question or another question.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A — Wednesday, 22 May 2024]

p190c-198a

Chair; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Shane Love; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr David Michael; Mr Peter Rundle

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to the table titled “Details of Administered Transactions” at the bottom of page 592. My question is about the line item “Payments to Off-Road Vehicle Trust Account” under expenses. When will we see an update of the payment system for off-road vehicles from the current paper-based system?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will refer that last question to Minister Michael yet again.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am happy to take it as supplementary information.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We will take that question as supplementary information.

The CHAIR: Minister Michael, can you state what you are going to be providing?

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I will provide an update on the new service for off-road vehicle licensing.

[*Supplementary Information No A23.*]

The appropriation was recommended.

Meeting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm