

**SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC SECTOR EXPENDITURE**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE  
TAKEN AT PERTH  
THURSDAY, 2 APRIL 2009**

**Members**

**Hon Sue Ellery (Chair)  
Hon Brian Ellis  
Hon Jon Ford**

**Hon Ken Travers (Participating Member)**

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**Hearing commenced at 9.01 am****O'CALLAGHAN, DR KARL**

**Commissioner of Police, Western Australia Police,  
2 Adelaide Terrace,  
East Perth 6004, sworn and examined:**

**ITALIANO, MR GREG**

**Executive Director, Western Australia Police,  
2 Adelaide Terrace,  
East Perth 6004, sworn and examined:**

**BECHELLI, MR LES**

**Acting Director of Finance, Western Australia Police,  
2 Adelaide Terrace,  
East Perth 6004, sworn and examined:**

**The CHAIR:** I will just tell the witnesses that the cameras are taking footage. If you have done this before, you know that they are taking footage but not recording any sound. They will do that for a little while and then they will leave. So they will try to do that in a very unobtrusive manner, I am sure. I have to say some words to you, and that will commence the proceedings.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome you to the meeting. Before we begin, I will ask you to take either the oath or the affirmation, and Renae will help you with that.

[Witnesses took the oath or affirmation.]

**The CHAIR:** You will have signed a document entitled "Information for Witnesses". Have you read and understood that document?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** These proceedings are being recorded by Hansard. A transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. To assist the committee and Hansard, please quote the full title of any document you refer to during the course of this hearing for the record, and please be aware of the microphones and try to talk into them. Ensure that you do not cover them with papers or make noise near them, and please try to speak in turn. I remind you that your transcript will become a matter for the public record. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session. If the committee grants your request, any public and media in attendance will be excluded from the hearing. Please note that until such time as the transcript of your public evidence is finalised, it should not be made public. I advise you that publication or disclosure of the uncorrected transcript of evidence may constitute a contempt of Parliament and may mean that the material published or disclosed is not subject to parliamentary privilege. I will introduce my fellow committee members: Brian Ellis, Ken Travers and John Ford.

Commissioner, you provided us with a document this morning. Do you want to talk to that; and if you do, are you happy for that document to be made public?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** We are happy for the document to be made public. I do not particularly want to talk to it. It is just by way of background information and it may help with responding to some questions that the committee puts to us.

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**The CHAIR:** If you are happy with that, then we will make the document public. Members are agreed with that. In that case, if you do not want to make an opening statement, we have some questions we would like to direct to you. Can we start by establishing, I guess, baselines. Can you confirm that it is your understanding that the three per cent efficiency dividend for WA Police is made up of \$12.5 million for the remainder of this financial year; in 2009-10, \$25.4 million; in 2010-11, \$25.9 million; and in 2011-12, \$26.4 million?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** That is my understanding, yes.

**The CHAIR:** Are you going to meet the \$12.5 million by 30 June this year?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** No.

**The CHAIR:** Can you talk to us about that?

**The CHAIR:** I can talk to you a little bit about that. The efficiency dividend, which we started discussing towards the end of 2008, required us to save around about \$12.5 million to \$12.7 million in the Western Australia Police budget for the 2008-09 financial year. One of the problems with trying to embark upon savings of that magnitude when you are already halfway through the budgetary year is the actual way that the police budget is structured, and we can refer to this document. If you look at the budget structure, you will see that 72 per cent of all of our costs are salary-related costs, so they are tied up in salary. Unlike other government agencies, we do not have as much flexibility with staff because about 5 300 of our staff are blue-shirt police officers; in other words, you cannot simply remove them, you cannot take those positions and save money on those positions. There is a further 19 per cent of the salary tied up with contractual arrangements that are also non-discretionary, which leaves a small amount of the budget—nine per cent or approximately \$80 million—from which the \$12 million has to be saved. The problem for the WA Police is that the biggest amounts of money could be saved in that 72 per cent that goes to salary, but it is not possible to achieve that in the short term for two reasons. One is, as I said, a lot of our FTEs of the people we employ are fully sworn police officers; and of the remainder my understanding was that we were unable to make them redundant anyway in the short term, so that money could not be saved. So we had to look for other ways to achieve the savings.

**The CHAIR:** So how much of the 2008-09 component will you actually make?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** It is \$4.7 million out of the 12—I think it is 12.7?

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** So, we will fall \$8 million short this financial year, but it is my understanding that we will repay that \$8 million over the term of forward estimates.

**The CHAIR:** Can you take us, commissioner, to the efficiency savings that you are going to be able to give operational effect to in 2008-09; and, if you are able to, can you identify how much in dollar terms each of those savings will actually generate for you?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I will ask Les Bechelli, the Acting Director of Finance, just to refer to those figures for you.

**Mr Bechelli:** The first part of the saving is about \$700 000, which is looking at recruitment schools. Towards the back of the financial year we are looking at ceasing some of those recruitment schools. We will still be, or should be, on strength, so it does not jeopardise us from that perspective. The other contribution was a cash contribution of about \$4 million towards the efficiency dividend this year. So obviously within the time frame that we have, there is only a one-off type of savings that we could initiate.

**The CHAIR:** So it is an underspend?

**Mr Bechelli:** I am sorry?

**The CHAIR:** Is it an underspend in some other areas? How have you saved that cash?

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**Mr Bechelli:** No, it is actually money we had in cash at bank. So we are basically drawing down or running down our bank account to fund \$4 million towards this financial year.

**The CHAIR:** Can you tell us how your budget is travelling this year? Are you likely to be over budget, under budget or spot on?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** My understanding is that we are going to come in on budget at this stage.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The cash at bank must have been allocated originally for a purpose. What was the original purpose it was allocated for? I assume you would have been holding it for a future reason.

**Mr Bechelli:** The cash at bank related back to 2006-07; that we were, with supplementary funding, allowed to draw down in the vicinity of about \$4 million. What happened was that due to the fact that we did not require it because of the surplus we had at the time, government repositioned that into 2008-09. So there was no specific purpose for that money. Obviously we were going to look at probably asset purchases or the like to utilise the funding. So it had no specific-type purpose at the time. It was due to surpluses from two financial years ago.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It is my understanding that at the end of each financial year Treasury certainly sits down and negotiates with you on any money sitting in the bank at the end of the year. They would want to have a reason why you would want it. They would not necessarily take it back but they want to know the reason that you hold it. Are you saying they allowed you to hold it without a specific purpose in mind?

**Mr Bechelli:** It was originally with agreement that when we did not require that funding they would re-inject that money into police. So obviously we were going to look at opportunities this year of how we could utilise that. We had not yet allocated any of that money for that purpose. Pure and simply it is that obviously as an agency of our size, we needed to keep a reasonable amount in cash at bank to cover ourselves, just to pay the normal bills and due to timing of when we received appropriations. So that was going to be just for that just to ensure a bit of a safety net for ourselves.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** So do you now not have that safety net?

**Mr Bechelli:** We still have some version of a safety net. All we have done is reduce the amount that we require in the cash at bank.

[9.10 am]

**The CHAIR:** Can we go back to some baseline questions as well and talk about your staffing, full-time equivalents. Can you tell us what your current FTE is? What is your current usage of FTE?

**Mr Italiano:** Roughly —

**Dr O'Callaghan:** You are talking about both sworn police officers and public service admin support?

**The CHAIR:** If you are able to split that, that would be helpful. You might need to get back to us on the split; but, if you can, give us what you can today.

**Mr Italiano:** I think the approximation is fit for the purpose; it is about 5 300 sworn officers. And, Les, we would have what, about 1 800 police staff?

**Mr Bechelli:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** You would be aware of the Treasurer's announcement on 3 February that he was placing a ceiling on the public sector workforce of some 99 155. And for each agency's component, the ceiling that each agency was required to meet was the figure that is set out in the column of estimation of FTE in the 2008-09 budget year, plus if you have some election commitments of additional FTE, you would add that to the budget figure and that would be your FTE. My quick back of the envelope calculation out of the budget papers yesterday put your FTE—that is, total

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across all of the services set out in the budget—at 4 349. If you add to that the promise of 500 additional police officers, which was the election promise, that takes you to 4 849. The figure you have just given us varies significantly from that: 5 300 plus 1 800. So, to the extent that there is a difference, what is your understanding; and if you have been given any instruction from the Treasurer, can you talk to us about that? What is your understanding about how your agency is to conduct the audit you have been instructed to conduct by the Treasurer and how then do you deal with the fact that there is a discrepancy in the numbers?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** I am not sure about that. I am not sure that the Treasury is right with those figures, but the numbers of police officers are fixed. There are 5 300 and something—I am not quite sure of the exact number—and they are fixed by government, so we do not have any influence over that. So I am not sure how we came up with a figure of 1 000 less than that, plus we have about, as Greg said, 1 800-odd public service people who provide support and other types of functions for the WA Police. So, in terms of what we are trying to do to look at the numbers of public service staff in particular, there are a number of movements of business out of policing to other government agencies that we will be considering over the next couple of years.

**The CHAIR:** Number one, it seems from your comment that you were not consulted about how that target was set; am I right in assuming that?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** Well, I certainly have not been consulted personally about it, no.

**The CHAIR:** Have you been given any advice from government, from the Treasurer, the public service commissioner, anyone like that, about what the expectation is on how police will meet the target that has been set?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** I certainly have not. I do not know if you have, Greg.

**Mr Italiano:** No.

**Dr O’Callaghan:** We have not had any advice from government on this.

**The CHAIR:** If you are not able to do it now, perhaps you could take it on notice. Could you get back to us and confirm to us that my addition of the sums out of the budget document plus the 500 in the election promise is actually correct and that we are talking about a discrepancy of about 1 000? I will say to you that you are not the first agency that has appeared before us that has had a discrepancy in those numbers. Health is about 1 000 out and so is education, so it would not surprise me if you were as well.

**Dr O’Callaghan:** Okay.

**Mr Bechelli:** Just on those numbers, my understanding is that our numbers were about sixty-eight hundred in the forward estimates.

**Dr O’Callaghan:** Sixty-eight hundred?

**Mr Bechelli:** It was 68 or 69.

**The CHAIR:** Okay, so maybe it is my addition that is incorrect.

**Mr Bechelli:** Yes. It is my understanding that that is what the number is, as advised of. We had queried what was the number of the component of police FTEs from government, so off the top of my head I am not sure what that number was.

**The CHAIR:** If you could get back to us, that would be helpful.

**Mr Italiano:** Okay.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** That would still make you out by 300, though, on those figures, would it not?

**Mr Italiano:** There is also an election commitment for 200 public servants over the next five years.

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**Mr Bechelli:** Sorry, the sixty-eight hundred was based on 2007-08, so it may not be in the forward estimates.

**Mr Italiano:** That was part of the elections.

**The CHAIR:** All right, I think both of us need to do a bit more adding up. Can you talk to us about the increase in demand for services? One of the things you referred to in terms of your tied contractual arrangements included PathWest and ChemCentre. I am interested, for example, in what DNA testing is doing in terms of driving demand for those sorts of services, but also in whether there is any impact on demand on services from our police in respect of particular pieces of legislation or anything like that.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I will split that a couple of ways. I will get Mr Italiano to talk to the pressure in the PathWest DNA analysis area first because he is right across that.

**Mr Italiano:** Obviously there has been a significant growth in the role of forensics in the resolution of crime, be it in volume crime or major crime. There have also been trends to collect a greater number of exhibits, particularly in major crime cases. Our exhibits going through to PathWest have grown 80 per cent over five years, so there has been a significant increase in volume, and that has been a budget pressure for us over consecutive years. The model with PathWest is that essentially we are the provider of all funding for PathWest, notwithstanding the fact that it exists within the Department of Health; and, of course, PathWest have geared up their operations, both assets and people, scientists etc to cope with those increases in volume and provide a service on turnaround on those things, because obviously there are court cases to be serviced. With volume crime we know that time is of the essence sometimes in terms of how quickly you can get a hit on DNA to prevent further offending. So with respect to volume and degrees of service, our budget for PathWest has been under pressure now for a number of years.

The manner in which we have been able to cover off on that cost pressure is that we have had years when we have been in surplus, essentially because of underspending in salaries. If we go back a number of years in police, particularly during the height of the labour market conditions, we have been 100-150 under at some points in time. We have been over strength for this entire financial year, albeit that the over strength varies according to attrition at a point in time. So some of the flexibility that we have had to offset those costs is not currently present in our budget. So the capacity for us to find additional funding for the PathWest-type pressure is no longer present going forward. So that is some background on those kinds of arrangements. There are other cost pressures, the costs around vehicles. We have a significant fleet, obviously, in police. We have managed to get our fleet to 30 per cent four cylinders over the last few years, which helped us with some of the cost pressures; but nevertheless, particularly in the area of decommissioning vehicles and maintenance costs, we have been under some pressures as well. So these are matters which have been raised in successive years in the police budget, and there has not been any specific recognition for some of those cost-pressure increases. But as I said, in previous years police have been able to cover some of those costs by virtue of having some surplus in another area.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I will talk about legislation a little bit, because that has been the subject of a lot of public debate. Changes in legislation have significant impacts, usually on police and how they respond to particular issues. If you just have a look at the sorts of things that have been implemented in the last few years, both in a policy sense and in a legislation sense, they all drive a demand inside policing and they require FTEs to resource them.

You, Madam Chair, would be aware of the mandatory child abuse reporting regime, so if you introduce a mandatory child abuse reporting regime you need detectives to service that. We estimated at the time that that was implemented or was about to be implemented that we would need 14 at least to service the increase, and those things were not provided up-front. We have had a significant increase and a significant change in strategy about dealing with child abuse in remote communities—Aboriginal communities—that is also placing pressure on the WA Police. The

introduction of the dangerous goods legislation about two years ago required police to do high level integrity checks and provide information that they had never provided before. The implementation of the child sex offence register requires police to monitor sex offenders. Five years ago they were not monitoring sex offenders. Changes to CIA legislation to increase disclosure and increase demands on police as to how much they disclose —

[9.20 am]

**The CHAIR:** CIA legislation?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** Sorry, the Criminal Investigation Act. There are some changes to hoon legislation on the table at the moment proposed by government. That will have a significant impact on police; it will cost money to service. There is discussion about prohibitive behaviour orders by government at the moment. If that legislation is implemented, it will have a significant impact on us in terms of how we service that. I think the previous Attorney General introduced family violence courts; that required prosecutors that were not resourced at the time. These are some examples. And I can tell you also that under the whole Frontline First philosophy, because more police are actually on the streets and more police have access to new technology like the in-car digital access to the computer system, police briefs and police court charges have gone up by 40 per cent in the last two years. Now that is a very, very significant increase, so it increases the load of both police and prosecutors, and of course the department of justice, or DOTAG, in terms of pressure on the courts. So as we get more efficient with technology and we get more efficient with DNA and we can resolve all crimes and legislation is broadened—we are talking about tougher, harder legislation in lots of different areas—this all has a significant impact on the way police respond to these things and the resources that are required to service these things. Some time ago, of course, we were also forecasting a significant population increase in WA because of the economic trends. Some of those pressures would have gone away.

**The CHAIR:** Can you comment on—and then I will share the questions out and stop hogging the floor—the public debate and concern now about what appears to be an increase in the kinds of violent crime. I do not know whether it is a combination of alcohol, mental health or what it is. Can you comment on the kind of demand that is placing on additional resources and how you use your resources?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** Its main driver is alcohol. We know that the main driver of violent crime, about 80 per cent of violent crime, is tied up with alcohol abuse. I am not just talking about violent crime in Northbridge and in the entertainment precincts, but about what we are seeing in the family violence area as well. Police of course are required to respond to that, and as the pressure goes up and as more and more violent crime is seen on our streets, more and more police are going into Northbridge. We have larger physical police numbers in there than we have ever had and we will need to continue to service that. Of course the problem is never solved by police. The easy answer to the problem is to say, “Let’s put more police in there; let’s charge more people; let’s get tougher penalties.” But the answer is not there. The answer is to work further upstream with the problem in the first place. We are now servicing a family violence regime at a much higher rate than we were servicing it before, not just physically and dealing with the problem at its point of origin; but then there is victim management and family management that police are involved in after the event. There is the creation of family violent orders and the enforcement of family violence orders—most of all of this linked to alcohol abuse—that is driving police numbers at what I call the downstream end of the process. So police are a little bit like street sweepers: they come in and clean up the mess after the problem has occurred. We need now to police licensed premises—not put police into licensed premises physically—but police licensed premises at a much higher rate than we used to. We are talking about increasing our liquor enforcement division by quite a significant factor just so that we can keep the licensees under control. We are talking about now having to make prohibition orders against people entering licensed premises. So you can see the problem of the whole alcohol

problem. While one response is for police to respond at a street level and deal with the violence on the streets, they are also having to respond at an alcohol control level and they are also having to respond at, like, a prohibition level as well in terms of prohibiting people from entering licensed premises. This is just going to escalate and continue to escalate unless we see a lot more proactive action at the front end. With young people, we get support from the child services areas. There is a whole range of issues with nightspots, including transfers and transport in and out of those nightspots, that if they were solved would bring down the pressure on police

**Hon BRIAN ELLIS:** Following up on what you have just said, it just appears, and I may be wrong, that it is the level of violence in the past that may have taken only two police officers to deal with an incident, and it just seems that from what you say now it takes four or five to deal with it. Is that part of the problem?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I think one of the things that our statistics show is that the physical incidence of street violence has not increased significantly. The main increase in assaults in Western Australia has been in the family violence areas, but what has increased significantly is the intensity of those attacks. So we are seeing police injured. We are seeing the necessity for more police to respond to a single incident than we did before to be able to settle down those incidents. In some of those incidents methamphetamine is involved and that creates another level of problem for police to deal with—or a combination of methamphetamine and alcohol.

**Hon BRIAN ELLIS:** You mentioned police being injured. Can you give us any idea of how many police are out of action at any one time because of those incidents?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I cannot give you that. I can provide that information as supplementary information to the committee, but I do not have it with me today.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I might just ask about the capital works. Are any of your capital works projects captured under the review of over \$20 million projects, the government-wide review? Also, with respect to projects under the \$20 million, have you done an internal review of those projects and can you outline any sorts of results of that review?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** The Northbridge police complex, the Perth police complex, certainly is captured under that review, but I will refer to Mr Italiano to embellish that a bit.

**Mr Italiano:** Most of our works were caught up in the review because there were election commitments to spend in excess of \$20 million on police stations. So that was treated as a block of capital works. There is the Perth police complex. There is also our —

**The CHAIR:** Can I just clarify that? So those capital works projects that were election commitments and over \$20 million are also subject to review; is that correct?

**Mr Italiano:** Yes, the entire capital works budget is subject to the audit process.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** So your entire capital works is covered under the \$20 million, the review of projects over \$20 million, by aggregate because it has been aggregated up?

**Mr Italiano:** Yes. For the greater part, yes, that is correct. The expansion of our police metropolitan radio network is something in the vicinity of a \$31 million capital spend, so that was also subject to review. So police do not have an extensive capital works budget, as some agencies do, but virtually most of our works were caught up in the review, and that is still pending.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** So have you been notified as to when you expect to have a decision on those?

**Mr Italiano:** Our understanding is that it is part of the budget process. We have not been advised of any specific date that will be finally decided.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Right and that includes election commitments being reviewed as to the timing of them?

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**Mr Italiano:** Yes, the capital audit captured capital projects that were part of election commitments.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** What about projects like the Secret Harbour police station that was already in your budget; has that been captured by the review?

**Mr Italiano:** Yes, it is caught up in our capital review as well.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Your capital review or the government-wide capital review?

**Mr Italiano:** The government process as well.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** So why was that one captured; because that is under \$20 million and was already in your budget, was it not?

**Mr Italiano:** I think there is a discussion in that process as part of just the overall capital budget that we have at our disposal and what police priorities are within that. So there is that. It is included in that discussion on that basis.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Right, because my understanding was that the review was for projects over \$20 million and what you are now telling us is that projects that were already in the existing budget that were under \$20 million have also been caught in that review.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** We had a discussion on the Secret Harbour police station in terms of whether it was a police priority or not. The discussion over Secret Harbour police station has been largely driven by the police view of its necessity

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Right.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Not by government coming to us and suggesting we do not do it.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Things like the Rockingham rail unit, are they captured as well?

**Mr Italiano:** No, the Rockingham rail unit will be completed within the next month, and that is not subject to any discussion.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Then going to the other three stations that you re-opened earlier this year, Cranbrook, Dumbleyung and Wickepin, was that something that you made as an operational priority?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** One of the things that we did when we closed the six police stations, I think in about 2007, was we gave an assurance that we would review the situation in those stations at the end of 12 months. After the end of 12 months we reviewed all six in terms of the sort of work that was coming out of those particular areas and as part of that process we made the decision—in fairness to the local government authorities and I had given them that commitment before—that three of those stations could remain open because the workload has remained fairly constant; and it would be the larger three of the six, I think, that were closed. The other three remain closed because there is simply no work there, or not enough work to justify the existence of a police station.

[9.30 am]

**Mr Italiano:** For operational purposes, the stations are currently closed and have not been reopened as yet. We are in the process of recommissioning and reopening those three locations.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Was that done purely on operational grounds and not as a result of the election commitments?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** No. We reviewed them, and we gave an undertaking at the time, that we would review them based on operational strategies.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Was a budget provided for those? How are you budgeting that?

**Mr Italiano:** Yes, the Liberal Party committed, in its election commitments, to provide \$2 million a year for the reopening of those stations.

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**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Is that money allocated out of the royalties for regions program, or is it coming out of general government revenue?

**Mr Italiano:** I cannot answer that definitively. My understanding is that it is not out of the royalties for regions program but my understanding is based purely on the fact that it has not been nominated as such in that sense.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** To finish off on that, are you conducting a review of any other existing capital works about whether or not you can close any police stations as part of your savings?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** We have an ongoing review of our police stations as to whether or not they are viable. It was announced in yesterday's or today's paper that the Inglewood Police Station is closing. I point out that Inglewood Police Station has not really been an operational police station for a long time. The preferred method of policing these days—certainly it is our strategy—is to run policing from major hubs and not to have lots of small police stations in lots of locations, because that is highly inefficient. We will continue to review that process. Subiaco Police Station is one that we are considering closing and we are looking at wanting to build a major hub in the Mt Claremont-Wembley area to cover the whole of the western suburbs.

**The CHAIR:** What sort of criteria do you apply? If you have an ongoing review about your whole capital expenditure, which seems to me to be a sensible thing to do, what sort of criteria drives the decision that operationally you need to close a station or do something different? There are obvious things like the population, but what are the sorts of criteria that you use more broadly?

**Mr Italiano:** In the metropolitan area obviously you do not have the tyranny of distance that you are dealing with in regional areas. We look at our built structure as it currently is; our response times geographically, within a period; the amount of officers; and the scale of resources that produce a better overall outcome. We have had an ongoing program for about two years now whereby we have had an assets review of every single metropolitan district. We have forecasted population growth, retail and a range of things to look at where we would want to be and in what numbers and what size of development. It is fair to say that there has not been a strategic driver either for the way in which police stations have been developed or for our current structure within the metropolitan area. Many of our stations are very old and were constructed at a time when the model of policing was very different from the model of policing that exists today. It is not particularly efficient to run small stations with half a dozen or eight officers from a rostering point of view, a demand-response point of view or an investigational point of view. We have made it quite clear to government, through our capital works discussions, that we have a preferred service delivery model, which, in the metropolitan area, is to have fewer, larger police stations to provide the best service to the community. We are trying to move in that direction. That creates some challenges, obviously, because, I guess of election commitments and other processes, commitments may be given for those reasons and those commitments do not always -

**The CHAIR:** Politics.

**Mr Italiano:** You said it. The commitments do not always accord with what a rational, logical service delivery strategy might be.

**The CHAIR:** Are you suggesting that politics is irrational?

**Mr Italiano:** We obviously have to look at those things. We have taken on board the need to provide better information and, for want of a better term, to provide education about what drives police and what the best overall structure is for us to adopt. The commissioner mentioned Subiaco, for example. That station was constructed in the 1890s but we are still working out of it. The Wembley Police Station is operated out of an OIC's house. On our current replacement rate, a police asset is expected to have an economic asset of 90 years. We have been having an ongoing discussion with Treasury about getting our capital budget more sensibly set up to enable us to plan properly, to make sure that the developments we carry out are effective in their service delivery, and

to make sure that the police numbers that we get, which are expensive, are used to their best effect. That is where our capital program is coming from concerning stations, IT and communications. If you do not underpin those police numbers with the appropriate infrastructure, you get a very diminishing return on the investment that is made in those police officers. That is the discussion we are trying to have. I might be optimistic, but I feel as though we are getting somewhere with that discussion.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Can I ask two final questions on the capital works? Are you able to provide us—if you can do it today, that would be good, but if not, on notice—with a list of those capital works in previous budgets that are still proceeding and those that are actually captured by the review process? Obviously some may already be in train and are continuing, and I know that there are a lot of multifunctional police facilities.

**Mr Italiano:** Yes, there are.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Can we get a break-up of those that are being built and those that are captured by the review? As I understand it the Perth police complex was captured by the review and the government has committed to that. Have you got any details about the timing and the dates of that process? Again, as I understand it, that captures that aggregating up. You have closed the Leederville station and the Mt Hawthorn station, and the Perth Police Station replaces all that. What is the date of that?

**Mr Italiano:** Prior to the election, the Perth police complex was on the capital works at \$113 million. We provided advice to the previous government that obviously there had been a cost escalation in excess of that amount. The election process then unfolded and the capital works review unfolded from the election. The Perth police centre was announced as a government priority project, I think, which was your reference. That still is not currently resolved in terms of the funding escalation that we require. We continue to document that project so that it can proceed. It is still before government for a decision. In relation to your question, the funding increase that is still required for that to proceed has not yet been made.

**The CHAIR:** What do you need for it to proceed?

**Mr Italiano:** The current estimate is that the project would be around the mid \$120 million mark.

**The CHAIR:** So the extent of the escalation is how much?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** It is \$12 million.

**Mr Italiano:** It is in the vicinity of \$12 million.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The announcement back in February was just purely that it was a priority and not that it is actually going ahead with time lines and funding?

**Mr Italiano:** I understood the announcement to be that the government is committed to proceeding with the project but there was still the matter of resolving the additional funding to be carried out.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Do you still expect it to be done within the same time line? I think the original completion date was about 2011. Is that realistic, or is it likely to be later than that?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I do not think it is realistic at all. If you look at the history of the Perth police complex, it was tied up in a land resumption argument for about two years at one stage. We would be a lot further down the track if that had not been the case. I do not think 2011 is realistic at all now.

**Mr Italiano:** We are able to commence demolition works and we are doing that now to prepare the site and to remediate the site. I cannot provide you with a date. I think your question to me was when the resolution of the funding issue might occur. I do not know.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The former Leederville station is already on the market is it not?

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**Mr Italiano:** Yes, we have some people moving out of that over the next few weeks. That is one of the land sales we will be looking to make.

**Hon JON FORD:** Commissioner, yesterday the Department of Environment and Conservation talked about funding that was identified—DEC could not identify the actual amount of money, but Treasury was aware of it—that would be provided at the end of the year for fighting fires, for instance. I think they talked about it ranging from between \$15 million and \$19 million. They would be given an allocation at the end of the fire season for that. It is really a contingency based on natural events. Do you have that sort of costing arrangement?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** When we get a major natural event like a cyclone and a lot of money is spent in managing the cyclone, the way we have handled it in the past is to go back to government and ask for supplementary funding, which is usually given. We have never had a significant problem with that. A typical example of that is cyclone Vance in Exmouth, which is going back quite a while now, probably about 10 years. That was a major police operation, consuming a lot of resources and money, and we got supplementary money for that from the government.

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[9.40 am]

**Hon JON FORD:** Are there any other non-planned activities that would fall into that category?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Some organised crime activities obviously would fall into that category. Major operations, major investigations may fall into that category, but generally we manage those things within our budget. If we have a major issue, we go back to government and ask for supplementary funding.

**Hon JON FORD:** Either yesterday or the day before, the Treasurer announced a cap on salaries in the public service, but excluded, in the first instance, your officers for the next pay round. Have you got a budget towards that expectation; that pay rise?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I do not think the budget is committed. It would not be committed until we got through the EBA negotiations, which really have not started in earnest yet. Although there have been some preliminary meetings, the actual amounts have not been put to the union yet, and the EBA negotiations are yet to commence. But I would not imagine we would get a finite allocation until we know exactly what the cost of the increase will be.

**Hon JON FORD:** From what you are saying, that, of course, has an effect on shifts and overtime; part of that remaining nine per cent. There would be a natural increase in your budget as a result of that?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Sure, yes.

**Hon JON FORD:** As a result of the next budget round, if you have a three per cent cut forced on you—that could be in the form of just keeping you at the same level of budget you are currently at if you were unable to come up with some suggestions—where would you see that efficiency drive going to?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Firstly, we are not subject, necessarily, to three per cent cuts; we are subject to a three per cent efficiency dividend. There are obviously a number of ways to achieve an efficiency dividend without simply going around cutting budgets. We have already put strategies to government to achieve the three per cent required over the term of the forward estimates. Those strategies, at this stage, have been accepted by government, so we are already on the way to doing some of those things, or we have a plan to do those things.

**The CHAIR:** One of the things that got some public attention was the Premier's offer to assist you find your three per cent, and the Treasurer talked about, kind of, flying squads of private sector auditors going into government agencies to provide assistance. Have you had the Premier or the Treasurer, or a private sector audit flying squad knocking on your door?

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**Dr O'Callaghan:** No, we have not. I certainly have had long discussions with the Under Treasurer, and the Under Treasurer has come down and we have discussed the police budget. We have looked at ways to resolve the three per cent efficiency dividend, and I think the Under Treasurer is quite satisfied with where we got to.

**The CHAIR:** If I take you back to what you said at the beginning about how you will reach the 2008-09 component of the three per cent efficiency dividend, and, Les, I think you talked about the recruitment schools. Can you talk to us a bit more about that? My understanding of what you were saying is that you had planned X number of recruitment schools; you are now going to do less. What does that mean for how your plans for staff recruitment are going?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I will defer to Greg Italiano in a minute, but the point I make is that we planned recruitment schools based on our forecast profile of attrition. As you know, about two years ago the attrition rates in police were quite high—as they were across the whole public sector because of the state of the economic environment. One of the things that has happened, obviously, in the last few months is that we are not seeing many leave police, and our local applications have gone up quite significantly. We are not losing as many as we forecast, so we do not need to run as many recruiting schools. I will let Greg talk about the specifics.

**Mr Italiano:** That is essentially the case. We put in place extensive marketing and recruitment programs obviously to get us up to strength, which has been our intent. Towards the end of last year we were finding that attrition had dropped from in the 30s, to seeing months in the 20s. I think as recently as last month only nine officers left the organisation, so that gives the committee some indication of the decrease. In conjunction with that, as the commissioner said, we have seen a significant increase in local applications. We have also obviously had more people seeking to re-engage—that is, officers who have left the organisation are seeking to come back in greater numbers. In essence, the recruitment schools were not required to keep us at our strength, and where we had the discretion not to conduct those schools, we have taken that opportunity to do so.

**The CHAIR:** The way you run the schools—I am not familiar with your operations, so you might have to explain recruitment school staffing for dummies—does that have an impact on the people who deliver your training in your recruitment schools if you are running less? You had planned to run X number; you are now going to run less; what does that mean for those people who were going to deliver the training?

**Mr Italiano:** Most of the people oversight and oversee recruitment and training are police officers at the academy. Schools are run for two reasons: one is to cover attrition; and the other is obviously to get—if there is an additional commitment by the government, we run schools to make sure we meet the increase. With the previous government, it was a 350 increase. What will happen at the academy, if the current trends continue, is that those officers will shift their emphasis somewhat to other parts of the business. For example, the Perth watch-house is now substantially manned by custody officers, which has released in excess of 40 constables to the front line; so training of that nature. We have cadets in the system now that we did not have previously I might say also that there are a great many other training needs in the WA Police that have not received the attention that we would have otherwise liked to have given them because of the huge load we have had in getting recruits through the academy. There will be some shift in focus, and some of the things the commissioner is talking about, in terms of legislative impacts, in terms of our supervision and leadership training, those things will receive greater attention than they have in the past. But undoubtedly, if the business shifts dramatically enough, we will look at the resources at the academy and see if that is appropriate going forward.

**The CHAIR:** Other questions?

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** When you came in, you mentioned that the break-up was 72 per cent salary related, and it was impossible to cut that in the short term. How would you be able to cut it in the long term?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** There are a whole range of activities which are undertaken by police which are not police core business. This is one of the discussions I had with the Under Treasurer. There are a whole range of things that police do which can be done by other government agencies or other people a lot differently. For argument's sake: we are still involved in custodial transfers, particularly of sentenced and remanded juveniles. We have said quite clearly that that is not a job for the WA Police; that is a job for somebody else, whether it is corrective services or GSL. We are involved in infringement processing for speed camera infringements; that is not a job for the WA Police, it is a processing job only. We are looking at outsourcing that. We are involved in loading court data because other government agencies do not have the systems to load that information. There is a whole bundle of FTEs committed to loading data. That is data that we do not need to own. There are a whole range of activities that we discussed with the Under Treasurer about moving this business out of police, to someone who can do it better or more efficiently, or even out of the public sector, to private sector organisations. As that occurs, of course, we will be able to cut back on our public service staff commitment to those functions.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I can understand that there may be a saving if you relieve a sworn officer and replace him with a civilian, because obviously sworn officers are extremely highly trained and there is an incredible investment in them. But if you are just replacing it with one public servant to another public servant in another department, that does not necessarily save the global government any money —

**The CHAIR:** Or one public servant to a privatised operation.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** My experience has been that I have not seen too many privatised services ultimately end up being cheaper than the in-house provision of those services.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** There are a couple of things: I think there is a view, for argument's sake with infringement processing, that it can be done more efficiently and cheaper than police can do it currently. There is a view that by privatising the arrangement, or by having another government agency with systems in place and people already in place to do some of those things, it can be done cheaper. There are some synergies to be achieved by moving some of this business out of police. Obviously the Under Treasurer was concerned that cost shifting will not solve the overall government problem. We are confident, and the Under Treasurer is confident, that some of these things could be done in other areas that are better geared up for them. If we consider the data loading: the data loading can be improved by some IT investment over at DPI, or some IT investment over at DoTAG. As soon as the IT systems are improved there, less people are needed to physically manage the data entry, or it does not need to be double handled, for argument's sake. When I was talking to you about efficiency versus costs, an economic efficiency dividend can mean you need to invest some money to save some money in the long run. Those are some of the things we are looking at.

[9.50 am]

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** So they are the areas in which you would be looking at achieving the three per cent over the forward estimates?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Yes, most definitely.

**Hon JON FORD:** What about your role in PCYCs? Are you contemplating changing the role?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** No, we are not contemplating getting out of PCYCs; we are contemplating changing the way PCYCs do their business. I will just give you a bit of an explanation about how the PCYC debate comes up in the three per cent efficiency cut. Obviously when an agency such as police is made to consider its budget and made to make savings, which, as we have pointed out, you have to make your savings out of only nine per cent of the total budget mostly, you have to look at peripheral services. You would not want to cut core services and you would not want to cut front-line services. The first things you need to consider is what are the services we are delivering that if

we were not delivering them tomorrow would not affect police response times, investigation of crime and that sort of thing. That is where the debate about PCYCs and police pipe bands comes up. The problem is that in an agency such as policing, non-core services are as contentious as core services. As soon as you start talking about those, everybody gets nervous about them. There is no real measurement of how efficient PCYCs are. Everyone feels good about them. They deliver a service to young people, and that is good, but we do not really know what the long-term impact of a PCYC is because it is not measured; it is not recovered in any way. One of the things we want to do is try to make it measurable and focus the police officers who are working in PCYCs on at-risk youth rather than just running facilities for people to come in and have a good time. We need to do a lot more of that. Over the next few months we will be refocusing the police officers and the other staff who are there to focus on at-risk youth, juvenile diversion and a range of things.

**The CHAIR:** Commissioner, in addition to being lobbied about PCYC, which I think goes in part to addressing your upstream and downstream issue that you talked to us about before, we have all been lobbied about the Police Pipe Band. In an argument about hard economics it is easy to say, "Well, it's not core function" but, symbolically, the Police Pipe Band is held in enormous regard by the community. It really would be a dreadful thing to see all the history and the cultural history that goes with the pipe band disappear because of what some might see as a mean and petty approach to saving some money. I hope that is not going to happen.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** It is not going to happen. It is not mean and petty. It goes down to the discussion that when you have a budget and it is a very tight budget and you have to make tough decisions, sometimes you have to put up tough solutions. Having considered all the factors now and having had an opportunity to outsource some of the business that police are doing, there is no need to disband the pipe band and the whole issue is off the table.

**The CHAIR:** I am very pleased to hear that.

**Hon JON FORD:** In the 19 per cent area of contractual arrangements that you have identified in this document, what is the escalation that you would apply to these issues? Normally you have a standard escalation you put across the budget. I would see accommodation as an area where you would have a pretty unpredictable cost escalation, particularly in regional areas.

**Mr Bechelli:** As part of the forward estimates, agencies do receive a CPI component. From our budget perspective, I think it is in the vicinity of 1.5 per cent. As you would be aware, over the past few years it has been escalating well above. For instance, we found that there was some leased accommodation coming out of leased arrangements where we experienced 80 per cent to 100 per cent increases in costs. In the accommodation area, in last year's budget round we were successful in receiving additional funding, where we probably increased our overall budget in the vicinity of about 80 per cent to 100 per cent, which covered those. Usually it is cost escalation or activity driven, which drives us going forward to government with cost and demand pressures, which we were unable to meet. If it is over and above what we apply or what we can fund, we usually got a call to the government.

**Hon JON FORD:** Commissioner, what would you regard in your service as non-front-line roles?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Let us talk about what we regard as front line. Front-line services are those services that are provided towards our core functions. They are traffic, crime investigation and patrol work, officers who are required to go out and investigate or respond to calls for assistance and officers who are directly required to support that, like forensic sorts of facilities. I suppose the non-core functions to me are the administration roles, which could be done by anybody. They do not necessarily need to be done by police but police own them because they are necessary to support the police infrastructure. There are so many different areas of police that you would move out from a core front-line role, which is your police officers at police stations and detectives who are going out and doing work, to semi-core front-line roles like PCYCs. We could argue that if they are working directly with at-risk youth and juveniles who have been diverted from the justice

system, it is closely related to what goes on in the front line because it has an impact in terms of resolving the sorts of things that our front-line officers respond to.

**The CHAIR:** A little earlier you touched on the importance of communications. Can I ask you to talk to us about the communications network that operates in the regional areas? I understand that there is an issue with the age of the technology that you are using. Can you talk to us about that and what impact it is having on your ability to do the things you need to do?

**Mr Italiano:** Perhaps if I just return to the theme from the previous question. For police to deliver a service, as I said earlier, there are obviously a range of things that have to happen, both by what front-line operational officers do and the processes that underpin those things. If police officers do not work with accurate and reliable information, if our IT systems fall over, if our radios do not work, if our fleet is not safe and unable to be operated effectively, if they are not equipped with the right equipment—if all those things do not happen—they cease to be less effective police officers. When the police budget comes under pressure there has historically been a temptation to reduce the amount of police staff from public service staff in the police. Over the last term of the previous government 160 positions were civilianised. That has provided enormous benefit to WA Police by having, in many cases, more appropriately skilled people performing those roles in our organisation. One of the things that we have been determined to do through this process is not reverse that process by going back and taking a whole lot of police officers away from police officer roles and putting them into public servant roles in the organisation. That would be a retrograde step if that were to occur.

With respect to the question you asked on communications, the Perth area is now serviced by a digital radio network which provides both voice and data and in-car terminals. It has proved to be an outstanding project in terms of outcomes, cost and delivery. The proposition is to extend that digital signal roughly from Lancelin to Northam to Dunsborough. Approximately 80 per cent of the state's population would then be covered by that digital network. The communications infrastructure outside that area is based on an old analogue system that uses approximately 1970s technology. The system has two major problems. One is obsolescence; that is, the parts that are used to run that system now are scarce or not available. Breakdowns in that system are difficult to treat because the sites on which those towers and infrastructure are spread are spread over vast distances, they are on private property and it is not easy to test the equipment before you leave the site. There are a range of issues with keeping it going and maintaining it. The other problem we have is that the way the system is designed, there are a number of black spots within our radio communications out there so officers may find themselves in locations where they do not have radio communications, even in the event that the system is working at that particular time. We have obviously made that position known to both the previous government and the current government that what we broadly call the regional radio network does need to be replaced. At this point that is not a funded commitment in our capital works budget but obviously we continue to advocate that that should be the case.

**The CHAIR:** Was that not an election commitment from the new government?

**Mr Italiano:** The election commitment was to the expanded Perth metropolitan radio network, which I described. That is the digital solution from Lancelin to Northam to Dunsborough. At present the area outside that is not a funded commitment and it was not an election commitment. The election commitment was the expansion of what we call Perth metropolitan radio.

[10.00 am]

**The CHAIR:** In respect of the component that is the election commitment, what is the time line for delivering that?



**Mr Italiano:** We believe we can deliver that in two years. Planning is already well advanced. The technology that we will use is the existing Perth technology. The primary time thing with that is the site acquisition and the tower construction, but that is a two-year program.

**The CHAIR:** Is that program captured in that review of capital works?

**Mr Italiano:** Yes, it was captured in the capital works review.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It was captured, or is captured?

**Mr Italiano:** I am sorry; I did mean the indicated outcome. It was one of the programs subject to the capital works review, and as the outcome of that review is not yet finalised, it is still in that review.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Do you have an estimated cost for the upgrade of the regional network?

**Mr Italiano:** It is in the vicinity of \$60 million.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** In the earlier information you provided to us, you indicated that there was an area of nine per cent where you could make savings. When you identified the savings you did not appear to identify any savings in those areas. Have you put any restrictions or controls across the things like overtime, travel, advertising—which is not listed there but I would assume it would fit into advertising—and even minor equipment purchases? I would have thought that that would be an area that might fit in. Have you put any restrictions or controls to monitor or try to reduce the expenditure in those areas?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** This is one of the problems we run into, because I think the government sometimes thinks that all agencies run inefficiently and they do not actually respond to cost pressures internally. A lot of these things were done over the past couple of years. For argument’s sake, last year we reduced our travel budget by 20 per cent, or a quantum of \$4 million. We had already made those savings before the three per cent efficiency dividend came along. We are obviously very interested to reduce budgets and put pressure on overtime budgets, not to stop officers from working overtime, but to put more scrutiny and accountability on overtime—what is it worked for, how is it used? It is the same with shift penalties. We want to improve our rostering system and we are going to negotiate that through the EBA process, to try and flex up the rostering system. That obviously has an impact on the shift penalties that the agency pays. There is a whole range of those activities that are done as part of normal business. It is not as if the police do not pay any attention to those. All of those cuts are made already, so when you have made those cuts in that nine per cent of your budget, and the government comes along and says it wants another three per cent, it becomes even tougher, because you have already done a lot of work in that area.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** At Easter time I know you try to get every officer you can on the road, and I assume that is done through overtime—those sort of projects will not be affected?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** No, no. The thing I want to really emphasise here is that because you look at an overtime budget and you want people to be accountable about the use of it does not mean you are restricting it. You just want to have good information about how it is being spent. A really good example of that is when you have a major crime; you have lots of people who respond to that major crime, and it is sometimes difficult to work out exactly why all the hours have been spent on a particular issue, so we want to break that down and get a better view of how that is managed.

I just want to go back—you asked me a question before that I did not think I closed off on completely, and that was the issue about cost-shifting to other government agencies. Can I just go back to that for a minute?

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Yes.

Apart from anything else, police resources are generally more expensive than many other resources in government. If you use a police officer to transport a prisoner, when you could be using an

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custodial officer from another department, it is much more expensive for the police officer to do that in terms of wages. If you say to the courts “Don’t transfer the prisoner at all, we will do this by video link”, you save millions and millions of dollars. One of the things we have been trying to negotiate with DOTAG is that we move prisoners, and so does DCS, a vast amount of distances all over the state, just for an appearance before a magistrate, when the technology is there to do it quickly and cheaply via video link, but the magistrates are proving to be fairly intransigent about that, and they are the sorts of things we are trying to change. In other words, you can make savings by rearranging the businesses, not only of the police, but also in other departments. They are some of the things we put forward in terms of our future cost savings.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I am glad you brought us back to that, because I was also going to ask you if you are able to identify what the current costs are of providing each of those services that you identified: the infringement processing, the court data entry and the prisoner transport, which I think is predominantly now juveniles. Some of the adult work is contracted out, is it not?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** It is.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Do you have a current breakdown of what the costs of providing each of those areas are?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** We will be able to provide the costs in terms of the police hours involved, travel costs and fuel and vehicle costs, so we could do that.

**The CHAIR:** Just for Hansard, I will just make sure that we pick that up. You are going to provide additional information on those areas.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I would imagine that there would be some security issues in contracting out, which would still require security clearances, in things like the data entry and the infringement processing. Is that an issue?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** My feeling is that data entry would be done by another government department that has a better technology available, so that they can do it more efficiently than us. Certainly, if you are outsourcing a policing type function you would need to do some sort of background checks into people who are working in that area, because they are getting access to systems and information that a lot of people do not have access to.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I assume that infringement processing gives you access to the motor vehicle database.

**Dr O’Callaghan:** It gives you access to the motor vehicle database and to the drivers’ licence database.

**Hon JON FORD:** I was interested in what you were saying about magistrates. I do not know whether this relates, but I think it might do. On a fairly recent trip to the multipurpose facility at Jigalong, one of your officers said to me that the court evidence technology out there relied on 3G, and as such the court is now used as a meeting room for the community, because they cannot get 3G service. Is that the sort of thing you are talking about? Would that not result in people who require to appear before a magistrate still having to be taken into Newman, rather than —

**Dr O’Callaghan:** I think where you do not have video link or video conferencing facilities, you still have to do transfers, but there are many transfers around the state between courts in major centres that could be done by video link. It just means that we need to have a change in the way the judiciary operates in that environment. You could save millions and millions of dollars doing that.

**Hon JON FORD:** So is it more a cultural thing than a technology thing?

**Dr O’Callaghan:** Yes. Some areas do not have 3G, so it is not possible, but generally there is enough 3G access in regional Western Australia to actually make significant savings.

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**The CHAIR:** Have you raised that? Have you had conversations with Wayne Martin about magistrates' reluctance to —

**Dr O'Callaghan:** This discussion goes back even before Wayne Martin, to the previous Chief Justice. It is certainly on our agenda, and I think the Chief Justice is broadly supportive of it. Part of the challenge is trying to get people at ground level to accept it as a way of doing business.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** You were talking about Northbridge and the other issues around it. How do night trains out of Northbridge impact on your policing, if they were to be removed?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Night trains? There are not any.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The removal of those—what impact is that having?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** It is a huge problem for us, because there is no efficient way of getting people out of Northbridge in the early hours of the morning. Taxidivers generally do not want to transport people from Northbridge. They do not go there, so there is a high demand and a low supply. There are no buses, and there are no trains out of Northbridge in the early hours of the morning. I think that is part of the problem.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Also, in terms of your review of police stations, are you looking at aggregating up in the south metropolitan area, for a central complex in the south metro at all?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** In the longer term, we are. There are no immediate plans to do that, but in the longer term there are a number of facilities that need to be replaced. Fremantle Police Station is long overdue for replacement. The old Cockburn Police Station is due for replacement, so when those things come along we will want to talk about aggregation of facilities.

**The CHAIR:** When you are talking long term, what is long term for you?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** Fremantle Police Station is overdue for replacement now. We would like to do that in the next four to five years—at least start the process of its replacement.

**The CHAIR:** I am a member for the South Metropolitan Region, so I have an interest in this. There is some talk of doing something in Jandakot. Do you have any plans in the short to mid term in Jandakot?

**Dr O'Callaghan:** No. There was something as part of the last election process, where a police station was mentioned to be put at Jandakot. It is not our preference. It would not fit in with our service delivery model anyway, so I do not believe anything is going to be done at Jandakot specifically. I think there was also some confusion about exactly where that police station was meant to go.

**The CHAIR:** Okay.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** If you are going to get this parochial, I will have to ask about the Two Rocks Police Station.

**The CHAIR:** You asked about something in the northern suburbs already.

**Dr O'Callaghan:** I can answer that the Two Rocks Police Station has to be replaced, and there has to be a new police station in that area, possibly at Yanchep rather than Two Rocks. Two Rocks is simply a shopfront and is not suitable for running a policing service.

**The CHAIR:** All right. Thank you very much for your assistance. We have identified some outstanding things that you will get back to us on. We will look at the transcript as well and we may have some further questions. We would appreciate it if you could respond to those as well. Thanks again.

**Hearing concluded at 10.10 am**

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