

# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

**2022–23 BUDGET ESTIMATES**



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE  
TAKEN AT PERTH  
TUESDAY, 21 JUNE 2022**

**SESSION ONE**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, LANDS AND HERITAGE  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT AUTHORITY  
COMMISSIONER OF MAIN ROADS**

**Members**

**Hon Peter Collier (Chair)  
Hon Samantha Rowe (Deputy Chair)  
Hon Jackie Jarvis  
Hon Nick Goiran  
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt**

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**Hearing commenced at 10.00 am**

**Hon SUE ELLERY**

**Leader of the House representing the Minister for Transport, examined:**

**Mr PETER WORONZOW**

**Director General, Department of Transport; Acting Commissioner of Main Roads; Acting Chief Executive Officer, Public Transport Authority, examined:**

**Mr PETER PAROLO**

**Executive Director, Finance and Procurement Services, Department of Transport, examined:**

**Ms ROBYN LAMONT**

**Executive Director, Finance and Contracts, Department of Transport, examined:**

**Mr MAURICE CAMMACK**

**Director, Budget and Investment Planning, Main Roads Western Australia, examined:**

**Mr PHILIP D'SOUZA**

**Executive Director, Finance and Commercial Services, Main Roads Western Australia, examined:**

**Mr DOUGLAS MORGAN**

**Executive Director, Planning and Technical Services, Main Roads Western Australia, examined:**

**Mr DES SNOOK**

**Acting Managing Director, Main Roads Western Australia, examined:**

**Mr MARK BURGESS**

**Managing Director, Public Transport Authority, examined:**

**Mr ASHLEY VINCENT**

**Managing Director, Metronet, examined:**

**Ms BELINDA STOPIC**

**Acting Executive Director, Infrastructure Delivery, Office of Major Transport Infrastructure Delivery, Main Roads Western Australia, examined:**

**Mr PATRICK SEARES**

**Managing Director, Westport, examined:**

**Mr GLEN FINN**

**Planning Director, Metronet, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, examined:**

**Mr IAIN CAMERON**

**Managing Director, Department of Transport, examined:**

**Mr PATRICK ABROMEIT**

**Senior Policy Adviser, Minister for Transport, examined:**

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**The CHAIR:** Welcome to today's estimates hearings. The committee acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and pays its respects to their elders, both past and present.

Can the witnesses indicate whether or not they have read, understood and signed the document titled "Information for Witnesses"? Just a collective nodding will do. Everyone on the end, you have all read it? Thank you.

Your testimony before the committee must be complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. The hearing is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The committee will place the uncorrected transcript of your evidence on the internet a few days after the hearing. When the transcript is finalised, the uncorrected version will be replaced by the finalised version. This is a public hearing but the committee can elect to hear evidence in private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question.

Members, before asking your question, I ask that you provide the relevant page and paragraph numbers where possible.

Minister, would you like to make an opening statement?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Only to say, chair, that you and I have had a conversation. I am driving three files—one for Main Roads, one for PTA and one for the Department of Transport. It would be helpful for me if we kind of do one of those at a time. I appreciate that might not always be possible. Otherwise, I will just slow it down a bit by trying to juggle my files.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you for that. As I said in our conversations, we will be as accommodating as we possibly can. Given the large volume of members here, sometimes that just may not be possible. We will start, ideally, with the Department of Transport. Are there any questions from the committee? Hon Samantha Rowe.

**Hon SAMANTHA ROWE:** Thank you, chair.

Minister, I am referring to budget paper no 2, page 589, which is significant issues. It is point 13, titled "Climate Change". Minister, are you able to outline the financial incentives that are going to be offered to the public to help increase the licensing take-up for electric and zero-emission vehicles in WA?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will do my very best. Yes, I can. So, WA has set a target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and the decarbonisation of transport is one of the key measures to help us achieve that. Since cars have a long service life—I am advised that the median WA vehicle is 11 years old—it is important that we prioritise decarbonisation of transport as soon as possible. One way of doing that is to offer financial incentives to make the uptake of zero-emission vehicles more attractive and affordable. To encourage the uptake, the scheme will offer a financial incentive of a \$3 500 rebate on the purchase of eligible new battery electric vehicles and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles valued up to \$70 000. There will be 10 000 of those rebates over the period 2022–23 to 2024–25 with a total of \$36.5 million. Those eligible vehicles will be new light battery vehicles or hydrogen fuel cell vehicles up to 4 500-tonne gross vehicle mass—that is, hybrid vehicles not included—first registered by either an individual or an organisation within three years of the date of the announcement of the rebates and they will have a dutiable value of up to \$70 000. Vehicle owners will need to submit an application form to the Department of Transport, which is available

for them on the website and the Department of Transport staff will check vehicle licence records to confirm eligibility and then arrange for the payment of the rebate.

**Hon SAMANTHA ROWE:** I have another one for Department of Transport if we are still going. Minister, it is page 604. “Details of Administered Transactions” and if you go halfway down, it is on-demand transport levy. Are you able to let us know what is happening with the on-demand passenger transport levy?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I can. The temporary on-demand transport levy commenced in April 2019 as part of what is now a completed reform of passenger transport industry. The levy was introduced to recoup the \$120 million paid by the government to buyback Perth-owned taxi plates. Modelling undertaken in 2017 predicted that the levy would be required to be in place until April next year—so for four years—to recoup the \$420 million. In early 2020, the government fast-tracked an urgent amendment to the Transport (Road Passenger Services) Act 2018 to allow levy funds to be directed back to the industry in the form of a suite of COVID-19 financial relief measures totalling \$9 million, so that additional support was added to the moneys expected to be recouped by the levy, bringing the total to \$129 million. Stronger-than-expected conditions within the industry and as part of the government’s measures to address cost of living, it was announced that the levy would be repealed on 31 May this year. So, that is 11 months earlier than anticipated. The early repeal of the levy is expected to result in between \$1 million to \$2 million under-recovery of the full \$129 million. Customers can expect a drop in fares from those on-demand booking services that elected to pass on the cost of the levy rather than to absorb it.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** Minister, my question is on page 588, spending changes. It is about halfway down. It is the “Driving Access and Equity Program Extension” under “Ongoing Initiatives”. There is \$5.4 million budgeted for 2022–23. That driver access and equity program, because it is noted as an extension, I assume it is a continuation or expansion of the existing program. Can you outline in practical terms what the actual program is and what it delivers?

[10.10 am]

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes, I can. This was one of the things that came out of the skills summit in July last year. Employers and other stakeholders identified that a major barrier to young people in remote and regional WA getting a job was not having a driver’s licence. There are limited driving instructors, particularly in remote areas. The Kimberley, for example, has one of the lowest numbers of professional driving instructors in the state, and there are limited practical driving assessments available. Literacy and language is also a barrier for some. The plan was announced last year to help more young people get their licence, and that is the Driving Access and Equity program. In the last 12 months, the program has awarded almost \$3.5 million in grants to 12 organisations throughout the Kimberley and the Pilbara. Organisations have indicated that they will be working with over a thousand disadvantaged learners, which should result in over 550 provisional drivers’ licences and over 350 employment opportunities. Funds have also been used to assist vehicles to be purchased for those organisations to use as part of that program. We have established or expanded three programs to help people complete their 50 hours of supervised driving, because that has been one of the barriers as well—actually having someone who has a licence themselves to do the supervision so that people can get a driver’s licence. We are training people in certificate IV in driving instruction so they can teach learner drivers. There has been a number of training courses. Eight people in Broome in March completed their qualifications, and seven in Kununurra more recently. That was the first three female Aboriginal participants as well. It has created jobs for the instructors and helped others to get into jobs by ensuring that they have their licence as well. We are going to expand the program to the midwest, the Gascoyne and the goldfields–Esperance region. Again,

\$2.4 million in grants will go to community-based organisations. The stakeholder engagement sessions have begun in the midwest and Gascoyne, and then they will start in goldfields–Esperance in August to identify the local variables that need to be taken into account.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** Excellent; thank you.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I refer to page 589 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and the significant issues impacting the agency. Point 13 is on climate change. The department said in response to a question asked prior to the hearing about consultation for the transport sectoral emissions reduction strategy—the SERS—that a range of stakeholders and peak bodies will be consulted, and listed the RAC, the Freight and Logistics Council, the Motor Trade Association, airlines, and major road and freight companies. My question is: will stakeholders for active transport be consulted through the SERS process?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** A good question, and I will see who can give me an answer. I am advised that we can. I assume that means that we have not to date, but we can consult with them.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** Given that you can, which is great, who would you be consulting with from the active transport area?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** My sense is that it is not organised, from the answer that I have got.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I can give you suggestions.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will let Mr Cameron answer that directly.

**Mr CAMERON:** We are more than happy to take any nominations. We will advertise that more widely and engage with people broadly on that.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** Thank you. That flows into my next question around SERS, and that is: what opportunities will there be for members of the community? Obviously, there are peak bodies—WestCycle is the one that certainly comes to mind as the peak body for cycling in WA—but are there going to be opportunities for community members to participate in the SERS process as well? I frame that by saying that I do not think we will get to emissions reductions without active transport as a key part of it. Getting people into electric cars will not get us there.

**Mr CAMERON:** Point taken. Yes, we would typically go to those peak organisations and groups and then obviously work through that, but we will work at a way that we can invite broader comment as well.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** For the sectoral emissions reduction strategy, do you have a time frame of when you are likely to consult and when you are likely to be completed?

**Mr CAMERON:** No, not specifically at this point. We will advertise that and promote it once we have sequenced that.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I have a different question around the space of cycling generally. This is me trying to understand where cycling fits in the budget. It is slightly challenging. It is always very interesting in this area to understand how much has been spent and when and where. There are several line items. There is the Western Australian bicycle network—the principal shared paths and bike boulevards. Many of those are listed on page 601. Again, in our previous questions on notice, we were given kind of lump sums for the forward estimates around what was going to be spent in those areas. On page 601, it says that the Western Australian bicycle network, including the principal shared path program, has \$24.8 million proposed for this coming financial year. Are you able to provide a breakdown of what is going to the PSPs and what is going to the Western Australian bicycle network? As a follow-up question to that, is there any other funding that I am missing or is that the complete funding for cycling infrastructure in Western Australia?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will see whether I have a note that brings it all together in one spot. Following on from \$265 million in 2021–22, that has been now boosted to a \$347 million investment in pedestrian and cycling infrastructure over the next four years throughout WA, including \$47 million to further expand local bike infrastructure throughout the WA bicycle network grants program and other projects; \$62 million to continue the principal shared path expansion program; \$46 million to deliver riding and walking facilities as part of other major infrastructure projects, including the Swan River crossing project, Mitchell Freeway projects—Hodges to Hepburn, and Cedric to Vincent and Stephenson Avenue—and the Tonkin Highway extension; \$35 million to deliver a pedestrian and cycling bridge in East Perth; and \$157 million through the Perth City Deal to deliver active transport projects, including the Causeway pedestrian and cyclist bridge.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** You may not have this, and I am happy to take it on notice, but do we have a breakdown for this current financial year in terms of expenditure in those different categories?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We are happy to take that as supplementary.  
[*Supplementary Information No A1.*]

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The department's large database is the transport executive and licensing information system. It is known as TRELIS. What is the cost of maintaining that database?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Can you give me a budget page reference?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** That is what I am asking you: what is the cost of maintaining the TRELIS information database system?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The way that it is helpful to me to be able to find you that information is that my file is organised according to budget pages. If you can give me a budget paper reference, that will help me find the information.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** I understand that, but at the end of the day, it is impossible that these witnesses do not know about TRELIS. Somebody here knows about TRELIS and how much it costs to maintain it.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Do you have a budget paper reference, member?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** I do not.

**The CHAIR:** The director general perhaps?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will see if I can find an answer for you.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** It would be staggering if you could not.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It would be amalgamated into the operating costs for the agency. We could take it on notice, honourable member, but it is not information that is prepared in the budget paper documents.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Yes, please.  
[*Supplementary Information No A2.*]

[10.20 am]

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The CCC tabled a report with respect to the unlawful access to TRELIS by the department and its staff. It is dated 5 August 2021. In this report, the commission says that it is concerned about the approach by the Department of Transport, whose default position is that unlawful access is a mere conflict of interest, whereas the CCC considers this a serious matter, including not only serious misconduct, but a criminal offence. Has that approach changed by the Department of Transport or does it still consider it a mere conflict of interest?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, the purpose of these sessions is to interrogate the budget papers —

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** That is right.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** — and the information that is provided to me, as the person answering the questions, is organised in an accordance with the budget papers. I can take that question on notice and if the minister has a point of view to express to you, she can do it. But in terms of what is a useful use of the time here today, it is about the interrogation of the budget papers.

**The CHAIR:** I think the best we are going to get at this stage is on notice. That is A3 unless you have another line of questioning.

*[Supplementary Information No A3.]*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Yes, thanks, chairman. Minister, when there is unlawful access to TRELIS, who in the Department of Transport investigates these matters?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Again, it is the same line of questioning, chair. The purpose of this session is to interrogate the budget papers. I can take that question on notice.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Minister, I think you misunderstand the purpose of these hearings.

**The CHAIR:** Just one second. We will take that on notice and we will have that as part of A3.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The point here is that TRELIS is the largest database held by the Department of Transport. It holds sensitive information about Western Australians. The CCC has said that it holds the most personal information about members of the WA public. They have raised concerns about this matter. Your director general and your officers here are responsible for that and they have a duty to be accountable for it. So for you to say that this is simple a budgetary exercise, part of the budget is actually them getting paid. That is what they get paid the big bucks for. So it is extraordinary that the CCC —

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** You want to keep wasting your own time. The chair has taken the question on notice. It is fine by me if you want to waste your own time.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** No. I am just trying to make sure that you understand —

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Go for it.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** — that this is more than just simply analysing the budget. It includes these issues that arise from it.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is exactly about analysing the budget.

**The CHAIR:** Member, do you have additional questions in regard to TRELIS, because I think we are going to be taking all of them on notice by the sound of things?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Yes, I think so, Mr Chairman. So my question to the minister is: is any witness present here familiar with TRELIS? If they are, what is the name of that officer?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Chair, the answers are given by me—by me—and if I need advice from officers, I will seek it. But I give the answers in respect of matters —

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Point of order, Mr Chairman. The minister is mistaken, because a member can ask a question to any of the witnesses directly, and I would like to know which one here knows something about TRELIS.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** And I am telling you that I will take your questions on notice. I make the decision about what information is provided. All the answers go through me. You will note I have been doing this for 20 years, and when officers give answers, they say, “Through you, minister.”

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**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Sadly, minister, you have not read the procedural guideline.

**The CHAIR:** Member, I want to expedite this process. I appreciate where you are coming from. The minister, I think, has made her position clear. So are there any other questions that you would like to ask on TRELIS or anything else, because we really are going to have to move on?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** I am simply asking which of the witnesses here are familiar with TRELIS so we know who to ask the questions to.

**The CHAIR:** I am not quite sure that is going to resolve this.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I do not think that gets you any further, because I would say everyone sitting here is familiar with TRELIS.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Then I have the opportunity to ask that particular witness something about TRELIS. Whether the minister orders them not to answer the questions is another thing altogether. It is pretty extraordinary that there is a CCC report and the minister wants to obstruct the process.

**The CHAIR:** The minister has made her position quite clear with regard to this. You can ask a particular witness, but then the minister will make that determination as to whether or not she answers it.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Right. In which case, chairman, my question is: does the director general know anything about TRELIS?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The answer to that is, yes, he does. But in respect of your line of questioning, I have already made it clear that I am happy to take your questions on notice and put them to the minister.

**The CHAIR:** Anymore, because I am going to move on from TRELIS?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Mr Chairman, I would be happy to ask a range of questions, but this is an extraordinary exercise in obstruction by the minister.

**The CHAIR:** Sorry; there are a lot of members who need to ask a question. Have you no more on this?

Hon Neil Thomson.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I refer to page 588 in relation to the Westport feasibility studies, which are being funded this year and obviously in the 2023 financial year. I understand that there is quite a considerable amount of money being put into feasibility studies and planning, and I assume that a lot of options are being examined. I also note that the concept plan for the onshore transport-related components was released only a few weeks ago. I also note the concerns of the industry around the future constraints and I ask specifically to do with the options for the future capacity of that port and whether they are being assessed within the feasibility studies that are underway, particularly in relation to the channel depths which are being developed and whether there is any consideration for the depth of 21 metres. I understand—I am not a maritime person—there is scope in the future for ships of capacity up to 21 metres. Have any of those been considered within those feasibility studies which are under consideration at the moment?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The new \$20 million, including the \$4 million contingency design optioneering—is that even a word?—enabling works program, will support the development of the new Kwinana port and drive improved trade, economic and land use development outcomes in the Kwinana-Fremantle area. Over the next two years, the following feasibility studies will be developed—relocating the ageing Kwinana bulk terminal jetty to provide flexibility for the new container terminal site, and that is \$7.5 million to be delivered by the Fremantle Port Authority; moving the

vehicle shipping berth from Victoria Quay to Fremantle's North Quay, and that is \$5 million to be delivered by the Fremantle Port Authority; relocating the livestock trade from Fremantle to a regional port, and that is \$2 million to be delivered by the Department of Transport; and construction of a southern Kwinana rail loop to avoid rail congestion once the container terminal transitions, and that is \$1.5 million to be delivered by the Department of Transport. My note of what you asked about included a reference to channel depths. I am just going to see whether anyone can tell me anything specific about that. I am told Mr Seares can provide you with some additional information about that.

**Mr SEARES:** Yes, there are very detailed considerations of what the future shipping fleet might look like that will visit not just Western Australia, but Australia as a whole and, therefore, the analysis of what size those ships are will allow us to determine the depth of the channel. Obviously, the very, very large ships that you see around the world, and occasionally get jammed in the Suez Canal, are probably unlikely to ever visit Australia because of the size of our market, so it is important we understand exactly how deep we need the channels to be rather than over-scope that work. That will be included in the business case analysis.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Thanks for that; I appreciate the answer. I note that last year \$400 million was allocated to a special purpose account for Westport. It is in the budget on page 599. It is in terms of the cash flows, because the impact of the budget goes down by a \$386 million appropriation this year because that was not funded. Given the issues raised by Hon Dr Steve Thomas, the shadow Treasurer, in relation to the special purpose accounts, there are just two questions I want to ask if I can. They are part of the same question. One is: What are the government's arrangements for managing that SPA? How does the government envisage those funds will be utilised?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I think the question about how we manage special purpose accounts is probably a bigger one than just for this particular agency. I will start with giving you some of the information that I have got and then we will see if we can answer your questions to the best of our ability. The \$400 million Westport enabling works now also allow for investments in environmental offset works and a range of feasibility studies in respect of prospective projects. Over the forward estimates period, Westport is set to secure \$322.5 million worth of strategic land to protect the future freight corridors along Anketell, Thomas and Rowley Roads, as well as to protect industrial land for logistics and infrastructure.

Planning for the Anketell–Thomas Roads freight corridor is progressed in stages. That is aligned to Westport's program of development activities. The concept design for the first stage of the freight highway between Clementi Road and Tonkin Highway has been released, and the concept design for the full freight route is expected in 2023–24. I am not sure if this is the kind of information that you are after in terms of the breakdown of those funds. I have more information on the breakdown if that is what you are looking for.

[10.30 am]

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** If you can table those—for time.

**The CHAIR:** You have a minute.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Okay. The new \$55 million environmental offset enabling works program is part of that. There is \$20 million, including a \$4 million contingency design optioneering enabling works program, and I have outlined what that is made up of.

**The CHAIR:** I intend to go through these agencies and give everyone a go—no problems. Any time that remains at the end, you can ask any of them, but at this stage I am giving everyone about five

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to seven minutes, depending on the situation. Anytime that remains at the end, we can hold those other questions for then.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** My questions concern the high-capacity signalling program of works, and that appears on page 631 and 633 of the budget papers.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** So we are into PTA now?

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Yes. Can I not ask PTA questions?

**The CHAIR:** I am going to come to PTA. Ideally I want to deal with just transport in this round, and then I will come back to the PTA.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Jump over me then.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thank you, chair.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I refer to budget paper No. 3, *Economic and fiscal outlook*, chapter 7, investing in regional Western Australia, “Royalties for Regions Program”, page 230. I would like to ask about the Albany ring-road, which is due for completion by the end of this financial year. Considering the number of property owners who have been adversely affected by the construction —

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Chair, it is Main Roads.

**The CHAIR:** This is the Department of Transport. As I said, I know this is going to be difficult, but I think it will be more efficient in the long term if we do not chop and change. This is just the Department of Transport at this stage. You will get to ask your question, but when we get to Main Roads.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** No problem.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 601, the Country Age Pension Fuel Card scheme—I see it is a similar amount in this budget and in coming years. Has the department done any work on how many less kilometres would be able to be travelled by the recipients of that scheme? It is a great scheme, by the way. So it is \$575 to be used for taxi fares plus fuel. Is there any work being done, given the recent fuel price rises, on how many less kilometres would be achieved with that spend?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will give you the information I have. The policy sits with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. It is administered through the Department of Transport. I will give you the information that I have. The member would be aware that it provides pensioners who live above the twenty-sixth parallel with one return journey each year by air or by coach. But you are actually asking about the fuel. At the discretion of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, the card value may be annually indexed at the Treasury-advised consumer price index rate. The card remains at \$575 for 2021–22 and going forward. There is an estimated net card increase of approximately a thousand per annum, using previous years’ trend data. I am not sure that I can give you much more information about that. If it is helpful, I will take it on notice. If I can get you more information out of this agency I will. Chair, are you calling DPIRD?

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I might also suggest, honourable member, that you ask that question during DPIRD’s appearance as well, and I will see what I can get you from this agency.

[*Supplementary Information No A4.*]

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**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Chair, I seek a bit of advice. The supply chain fund is mentioned in transport and PTA. It is mainly in PTA, but I just wanted to make sure I have hit the right one.

**The CHAIR:** We will see how we go.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I think we can do it now.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** There are a number of dollars allocated to that fund. I was chasing the split between state and federal spend, and when. Obviously, there is some CBH money in that as well. Could I get the location of that spend, and when, and the split between state and federal? I believe there is a study being done on a section of that rail network. I would like to know when that is in that spend. Will that be a state–federal–CBH contribution for the study or will all the federal money go on actual rail improvements? The state has allocated \$40 million for the total project. Where will they find the extra money for the study and the work on that bit of tier 3 railway line?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will give you some information, and then I might hand to the director general. I am advised it is effectively an 80–20 split. The state and commonwealth governments have committed \$187.5 million of joint funding in the wheatbelt secondary freight network program to increase freight efficiency and productivity. The transport portfolio has finalised the allocation of \$200 million in combined state and commonwealth funding to individual freight projects under the agricultural supply chain improvement program—ASCI. That package will go towards four project areas. This government funding will leverage millions in private sector investment.

There is \$22 million for four rail-siding extensions to the CBH grain bins at Moora, Brookton, Cranbrook and Broomehill, which complements the significant CBH investment in rail-loading facilities. Those works are now underway. There is \$46 million for seven additional grain rail-siding upgrades at Avon, Kellerberrin, Dowerin, Konnongorong, Ballidu, Mingenew—Mingenew is Ellery territory—and Perenjori North, which will help CBH load longer trains much more quickly. Then there is \$60 million for the Midland line main line upgrading, from 16 tonne axle loading to 19 tonne axle loading between Carnamah and Mingenew, allowing heavier trains and a 20 per cent increase in train loads.

With around 400 000 tonnes of grain per year being carried on that section, the upgrade will provide operational improvements and freight cost savings for all grain growers delivering to bins on selected line sections. I will check with the director general—there is more! There is \$72 million for the southern wheatbelt region towards the progressive recommissioning of the Narrogin—Kulin rain line and associated works to service grain and other potential customers in the Narrogin—Wickepin area via a tier 3 line. The Narrogin—Kulin line was closed in 2013, as the honourable member would be aware. The first stage of this project will be a study to assess the most useful way to make that investment benefit all of the potential freight users and the community. The Department of Transport continues to work with industry stakeholders to identify opportunities and priorities for the freight rail network, including the southern wheatbelt, as part of potential future packages for regional infrastructure investment. There were a few parts to your question, honourable member. I am not sure if that got all of them.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** The \$72 million for the southern wheatbelt—can I get the split between state and federal, please?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is 80–20.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** On all of them?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Correct.

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**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Minister, if we can turn to page 588 of budget paper No 2, volume 2 and go back to the Westport feasibility study, following on from some of the questions of Hon Neil Thomson. You talked earlier about the transition to Kwinana or changes there in the investment of the bulk jetty, the movement of vehicles and so on. What I am trying to get an understanding of is what might be the indicative time frames, I guess, for the operationalisation of that outer harbour and the freight networks associated with it. Have we got a time frame on when they will become indicative?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am advised, honourable member, that the time lines will be determined and examined through the business case process; I think I referred to that in my earlier answer.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** So at this stage we do not know when containers will be transitioned from Fremantle to the outer harbour—we do not have any indicative dates at all?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** No, because we have to do the business case to do all the analyses of what is going to be the best way to do that.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** In that instance then, there must be some investment being made into the existing freight network to cope with the extra volume of containers that are going to be going on the existing network. Is there an indication of what that investment might be?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am getting a list, honourable member. There are a few projects. The Fremantle Traffic Bridge is one. I might ask the director general to provide you with an answer to that.

**Mr WORONZOW:** Thank you. It might be useful to just talk about some of the roadworks that we have completed recently. The High Street upgrade was a key component of allowing heavy vehicles to travel safely and more efficiently into the port. In the budget papers, there is reference to the Swan River crossings; that is the Fremantle Traffic Bridge. We have awarded the contract for the Swan River crossings. We are in the process of completing the design, and construction will commence with a time frame to have that bridge completed sometime late 2024, early 2025. Main Roads has invested heavily in a road network operations centre, which has allowed us to optimise the flow of traffic along Leach Highway. We have been able to coordinate in a better fashion those 16 or 17 traffic lights along Leach Highway and, as a result, the average travel time along Leach Highway is about eight or nine per cent less than what it was two or three years ago. At the same time, we have been able to increase the reliability of travel. Truck drivers, besides speed of travel, they look for reliability, and for the ports operation, reliability is really important. The investment in the technology to synchronise those traffic lights in a better fashion with those physical investments has meant that congestion and reliability for the foreseeable future for the port is no longer the issue that it was.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Just following on from that, the compound annual growth rate for container traffic is around, I think, 3.25 per cent is the estimated growth rate. Given that change, and we are looking at some significant time period before the operationalisation of the outer harbour, will that existing freight network cope with that growth rate?

**Mr WORONZOW:** As I said, those initiatives that I outlined provide a reduced level of congestion. As I said, it is in the order of nine per cent. Our modelling, and as the minister has pointed out, a lot of work is going into answering all these questions, which will be presented in the business case that will go to government.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** When do you anticipate that business case will be complete?

**Mr WORONZOW:** It will be sometime in 2024.

**The CHAIR:** Do you have something, Hon Dr Brian Walker —

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**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** I do.

**The CHAIR:** — for the Department of Transport?

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** It is green energy.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Is that Transport? You can ask me a question; I am told we are administering some of that so let us see if we can answer it.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** It is budget paper No 2, volume 2, 588 and the line item headed “Green Hydrogen Feasibility Study”. It has got a contribution of \$300 00 this financial year. What I was wondering is: what is the scope of this, the feasibility study, and what do you hope it will achieve?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Good question. I will see if I can drive my file and answer it myself. You never know your luck in a big city.

I am advised the funding is for a feasibility study into the hydrogen fuel cell trains for the PTA’s regional passenger train services and follows high-level investigation into emission technologies that concluded that hydrogen fuel cells, using green hydrogen, may be an appropriate future technology option. This project will inform future planning of the *Prospector—AvonLink* train replacement and future planning of trains for the Bunbury faster rail project. The administration of this project has been assigned to the department as the central coordinating agency for climate action and advice across the transport portfolio.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** This came to my attention recently and I was quite surprised by it—maybe you will be surprised, too. I was just reading just two days ago that hemp batteries are six times more efficient than the current lithium batteries.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Hemp?

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Hemp batteries—strange as it is. Any thoughts on that?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** No; I have no thoughts on that!

**Hon SANDRA CARR:** I refer to page 589, budget paper No 2, line 7, under the heading “Supporting our Regions”. Can the minister update the house on how the McGowan government is supporting employment and tourism opportunities in our regions through the expansion of WA’s interregional flight network?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thanks, member. There is \$4 million to support the proposed expansion of the interregional flight network operated by Aviair. Currently, Aviair operates nine-seater aircraft on a service between Broome, Port Hedland, Karratha and Newman. This funding will support the introduction of a larger 76-seater plane—that would make me feel more comfortable than a nine-seater—meaning that more people can travel at a more affordable cost.

The expansion plan will also include extending the network from Karratha to Geraldton. For Geraldton, as the honourable member will be aware, the initiative is particularly important. While workable airfares have existed in other regional towns, this is the first time they will be available to Geraldton residents, and the new link would significantly reduce travel times between Geraldton and the Pilbara. It will be of assistance as well to small businesses and FIFO travellers in Geraldton, who currently travel to the Pilbara via Perth.

[10.50 am]

**Hon STEPHEN PRATT:** I refer to budget paper No 2, page 601, under “Details of controlled grants and subsidies”; the line item “Fremantle Container Rail Subsidy”. There is an allocation over four years for \$35.6 million. Can the minister provide an update on progress in achieving the 20 per cent rail mode share, and reducing truck movements on arterial roads linked to the port?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** This is in addition to the information that was provided to the question asked by Hon Colin de Grussa a few minutes ago. This also goes to how we maintain an effective port while the work is being done on Westport. In 2018, we increased the Fremantle container rail subsidy from \$30 to \$50 per 20-foot equivalent unit—TEU—for eligible containers to and from the Fremantle port. That was aimed at encouraging greater use of the rail service, and to reduce freight-related traffic on the port's arterial roads. After the increase in the subsidy, the rail mode share rose from 16.1 per cent in 2017–18, to just over 20 per cent in both 2018–19 and 2019–20. That met our election commitment target.

It is fair to say the global disruption caused by COVID did impact rail volumes, with a mode share of 18.4 per cent recorded in 2020–21. However, volumes have rebounded over the last six months, averaging 22.5 per cent between July 2021 and March 2022, and reaching a peak of 24.3 per cent in March of this year. That mode share in March this year was the highest ever recorded, with the total volumes handled by rail also at a record high, with over 16 500 TEUs transported via rail. In the last 12 months, to March, the container rail service handled 163 071 TEU containers, removing approximately 110 480 one-way truck movements from those arterial port roads, and that compared to 86 000 one-way truck movements in the 12 months prior to increasing the subsidies, so prior to the 2017 calendar year. This funding of \$35.6 million over the forward estimates will give greater confidence and cost certainty to customers using the rail service, and will support the sustainable development of the operation of the Fremantle container rail service, and the continuation of the subsidies has helped compensate for the economic uncertainty created by the pandemic and slower than planned productivity improvements at the North Quay rail terminal.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** My question relates to page 589, and the taxi industry and the on-demand passenger transport levy. There was a voluntary buy-back scheme, which I think was early completion, which was great to hear. There are a couple of questions about that. How many plates will still be owned privately at the end of this process? The other question is probably a little more by way of background. I am trying ascertain whether there are still any revenues raised from the leased plates that used to exist. If you could clarify that for me and update me on that, and whether the taxi industry development account, which I could not find in the budget papers, still exists, and whether that has any funding in it.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I might ask Mr Cameron to provide you with an answer.

**Mr CAMERON:** Following the reform of the taxi industry, we have now moved to an annual on-demand vehicle licence. From my memory, I think there were over 1 000 owned plates at the time. I think, after all our endeavours were exhausted, all but two or three of those were bought back. We can provide more information—that is using my memory. Effectively, that then ended all of that regime. The leasing plates that you refer to, that is no longer in operation, so that is under the pre-reform. We have now moved to an annual licence, and anyone wishing to operate a taxi or an on-demand charter vehicle is able to apply and pay an annual licence. The benefits of that to the industry are easy-in, easy-out, so people can adjust as the market adjusts, whether that be regional or metro. There is just an application process and a licence fee they would pay. They need to be licensed themselves as an on-demand transport driver. It is a licensing regime now, which replaces the previous industry where they were owned plates. As you referred to, that was then changed as a result of the buy-out process.

**The CHAIR:** In the first part of that response, Mr Cameron, did you say you were going to provide additional information?

**Mr CAMERON:** What I was saying was that, from my memory, I think we ended up buying out all but two or three plates. I could confirm that if you wanted me to.

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[*Supplementary Information No A5.*]

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Just a follow-on from that, if I can. There seems to be two components. There was the—I cannot find the right word—component, which was the levy, to help pay the buyback, which was applied quite broadly, and then the licence fee. What is the annual licence fee, so once the levy goes, what will the industry be paying annually for one of those licences to operate effectively?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Mr Cameron will provide you with an answer.

**Mr CAMERON:** I can find it. Sorry; I am just taking a moment.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I am happy for it to be on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No A6.*]

**The CHAIR:** That has taken us about an hour—the Department of Transport. We now go to PTA. If you do not have any questions on a particular area, feel free to bypass. Then at the end, as I said, if we have any time, we can have a general go-for-it, and anything above and beyond that, you can put in questions after the hearing. That worked quite well in the end. I think everyone got a touch of the love, so that is good. We will now go to the PTA.

**Hon SAMANTHA ROWE:** I am referring to budget paper No 2, page 601, “Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies, about halfway down, Public Transport Authority, “Purple CAT Service”. There has been an allocation of funding of \$11.824 million towards the new purple CAT bus service over the next four years. I understand the service commenced in February this year. Do you have any more details on how that has gone in the community? Has there been uptake on the purple CAT?

[11.00 am]

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The purple central area transit—the CAT service—connects the University of Western Australia, Perth Children’s Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital to the CBD via Elizabeth Quay, Kings Park Road and Thomas Street. It adds about 470 kilometres each year to the existing CAT bus networks, servicing 46 stops along the route. In the first two weeks, there were over 20 000 boardings, making it the third most used CAT ahead of the blue and the green CATs. It continues to be a popular service—a free service—for students, teachers, hospital staff and visitors.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** With respect to the Public Transport Authority, what is the expected revenue to be derived from advertising this financial year?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Have you got a budget paper reference, honourable member?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Page 624 is where the division starts.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** That is correct. I am not trying to be difficult, but if there is a budget reference, if you can give to me, it makes it easy for me to drive my file. Meanwhile, I will see if anybody has got any information about advertising.

I will give you some information then. If I need to supplement that with information from Mr Burgess, that is what I will do. We have got two separate contracts with JCDcaux Outdoor Pty Ltd, which was formerly known as APN Outdoor Pty Ltd, that allows commercial third parties to advertise on PTA-owned train and bus conveyances and infrastructure. For the financial year 2021–22, the combined total advertising revenue paid from both contracts is estimated to be approximately \$6.1 million. That is an increase of \$1.3 million over the revenue in 2021 and a decrease of \$4 million over the \$10 million achieved in 2019–20. The train and bus advertising contracts expire in 2025 and 2029 respectively, and both contracts operate on a revenue share basis. Following the 2017 election, the Minister for Transport requested that the PTA negotiate to cease alcohol advertising, and those arrangements were implemented for the train advertising contract from March 2018 and

for the bus contract from March 2019. If it is of assistance to the member, I have got a breakdown of the percentage summary by advertising category—automotive or whatever different kind of category.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The answer is \$6.1 million. What is the budget revenue expected from the advertising in the coming financial year?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We do not have a figure, and there would be no benefit in taking it on notice, because I cannot give you a precise figure, although the expectation, honourable member, is that it would be similar to this year.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Right. Last year you said it was \$10.2 million for 2022–23, 2023–24 would also be \$10.3 million, then 2024–25 would be \$10.3 million. So has there been a change?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The expectation is that for the next financial year, it will be similar to the last year that we have just had.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** As in \$6.1 million?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I think that is the figure I just read out.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Last year it was \$6.8 million. I asked the same question and the response was that it would still maintain that \$10 million level. Now we have had another year where it is only \$6.1 million. That is why I am trying to get to the bottom of what the budget paper actually says.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The expectation is that it will be similar to this year, which is the \$6.1 million.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** You do not want to take it on notice?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I can; I am just not sure I would be giving you any additional information, but I do not mind.

**The CHAIR:** We will take that on notice then just to see if there is any adjustment.

*[Supplementary Information No A7.]*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Last year we got a table that said \$10.1 million, \$10.2 million, \$10.3 million and \$10.3 million. A response saying, “Look, the expectation is it will be the same”, is not satisfactory. We want to know what the forward estimates budget is with respect to those four years.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It has been taken on notice already.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** That is all right. Just making sure we are crystal clear.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** You are using up your own time. That is fine with me.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** How many complaints have been received in this financial year with respect to that advertising?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Do you have a budget paper reference, honourable member?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Well, it is the same one, is it not?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Well, it is just.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The \$6.1 million —

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will try to help you but you are not helping me.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Do not worry. They will be prepared because I have asked this question every year.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I have not had this portfolio every year in estimates, so forgive me.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** I know.

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**The CHAIR:** Is there anyone who can assist?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** We have had better responses in previous years.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I have to take it on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No A8.*]

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** The final question further to that, chairman, which will obviously have to be taken on notice, is: what were the nature of those complaints?

**The CHAIR:** That will be part of that A8. We will revert to Hon Dr Brad Pettitt, who was out on urgent parliamentary business.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I refer to page 624 of budget paper 2, volume 2, which is around “Spending Changes”, “Climate Action—Strategy to Transition the Transperth Bus Fleet to Electric Vehicles”. I understand, and please correct me if I have not got this right from some of the questions that we asked prior, that obviously there are two electric vehicles in the Transperth fleet at the moment. There will be four as part of the trial in Joondalup. Is it also correct to say that there will be 126 buses purchased that are scheduled to be delivered in this financial year, 2022–23? Is it correct to assume that all of those will be diesel and none of those will be electric?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thank you. I am just checking. I will ask Mr. Burgess to give you the answer.

**Mr BURGESS:** Thanks, member. I am not sure where you got the 126 number, but I am not saying you are wrong by any means. Our typical order is about 90 buses. It would be diesel at this stage. We are very keen on the electric buses. Obviously, it is a three-year trial, but we very much see it as a key part of the future and the question will be how that trial goes. One would hope even during the course of that trial, it informs us well on where we are headed, but at the moment they are diesel. They are Euro 6, so at least in terms of emissions it is the best we can do at this stage. But the 90 number we typically take every year. I know we are buying more for various activities to support various Metronet projects, so you may well be right with the 126 number, but I am not sure where you got that.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I think that may have occurred from one of the previous questions that we asked prior, where that number was given to us. I assume that part of the extra purchase above the 90 is because of the replacement to manage the Armadale line closure?

**Mr BURGESS:** Correct.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** Just so we have got some clarity going forward, the transport minister has previously said that obviously the manufacturing of electric buses will not happen until 2024–25. I guess what I am trying to understand is: is the department entertaining actually purchasing any electric vehicles? There is a \$549 million contract. Will any electric vehicles be purchased before they start to be manufactured here in 2024–25, assuming the trial is going well? I think it is a pretty proven technology, and there is no doubt that trial will go well. Will there be the opportunity in those forward budget lines, if not this year, in the next year or two, to convert some of that \$540 million contract with Volvo from diesel to electric or are we going to wait until the manufacture of electric buses here?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, I cannot give you a categorical yes or no. It has not been ruled out that we might take action before the trial period is completed, but essentially a decision has not been made yet.

[11.10 am]

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** Thank you. On a slightly different note, then, page 627, in terms of under the outcomes and key effectiveness indicators, second line down it talks about “Use of public

transport—Passengers per service kilometre” and metropolitan train services averaged just over two people per service kilometre in terms of last year in the budget. That is expected to jump up to 4.3 in the 2022–23 budget target. That is almost a doubling. Why is that?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Good question. I am told I do not have that information here, so I think the most efficient way is if I take it on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No A9.]*

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** My assumption was—maybe a guesstimate—it was about the Armadale closure, so that comes out of the rail network.

**The CHAIR:** We will find out when we get a response to A9.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I refer to page 625, related to the railcar manufacturing and assembly facility. There are three questions associated with this and if I can do them together as one tranche, that would be great. What component by value of the \$1.3 billion contract with Alstom is being delivered by the KTK Group? Will the KTK Group have a presence in the railcar manufacturing and assembly facility? Will the state government require all contractors to have registered a statement on the federal government’s modern slavery register?

**The CHAIR:** I am not sure about the last one but we will see how we go on the first two.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am not sure about that, but I will see what I can find out for you. I am sorry, honourable member; I do not have the detail on those arrangements here so I am happy to take it on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No A10.]*

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** My question relates to the “High Capacity Signalling—Program of Works”. It appears on page 631 under the asset investment program and there is a table on page 633 which talks about the spending of works in progress. There is a figure there of \$449 million across the estimates. That also includes, I understand, the radio systems replacement project as part of broader suite of projects. The first question: does that figure of \$449 million include the \$6.6 million termination fee paid or payable to Huawei–UGL on the termination of the previous contract?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thank you. No, it is not included in that figure, honourable member.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Thank you, minister. May I ascertain if it is not included there but it is included somewhere else in the spending table? I suppose what I want to determine is whether or not that termination settlement has actually been settled and in which financial year?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes, it has been paid. It is an operating cost.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** In this financial year?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Does that \$449 million include the reported \$327 million procurement for the replacement contract that the minister has advised has been awarded to Nokia Solutions and Networks Australia Consortia?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes, it does.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Presumably, if that figure is included, it was known or speculated at the point at which budget papers were finalised? I think the budget cut-off is in April, thereabouts. Was that an anticipated figure at that time or had a contract already been signed?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am advised that the contract was awarded on 22 December 2021. Advice at the time suggested that we would be able to do both update the public on the delivery of the project

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and finalisation of the termination of the Huawei arrangements at the same time, giving a complete picture of the progress of the project.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Thank you, minister. We were appraised of this outcome only last week, but the determinations were made just before Christmas last year. That is an issue I will take up in another fora. With respect to the original contract with Huawei–UGL, I appreciate the dynamics of this. What I would like to ascertain, though, is aside from that termination payment of \$6.6 million, were there any payments made from PTA to that consortia from the period of award in July 2018 until its termination in late 2020, because obviously some contract milestones, I would anticipate, have been met or some prepayments were entered into? Is it possible to elaborate on that?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Just give me a minute. I will see if I have that information here. I do not have any more information about payments made to Huawei other than the \$6.6 million, but for completeness, honourable member, I am happy to take that on notice.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** That would be splendid.

*[Supplementary Information No A11.]*

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I suppose I will ask the obvious question. The original contract, minister, was an order of \$206 million—please correct me where I am wrong—for the radio systems replacement. The most recent iteration, the new contract, is \$327 million. Is it possible to attribute that 50 per cent escalation to a factor or a range of factors?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Other than time, I do not have any other additional information. For completeness, again, I am happy to take it on notice if there is further information available.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Appreciate it.

*[Supplementary Information No A12.]*

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** My question relates to the budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 590, “Strategic Transport Policy and Integrated Planning”, Bunbury faster rail study.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We have gone back now to the Department of Transport. But honourable member, you did have a question for PTA that —

**The CHAIR:** For Main Roads. So, what are we asking now?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** He has gone back to the Department of Transport.

**The CHAIR:** Which you could have asked in the last round, but, look, in this instance I will allow a bit of latitude because you did go back. We will briefly go back to the Department of Transport.

[11:20 am]

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Thank you for your indulgence. I refer to budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 590, “Strategic Transport Policy and Integrated Planning”. I would like to ask about the plans to deliver a more efficient rail service between Bunbury and Perth. In its 15 June announcement that KPMG had been awarded a \$500 000 contract to investigate improved public transport options between Bunbury and Perth, the government used the term “faster rail” as opposed to “fast rail”. Why is the term “faster rail” now being used as opposed to the term “fast rail”? Is it an admission from the government that it is lowering the scope of what may be intended for that future project?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Despite being generous to you, the answer is no. The Public Transport Authority, in collaboration with the National Faster Rail Agency, has commenced investigations in accordance with stages 1 and 2 of the Infrastructure Australia assessment framework, with the PTA planning to develop a strategic business case that: considers the role the improved public transport options between Perth and Bunbury, including faster rail, could play in the development of the region;

considers population and economic growth conditions, and analysis of related demand forecasts, including potential benefits for communities further south towards Busselton and the Leeuwin-Naturaliste area; and identifies potential timing for investment and delivery, acknowledging that, based on current population densities and travel patterns, the introduction of faster rail in WA is likely a longer term initiative. I do not see anything in this other than the fact that the national agency is called the National Faster Rail Agency. I do not see a grand conspiracy in the change of language.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I understand the federal and state governments have put in a combined \$8 million. If \$500 000 is being spent on this element, what is the other \$7.5 million likely to be spent on?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The money that has been allocated to date is to work out the overall costs. I am not in a position, until that work is done, to spell out how the rest of the money will be spent.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I was under the understanding the \$8 million was to create the study. You are saying now that the study is only going to cost half a million and you are going to bank the rest for the next parts of the project, or are there other elements to be discovered after this?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** No, I do not think that is correct. I cannot give you a breakdown on what the rest of the money will be spent on. For completeness, to assist you, I am happy to take that component on notice to see if there is anything I can add to that.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Thank you; that would be appreciated.

*[Supplementary Information No A13.]*

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Finally, I am just wondering in terms of whether the PTA has had any discussions with Main Roads about how any potential train line might interact with the new bore project, particularly the northern interchange, which I understand is impenetrable by a train line. I am wondering what discussions the PTA may have had with Main Roads about what options there might be for putting the train line through.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will ask the director general to provide you with some information about that.

**Mr WORONZOW:** The Bunbury Outer Ring Road project—in the scope, the design made provisions for any faster rail project. The Forrest Highway medium and the bore project anticipates sometime in the future that there will be a faster rail, so the provision has been made.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Could we have those plans, potentially, because they are not on any publicly available plans at the moment?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** If it is not publicly available, then probably not. I am happy to take the question on notice but I am not giving you a commitment that I am providing that information. The minister will make that decision.

**The CHAIR:** We get that point. With the permission of the minister, if they are available, they will be made available.

*[Supplementary Information No A14.]*

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Minister, I refer to page 630 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, “Regional School Bus Services”. Can someone just explain what the efficiency indicator “Average cost per contracted kilometre—School bus services” actually means? That is the first point. Subsequent to that, with the recent fuel price rises that have occurred in the last six months, there is no jump in that number, so will the school bus operators be asked to be more efficient to meet the same target or is there an allowance there for that fuel price rise, which would be significant for those operators?

**The CHAIR:** This is PTA, is it not?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** We are on PTA. The top of page 630.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am sorry; I was just juggling my files when you asked me that.

The estimated actual of the “average cost per contracted kilometre—school bus services” increased to \$3.93. That is 1.3 per cent above the 2021–22 budget. That was mainly due to a decrease in the contract service kilometres, largely driven by three fewer service days in 2021–22 and COVID-related policy decisions. The honourable member might recall there were a couple of occasions when, on either side of the start or end of the term, we made arrangements for parents to choose whether or not to send their kids to school. You might recall there were a number of different points along the way.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** It is average cost per contracted kilometre, so it would not matter whether they are doing one kilometre or 100; it is the cost per kilometre.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes. The advice I have is that the increase is due to the decrease in the kilometres. That is the advice that I have been given.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Subsequent to that, can I get some information about whether the fuel cost price rise has been taken into account? I mean, that is a very small increase, and you have just outlined that it is not about the fuel price rise. Are the school bus operators being asked to —

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, that was the 2021–22 estimated actual. In terms of fuel price, when they kicked in over that entire financial year—in September last year or whatever, we were not experiencing the kind of fuel costs that we are experiencing now. I am happy to take it on notice if there is more information we can give you but I think during that time frame you are not just talking about fuel cost increases.

[*Supplementary Information No A15.*]

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Can I just clarify what I am actually after? I think we are almost there. Are the school bus operators being paid \$3.93 a kilometre regardless of the fuel price rise or will the actual number reflect—I am sure there are other things in the \$3.93 other than fuel, but will the fuel price rise be reflected in the number or will they be forced to take a cut in their return?

**The CHAIR:** I think that will be contained in A15.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We will take that on notice, if we have information that we can provide you with.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** If I could just turn to page 625, under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. Paragraph 3 states —

... begin detailed planning on the Morrison Road Level Crossing Removal.

When is that planning expected to commence and what consultation, including public consultation, will be undertaken as part of that planning?

[11.30 am]

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am advised that we are in the very preliminary stage of planning and design. I might get the director general to explain where we are at.

**Mr WORONZOW:** Thanks, minister; thanks, member. The funding for the Morrison Road level crossing removal was an election commitment of the current federal government. From recollection, it is in the order of \$200 million. Before the commitment was made, we had done some preliminary design, but we are now at a stage of doing enough detailed design to properly scope the project and get it to a stage where we can go to the market and engage a contractor.

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**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** Do you have a time frame as to when the removal would occur? I do not know how long these things will take. It sounds like it is at the particularly early stages, but can you give us an indication of time frame?

**Mr WORONZOW:** Typically, for a project of that size, by the time you get the environmental and heritage approvals, the detailed design and engage a contractor, you are looking at between 18 months and two years. So, indicatively, around two years' time would be a realistic time frame.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** If I can just add to that. The timing of groundworks of the removal will depend on the planning progress and the other interfacing projects in the area, so that we minimise the inconvenience to the community and maintain safe vehicle movements. While that is an indicative time line, it is going to depend on the planning work and the interface with other projects.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** Thank you, because that was my next question. Obviously, that would create some significant challenges and there are already challenges in and around that area, so ensuring that that is taken into account I think is incredibly important. Thank you for that answer. I just want to get clarification. I am happy to hold off until the next section, but at page 624 the Caledonian Avenue level crossing closure is listed under spending changes under the section for ongoing initiative, other. That is also referenced under the Commissioner of Main Roads. I have some questions around road improvements that will be undertaken in response to that closure. Is it best that I ask that now?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We will try now.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** My first question is: what is the current schedule of works that will be undertaken to improve the surrounding roads for that area, which the minister has identified? I would like to have an up-to-date schedule, and I am happy for that to be taken on notice.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Associated with the closure, there is \$15 million allocated to improve safety and access to the Maylands town centre for drivers and pedestrians. That includes protected bike lanes on Railway Parade between Meltham and Maylands stations; a signalised junction at Hotham Bridge, Railway Parade and Whatley Crescent, with a new dedicated right turn enabling vehicles to head towards Maylands; a new intersection treatment at Whatley Crescent and Caledonian Avenue; a signalised intersection at Guildford Road and Seventh Avenue; improved pedestrian facilities at Guildford Road and Eighth Avenue; speed restrictions and traffic calming in key town centre streets; and up to \$250 000 for revitalisation planning for the Maylands town centre, in partnership with the City of Bayswater.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** Could I get a time frame? My understanding is that a number of those works are actually being undertaken probably around 2024–25. Is that correct?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** There is a community reference group, and Main Roads has been working with that group. Some of the work, such as the protective bike lanes, is currently underway. For other projects, options, including the time lines, are still being worked through with the community reference group. Following that work being done with the community reference group, the delivery date will be able to be confirmed. I can let the member know that that group last met on 2 May.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** My question, then, is: given that there are concerns within the community with regard to traffic in this area, I would like to understand why a number of these improvements were not actually undertaken prior to the closure of the crossing, particularly given that the level crossing closure was first proposed by the government in 2017.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Good question. It closed when it closed. There will be a significant increase in train services on the Midland line as a result of the Forrestfield–Airport Link and the Morley–Ellenbrook line. That will increase pedestrian wait times at the crossing by about 43 per cent and see the

pedestrian gates closed for nearly four hours a day, including for a significant duration in peak periods. It needed to close prior to the commencement of the airport line services, and the Easter holiday period was chosen as it would be the least disruptive.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** Minister, I appreciate that. Sorry; maybe I might reframe the question. It is not with respect to the actual closure of the crossing; I think it is generally understood why that has occurred. My question is: why were some of the road improvements that you referenced previously not made prior to the closure of the crossing, particularly given the fact that some of them are not going to be happening for at least two or three years and there are some significant concerns around that?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I do not have information on that, but I am happy to take it on notice, honourable member.

*[Supplementary Information No A16.]*

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** If you could. Just as a follow-up to that—I am happy again for this to be taken on notice; I think it would need to be—can the government advise whether any safety improvements have or are being considered in relation to the section of Whatley Crescent between East Parade and the Third Avenue Bridge? It is around the Mount Lawley train station. There are concerns by residents and others with regard to speed and the volume of cars. I understand that perhaps it is a local road, but notwithstanding that, it would be appreciated to know whether or not any improvements have been identified by the department; and, if so, what is the time frame for those improvements; and, if not, will the department consider looking at that section of road in addition to the other works that are being undertaken?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I think I will take that on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No A17.]*

**The CHAIR:** We will go on to Hon Sandra Carr.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Chair, just before you do, we are a bit beyond the halfway point. I would not mind, at some point, a short comfort break. I am happy to do that at a time that is convenient to the committee.

**The CHAIR:** We will get through the PTA, and at the end of the PTA we will have a five-minute comfort break. Everyone happy?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** We will now move to Hon Sandra Carr.

**Hon SANDRA CARR:** Thank you, chair. I refer to page 626 in budget paper No 2 under the section “Metropolitan and Regional Passenger Services”. It is line 1 of the service summary. Can the minister please outline whether there are any planned expansions to regional town bus services?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thanks, member. Yes, in conjunction with the Shire of Esperance, the government will be trialling a town bus service in Esperance. That will make Esperance the eighth town in regional WA to have a Trans-branded intra-town bus service. It will be trialled for 12 months, beginning on 4 July, connecting the town centre with surrounding suburbs. The buses will run on three routes, three times a day, Monday to Friday. The routes include route 810 between Nulsen and Esperance, route 811 between Castletown and Esperance, and route 812 between West Beach and Esperance. The local community has been consulted on those routes through an online survey and at public information sessions held in the town. While it will run for a year, passenger numbers will be reviewed regularly, including at the six-month mark, to determine whether adjustments need to be made to the routes. At the end of the trial, an analysis of consistent patronage will determine

whether the service continues. These services have been successful in other regions and we think that it will be successful in Esperance as well.

**Hon PIERRE YANG:** I refer to page 625 of budget paper No 2 and line 6 under the heading “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. It is in relation to the electric CAT buses in Joondalup. Can I ask you, minister, to please provide an update on that trial and if there is any planned expansion of the Perth electric bus fleet?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** In February of this year, PTA began a three-year trial of battery electric technology on the Joondalup CAT bus routes. Two buses were deployed and charging infrastructure installed at the Joondalup bus depot. By the middle of this year, two additional battery electric buses will be available to expand the trial to other routes across the northern suburbs. The trial is designed to assess how the vehicles perform, compatibility with the Transperth application systems and general operating costs, including e-bus depot charging and garaging infrastructure requirements. In partnership with the new federal government, we plan to grow our electric bus fleet substantially. The member would be aware that at the recent federal election, the now Albanese government committed to delivering a local electric bus manufacturing facility that will deliver 130 new locally made buses, and the move to net zero gives us an opportunity to build buses here as well, which is a great one.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** My next questions pertain to the spending changes table on page 624, particularly the line item there which is nearly \$60 million for the replacement services for the Armadale rail line shutdown. I just want to connect the right things in my head. That is presumably linked to the table on page 633 and, in particular, the “Level Crossing Removal—Victoria Park—Canning (Inner Armadale)” project, which is a value of \$1 billion, which I also think is linked to the bill that we were discussing before we adjourned on Thursday—the broader sort of Armadale suite of works, including the Byford extension. I just want to conceptually know: should I combine all these things in my head?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Good question. I am advised, honourable member, yes, they are all connected for the purpose of the shutdown.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Splendid; that is exactly what I want to determine. Thank you. Minister, I put some questions in prior to the hearing, as is the custom. I do not know whether or not they are available to you.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Splendid. I just have three questions in relation to the suite of questions and answers. I previously asked about how this has all determined the 18-month shutdown. The answer from PTA was that closure requirements were confirmed throughout the project development and competitive bid stage. Can I ask when that stage took place?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I have got a whole list of questions from you, honourable member.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** It is a question from me and 5)b) is the answer I am referring to.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I have found that, and now repeat the question; sorry.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Can I ask when the project development and competitive bid stage took place?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will see if I can get you an answer. My recollection is that you have asked a lot of questions along this same theme, so I am not sure I am going to be able to.

**The CHAIR:** We will see how we go. We are here to help.

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am advised that during the proposal assessments, the proponents proposed that they could do it quicker and more safely as part of what they were putting to government for whether or not they could do the project. That is where the issue arose.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** From the answers I received, minister, particularly b) and e), I appreciate there is a full project development stage and there is a bid stage, but then there was an alliance development stage. Can I just determine that you get to that alliance development stage when PTA, as the client, effectively determines a contractor with whom they are more likely to work or whom they prefer to work with.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will get the director general to respond to your question.

**Mr WORONZOW:** That is correct. When we go to the market, typically you get a number of construction consortiums respond with their proposals. We will do an assessment in accordance with the published assessment criteria, we will select a preferred proponent and then we would work with that preferred proponent to work out the alliance agreement.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** When did that process take place?

**Mr WORONZOW:** I have not got the exact dates with me.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We could take that on notice, honourable member, for completeness.  
[*Supplementary Information No A18.*]

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** This is completely different. I will just have to wait for that. This is the final one, potentially. The committee asked a series of questions about cost–benefit ratios of respective projects. I note in the answer provided by PTA, and obviously endorsed by the minister, that the Yanchep rail extension project was determined to have a benefit–cost ratio of 3.4. Can I just ask why that figure is inconsistent with the BCR determined by Infrastructure Australia in 2018, which arrived, I think, at a figure of 2.6?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, I appreciate the question. We would not have that information here, so I am happy to take that on notice.  
[*Supplementary Information No A19.*]

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** As a follow-up question, and it is probably exactly my last one, in the course of seeking funding support from the commonwealth—I think the previous government put in about \$4 billion worth of capital allocations—there is obviously going to be disagreements over business cases or clarification sought. In respect of your overview of the BCR of individual Metronet set pieces, whether they be Morley–Ellenbrook, the Byford extension or this particular issue, has there been any divergence from the BCR that PTA or the state government has determined in respect of a project and what the commonwealth, who was a 50 per cent funding partner, considered?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, we would not have that here either, but I am happy to take that on notice.  
[*Supplementary Information No A20.*]

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I refer to page 625, “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency” and point 6. I am specifically looking at the installation of solar panels on bus and train stations. I note as of 24 March 2022 that only eight train stations and eight bus stations had solar panels installed so far. A media release going back to June 2021 actually said that the rollout was intended for more than 50 train and bus stations across Perth, with the full rollout anticipated to be completed by mid-2022. My question is: has the rollout completed; if not, why not; and how many train and bus stations have had solar panels installed to date?

[11.50 am]

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I can give you what I have. The capacity requirements for all stations finalised, with tenders issued during October 2020. Phase 1 feasibility studies at 34 stations to determine the structural infrastructure suitability indicated that 21 stations are suitable. Eight stations have been upgraded, with four more designs complete. Phase 2 feasibility studies undertaken at 23 stations, with 15 identified as suitable. In late 2021, the Australian standard for inverters was updated, resulting in redesign works and installation delays. Panels have been installed at six bus stations to the end of June 2021. Phase 1 will be completed by December of this year. Phase 2 is to be completed by June of next year. I do not have more than that here.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** So, just to be clear, there has been \$1.8 million allocated to that project to extend it. I could not find it in here, but I am assuming that there is a budget allocated to continue this rollout. From that, is there a summary of how many you would get to at the end of that rollout in total?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I do not have that here, but I am happy to take that on notice.  
[*Supplementary Information No A21.*]

**Hearing suspended from 11.51 to 12 noon.**

**The CHAIR:** We are on Main Roads. Any questions on Main Roads? Hon Jackie Jarvis.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** Thank you, chair. Page 613, the “Asset Investment Program”. I am particularly interested in the Albany ring-road and the Bunbury Outer Ring Road. On page 615 it outlines significant costs of both projects. The Albany ring-road is \$175 million total cost and the Bunbury Outer Ring Road is \$1.2 billion, if my decimal points are correct. I am interested in understanding the community benefits of those projects to those regional communities.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We are investing record funds in roads across WA, particularly in regional WA, \$5.6 billion in this budget to improve and renew our regional road infrastructure. This will improve safety on those roads, reduce travel times and create local jobs and facilitate growth. The jointly-funded with the commonwealth regional road safety program will receive a further \$177 million in the next 12 months and a further \$175 million in 2023–24, bringing the total investment to \$828 million. By June of next year, around 9 000 kilometres of regional roads will have been upgraded with safety treatments. That includes the sealing of shoulders and the installation of audible edge lines. In the south west region, some \$72 million has been spent under the regional road safety program, including upgrading more than 710 kilometres of highway and in the great southern, 625 kilometres of road have been treated—that is some \$37 million. In Warren–Blackwood, some of the key routes that have been upgraded include: Albany Highway, Mount Barker to Albany, 20 kilometres for \$4 million; Muir Highway, 65 kilometres, \$11 million, with a further \$3.4 million sought to complete the highway upgrade; South Western Highway, Bridgetown to Manjimup, Manjimup to Vasse, Wallace to Deeside Coast Road, Vasse Highway to Emerald Road, \$3 million expected in 2022–23 to widen a six-kilometre section near Rooney's Bridge; Stuart Road, Vasse Highway to Brockman Highway, 28 kilometres; Sues Road, Bussell Highway to Brockman Highway, Vasse highway, 63 kilometres; Brockman Highway, Stuart Road to Wright Road, 26 kilometres. Other major works are taking place on the road network include the \$14 million upgrade of South Western Highway near Brookhampton involving the realignment of the road to improve safety, widening work, improved clear zones and the construction of passing lanes.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** Thank you. Page 606, the “Spending Changes”. I notice in that budget line item “Regional Road Maintenance In-House Delivery Model”, we have some negative figures. If I add it up, it is about \$67 million spending changes coming out of the budget for that regional road maintenance in-house delivery model. I am assuming that is linked to the recent changes we have made to Main Roads staffing.

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes. That is a significant project. The transition of road maintenance back in-house at Main Roads will provide a huge economic boost to regional WA while creating tens of millions of dollars in savings to the state. Up until the 1980s, Main Roads WA was tasked with managing and delivering almost all road works in-house. They directly employed a white and blue-collar workforce, which was experienced and capable of constructing and maintaining the state's road work network. Maintenance and low-value road improvements were progressively contracted out by Main Roads during the 1980s and 90s, culminating with fully outsourced operations by 2000. Over the same period, staffing levels in Main Roads dropped from more than 2 600 to a low of just over 800 in 2001, with the heaviest impacts in regional WA. Current maintenance contracts are due to expire between 2022–23 and 2026–27. The government has decided not to renew those contracts and return all routine road maintenance and low-value road improvement works for delivery in-house, streamlining the delivery of these services while creating savings and jobs. That new delivery model will create some 660 jobs, including 490 in regional WA. It will save the government money, annual operational savings of just over \$25 million. It will see the transitioning of current contracted road maintenance workers back into the public sector. They will receive between \$12 000 and \$22 000 in increased pay per annum along, obviously, with improved leave entitlements. Main Roads will strengthen its relationships with Aboriginal workers and businesses by being able to directly engage their services and build on previous successes. The new delivery model is supported by an independent financial review carried by Ernst and Young. We think the operational shift will be largely completed by March 2024. The last region to be brought in-house will be the Kimberley, where the current contract expires in 2026. This transition, it is important to note, does not abandon the current network contractors. Some project works currently delivered by private road builders will become available to the wider contracting agency. Specifically, the largest impact will be felt in Manjimup in the Warren–Blackwood area. Currently, there is a small two-person crew but it is expected to increase to 22 staff working out of Manjimup as the new office and depot facilities are established. The specific composition of the workforce is still being worked through but it will be a blend of blue and white collars.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I will start by referring to page 605, budget paper No 2, volume 2, which is the appropriations, expenses and cash assets. What I am after here, in terms of coming back to the bike issue that I was trying to raise before, is trying to understand who is responsible for what and doing what. Maybe I will start with a question around repair and maintenance first. Is there, as part of this, a budget line allocated for the repair, maintenance and upkeep of the principal shared path network? I am trying to understand which bits Main Roads is responsible for versus others; and, is this funded from what we have talked about previously?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will ask the director general to provide you with some information.

**Mr WORONZOW:** Thank you, minister. In terms of the principal shared paths, maybe a little background helps, member. The construction of the principal shared paths is predominantly done when we deliver a new capital works project so the funding for the principal shared paths is in the asset investment program. For example, with the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, we are going to be delivering a number of principal shared paths. As part of the overall funding for the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, there will be the capital component in there. I think you asked about how the maintenance is funded.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** Yes. There has been some concern that there is not a dedicated repair, maintenance and upkeep budget for that principal shared path network.

**Mr WORONZOW:** You are right; in the budget papers you will not find a simple line for the maintenance of principal shared paths. It is all part of the overall maintenance allocations provided

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by government to Main Roads and, internally, it goes through a process where the maintenance budget is put in place for the current year and the forward estimates and there will be a component of the overall maintenance budget that looks after the maintenance of the principal shared paths.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** The reason I raise that is that the stakeholders have raised with me that parts of that network are not as well maintained as perhaps the road network and that it is a forgotten element within that transport network. Is there something you can share with us in terms of putting on notice what is the discrete budget line for the repair, maintenance and upkeep of PSPs that Main Roads is responsible for. Do you have that in more detail?

[12.10 pm]

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Perhaps I can start. You are not going to find a discrete line in here. I am not sure what further information the DG can give you or whether there is further information on proportion or something like that. I am not sure whether you have anything to add to that, otherwise we will take it on notice.

**Mr WORONZOW:** The only thing I can add is that, as part of our ongoing maintenance operation, we have surveillance people who go along and look at the conditions of principal shared paths. Where we find there is work that is required, we build it into the maintenance allocation. We meet quarterly. Main Roads has a cycling advisory group, which WestCycle attend, and it provides feedback from its members about conditions of PSPs and cyclepaths. If their feedback is that we need to do some work, we take that on board and we respond.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** On page 615, just coming back to the earlier part of my question, about halfway down, under “COVID-19 Response”, it states —

Department of Transport—Principal Shared Path  
Causeway Cyclist and Pedestrian Bridge

I am assuming that everything here is capital works, not including maintenance. Is that correct?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes, that is capital, for the new Causeway cyclist and pedestrian bridge.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** This comes back to the previous question that you took on notice around dividing up where cycling infrastructure funds come from. Is there a separate line item that sits under Main Roads for cycling infrastructure that is different from the ones I previously asked, which referred to the WBN and the PSP, or is that contained within the PSP?

**Mr WORONZOW:** Where it gets a little bit confusing, the funding for cycling maintenance and initiatives is spread over the Department of Transport and Main Roads. There is a line item in the Main Roads budget papers where \$20 million annually is allocated to dedicated cycling initiatives. The program for where that \$20 million is spent is determined by the Department of Transport, but it is delivered by Main Roads. That is why it is in the Main Roads budget papers. As I said, this particular area is pretty complex because it is spread over two budget papers. If the minister is happy, we can provide a bit of background about where the money is.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** That would be very helpful. I am just trying to understand—I know there are several others who are interested—where it sits.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We will take that on notice. What we will provide you with is a table, if that is possible, to show you where the money is put in the budget.

[*Supplementary Information No A22.*]

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Minister, if I can take you to page 606, dealing with spending changes. In the table under “Ongoing Initiatives”, there is a line item “Motor Vehicle Licence Fee Revenue Update”.

On its face, it seems like a Department of Transport-type line item. Can you just explain what this update is about?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will ask the director general to explain that to you.

**Mr WORONZOW:** Motor vehicle licence fees are hypothecated to Main Roads, being collected by the Department of Transport. That line item would be referring to changes in previous estimates over the forward estimates.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Director general, I then turn you to page 604, where it deals with the income for motor vehicle licence fees. What you are saying is that the changes there should be reflected in both tables.

**Mr WORONZOW:** That would be correct.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I congratulate the government for adopting a Liberal Party policy in relation to the acceleration of the regional road safety program. It is great to see the outcome of the work there on page 606, accelerating the delivery of regional road safety, given the impact on single vehicle roll-offs et cetera. I want to just clarify a couple of things. Of that \$352.5 million that is being spent over the next two financial years, we know that a large proportion of that comes from the federal government. What is the mechanism to accelerate that program? Is that just a simple decision of the state to spend a proportion—maybe 20 per cent; the minister might clarify—to increase the rate of acceleration of that program?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** There is an agreement reached with the federal government about how the funds will be allocated. In stage 2, there are three tranches. The program value is \$355 million. The state contribution is 20 per cent—that is \$71 million; and the commonwealth contribution is 80 per cent, which is \$284 million. Stage 3 has two tranches. Again, there is a program value amount, with the state contributing 20 per cent, and the commonwealth 80 per cent. In stage 4 in 2023–24, again, there is a program value amount of \$175 million, and the state contributes 20 per cent of that, and the commonwealth 80 per cent of that.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Given that the state is only putting in 20 per cent, is there any further scope for acceleration into the out years?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Not beyond what is in the budget papers. The government can make a different decision, but I do not know why we would. We reached agreement with the commonwealth government on what we want to spend the money on. We have put a timetable to it. That is the plan.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** By way of clarification, the whole program had a total value, from recollection, over the 10 years of close to \$1 billion. If we go back to the election, there was this discussion about bringing it over five years. That was the position we brought to the election. Is this effectively doing that?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The original commitment was \$900 million over 10 years, but we are already delivering more than that.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Congratulations; that is good to see.

I refer to page 606 in relation to Tanami Road. Again, it is great to see the federal government and the state reaching agreement on the approximately \$500 million in relation to the funding, shown in footnote (b). One of the challenges we have in opposition is having transparency. We see there are some funding changes of \$205 million over the forward estimates. My understanding is that the reason you only put the funding changes in for Tanami Road is that it is a local road with the Shire of Halls Creek. Is that correct?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** That is correct.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Is there any way, given it is such a huge project—it is \$500 million, and can get buried into a large component under the local government section, which is not the Main Roads budget; in the next year I assume it will disappear into that—given that the Shire of Halls Creek is doing a lot of the work under the auspices of Main Roads, that we could have this in future budgets as a line item in the Main Roads budget, for the total project?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** This is a function of the history, and the legislative parameters that apply to Main Roads. Anything that is outside those legislative parameters is the purview of local government. That is not going to change anytime soon.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I refer to pages 605 and 609. Page 609 has a performance indicator “Return on construction expenditure”, and we see that that performance indicator, if we could just start with that point, appears to be declining. Is that a result of the cost of construction?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Which one are you talking about—the return on construction expenditure?

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Yes, that is right. It has gone down 20 per cent approximately over just over basically two years.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am advised the result is slightly behind target. The difference is due to the increased scope of works and unforeseen risks materialising in a smaller number of projects, resulting in a change to the basis on which the target was established.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Thank you. That may seem to confirm my reading of the appropriations expenses and cash asset table on page 605, which says there is now \$505 million in restricted funds held over from the previous years. Is that basically unspent works that were planned? Is that correct?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Take us back to 605, honourable member. Just point us to the number that you were talking about.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** There is a table called “Appropriations, Expenses and Cash Assets” and there is a figure.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I cannot see \$500 million anywhere.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I may have may have misquoted that one, but there is a figure. I might have to put this one on notice because I am trying to get to the bottom of it. There is a figure of \$505 million in restricted funds held over from previous years, but I cannot actually see it in that particular table. It may have been read from a different table.

**The CHAIR:** Okay, we might use that as a question for later.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I refer to budget paper No 3, page 230, “Albany Ring Road” in the *Economic and fiscal outlook*. I would like to ask about the Albany ring road, which is due for completion by the end of this financial year. Considering the number of property owners who have been adversely affected by the construction, does the \$6.1 million allocated to finalise the project for 2022–23 include a compensation fund or element to cover any costs of future legal action taken by landowners against the state government?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is not in the \$6 million. Main Roads does have provisional funds for that kind of thing when it is required, but it is not it is not included in the \$6 million.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Also, how much visibility does Main Roads have on management of these individual projects, and the minister as well, particularly in relation to issues that landowners at the Albany ring-road have raised?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will take that on notice. Obviously, the minister is not here to give me advice on how much oversight she has of those issues. I will make this point. This is a minister who is deeply, deeply engaged in her portfolio. I would be surprised if she is not across the issues.

*[Supplementary Information No A23.]*

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** In terms of the complaints that are raised themselves, does Main Roads actually investigate those specifically or is it left up to Decmil, or whoever the contractor might be on the ground, to resolve?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The construct of this particular project is an alliance contract, so Main Roads is part of the management, if you like, of that and is aware of the complaints.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** That is it for that particular topic.

I refer to the budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 615. It is about the Bunbury Outer Ring Road. I would like to ask about the Bunbury Outer Ring Road construction and the decision to downgrade the on-off ramp interchanges originally planned for Lilydale Road, which I now believe will be a roundabout. Considering the volume of traffic anticipated for the bore, as well as the number of heavy vehicles that will be using that road, has the government considered the safety of the road users in its decision to place a roundabout, effectively, on a freeway grade road? Will any additional safety measures be incorporated to the roundabout designed to minimise the risk caused by traffic slowing down and stopping at that site?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I can tell you that scope changes need to be agreed with, and were agreed with, by the commonwealth on this. I am not sure that I have got much more detail that I can give you. I can take it on notice. I cannot guarantee that I can give you the level of detail that you are requiring, but I can certainly ask.

**The CHAIR:** Let us see how we go.

*[Supplementary Information No A24.]*

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I understand just on those scope changes that there are three—I think there are three now—proposed roundabouts that were not part of the original scope, so I am wondering if you could explain why those changes to the scope were necessary. Presumably it was budget related. And also, the second part of the question: initially this project talked about reducing the travel time to, say, Margaret River by 15 minutes. I understand with these changes that the government is walking away from that commitment, and I am just wondering if you could give us some idea about how much of an improvement this road will be.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I can give you some information and I might have to take some on notice. Being the biggest transport infrastructure project ever undertaken in south west, the updated budget of \$1.25 billion will deliver stages 2 and 3 of the project, with major projects for the economy, both during construction and once in operation. The federal government recently commissioned an independent cost review into the project, which resulted in additional funding being allocated in the federal budget. There are rising supply and demand pressures that have resulted in recent increases in key cost inputs for the project. For example, diesel and bitumen supply costs have increased by 60 per cent and 20 per cent respectively over the last 12 months. The increased investment addresses these cost pressures and allows the project to continue to ensure that local businesses can participate in the project, with around \$450 million in a targeted local spend. A further \$30 million worth of opportunities for Aboriginal businesses is available as part of the project. State and commonwealth environmental approvals for the southern section are currently under consideration. The rest of that question, honourable member, I will take on notice.

**The CHAIR:** Was that a separate one? That was not on the outer ring road, was it?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It was.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Bunbury Outer Ring Road, not the Albany one.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, so it can be Bunbury, so still A24.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Just finally, if I may, just on that, in terms of those scope downgrades, I am wondering as well, and you may need to take this on notice, whether there will be a new project proposed in the future to then upgrade those roundabouts or whether we expect that they will actually be the functioning plan well into the future.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** : I will get the director general to provide an answer.

[12.30 pm]

**Mr WORONZOW:** Where those changes go has resulted in roundabouts, and the construction is going to be done in such a way that it will not preclude building interchanges in an efficient manner. The future of further funding is made available. We have been very conscious of that, and the design accommodates that with minimal throwaway if we get the future funding.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Page 608 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, under the “Total Cost of Services — Reconciliation to Service Summary Table”, the “State Road Funds to Local Government Agreement” is mentioned in that table. Given the numbers that are talked about on page 604 with the motor vehicle licence fees being a steady rise, there does not seem to be a correlation between the amount going to local government and the increasing vehicle licence fees. Can you outline the formula and why? For example, budget year 2022–23 went back to \$233.845 million, which is a fall from the 2021–22 budget, but vehicle licence fees of course keep going up.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will get the director general to make some comments on that.

**Mr WORONZOW:** Thank you, minister. Thank you, member. WA is the only jurisdiction in Australia that has got state funds to local government agreements. WA is the only jurisdiction where local government gives some certainty of funding to maintain their roads. The agreement is a rolling five-year agreement at the discretion of the government to renew. In terms of this particular agreement, it is in year four, and the transport minister and WALGA are about to commence negotiations about what will be the form of the next agreement. Built into the agreement is a formula with the percentage, I think, is 17.9 or something like that of the motor vehicle licence fees. That percentage that goes into the agreement and forms part of the discussion between the minister and WALGA each five-year cycle.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Is that 17.9 per cent a flat rate or is that negotiable?

**Mr WORONZOW:** It is negotiable every five years.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Given that, the current agreement runs out at the end of 2023–24?

**Mr WORONZOW:** That would be correct. I think there is about nine months to run on the current agreement.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Why would there be a fall in the 2022–23 budget from the 2021–22 budget when licence fees have gone up in the same time frame?

**Mr WORONZOW:** Unfortunately, local government do not deliver their entire allocation each year. Like everybody else in the current environment, there is constraint by supply chain challenges and getting capable people to deliver. They underdeliver by a percentage each year, so that would be the reason for that fall from the previous year.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** I will move on to a couple of specific projects if I could, chair. On page 617, under new works, it says “Great Eastern Highway — Covalent Lithium Mine Access” is \$120 million;

is that correct or is that the wrong line item? It refers to “Road Construct, Seal and Widen to Moorine Rocks” as \$120 million?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It looks right to me.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Is that a state road or is that a local road, because I believe that is not actually Great Eastern Highway that is having \$120 million on it; it is the access road to the mine?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will find out for you. What I can tell you is that it is to widen and seal Parker Range Road and Marvel Loch–Forrestania Road between the mine near Mt Holland and Great Eastern Highway. It is to facilitate the operation of restricted access vehicles with concentrated product to be processed at the refinery at Kwinana. As a regularly utilised road servicing multiple stakeholders within the Shire of Yilgarn, the upgrade of the road will provide significant safety and efficiency improvements to a range of users beyond Covalent.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** It is my understanding that that road goes from the Great Eastern Highway to what will be the lithium mine, yet you spoke about various stakeholders. Can you outline who some of those other stakeholders might be?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will let the director general make some comments about that.

**Mr WORONZOW:** Along the route—you are correct; it runs from Great Eastern Highway—at midblock there is the covalent operation, but it carries on further down to the proximity of the King Ingram Road. Covalent operations are about midblock, and there are other potential operations—mineral exploration companies—that are looking to take advantage of the road once it is sealed to bring their operations online. We also understand there are some pastoral operations along there that will improve their sustainability.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Is that a local government road?

**Mr WORONZOW:** It would be a local government road.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** And it will remain a local government road after having \$120 million spent on it?

**Mr WORONZOW:** Main Roads Western Australia has warrants in terms of when roads reach a certain level of construction where there will be discussions with local government about who is best placed to maintain it. In some instances, the level of upgrade to the road would preclude a local government with limited resources maintaining it adequately. Once it is completed, there will be discussion with the local authority.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** I appreciate that, director general. It might have been useful to have those discussions before I would have thought. I mean, you can imagine the nervousness. Is that Westonia or Yilgarn?

**Mr WORONZOW:** I think it is Yilgarn.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** With a fairly small rate base, that is a significant task that you might be lumbering them with. You say negotiations will take place after you spend the \$120 million. I would have thought they would not have the resources to maintain that sort of road.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, you heard what the director general said about them having the capacity to have those negotiations. Of course, making sure that those mines can operate efficiently and productively is of benefit to everyone in the shire as well.

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** One last one on that if I can. Have the mines made a contribution?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes, they have.

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**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Do we have a number please?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** It is \$60 million.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** I just have one question here. If we have time to go back to transport, I have one there. If I can go to page 615 under “Works in Progress” and the “Great Eastern Highway — Eastlink — Planning”. I understand that community consultation is currently underway with regard to this particular project. Obviously, a project of this size would require a number of approvals including environmental impact assessments as well as others. I am particularly interested, firstly, with regard to environmental impact assessments. Does the department have any time frame as to when they believe such a proposal would be referred to the EPA and its federal counterpart?

[12.40 pm]

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** The money that has been allocated is to do some planning, so they are not at the point where there are construction funds there. That is the point at which you would consider moving forward with whatever other approvals need to be done.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** So, there is not an intention to do anything until such time as that is put in place.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** There would be no point in seeking approvals before you have an allocation of construction funding to actually do it.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** Can I ask: is the government intending to put forward any construction funds; and, if so, when?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Planning and development is being undertaken over three years, so there is a fair bit of work to do yet. I cannot give you a final time line on it.

**The CHAIR:** Just on Main Roads, we will have a couple more minutes on Main Roads.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I refer to the table on page 602, “Statement of Financial Position”, “Restricted cash”. In that line, there is a significant amount. It was budgeted at —

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Honourable member, sorry; which page are you talking about?

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Page 602, second line under “Current Assets”. What is the bulk of that restricted cash?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** We have just got to check where you are referencing. That is not Main Roads.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** Sorry, it is not Main Roads. I will leave that.

**The CHAIR:** I will go to Hon Dr Brad Pettitt. Then after that if any time remains—I note that Hon Colin De Grussa has a couple of questions. So, we will go to Hon Dr Brad Pettitt on Main Roads first.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I wish to ask a question in relation to page 614, points 13 and 14 on that page. It is in relation to “Queen Victoria Street—Swan River Crossings” project, the new bridge that is also referred to on page 16 of the budget paper. The answer I got around what has actually been spent so far in terms of that project around design development was that \$35.5 million of estimated expenditure has been spent up to the end of this month on concept and design development. That seems like a really high figure to me, \$35.5 million, without actually starting construction. Is that normal? Then my follow-up to that really is around how much more is expected to be spent in terms of concept development and design consultation before the actual infrastructure project gets underway?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will see if I can get the director general, perhaps. The first part of your question is: does that \$35.5 million seem abnormally high?

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** Nothing has been built. That \$35.5 million is for concepts and design development; there is not actually any construction in that, to the best of my knowledge. I was a bit surprised by that figure so I was just wondering if anything unusual about this project has—

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will get the director general to make some comments on that.

**Mr WORONZOW:** That figure in the order of \$30 million encompasses all work to date, so it is environmental approvals, heritage approvals, local government approvals, time spent on those. It also includes the detailed designs. So, the project has an alliance working on finalising the detailed design, getting it ready for construction, I think the local member would appreciate. Part of your question is: is that an abnormal amount of money? Most projects you have probably spent in the order of 20 per cent on getting a project to the point where you can construct it. So, if that project is in the order of \$170 million, it is not abnormally high. It is a bit on the high side, but it is being built in a community that has shown a lot of interest, as the member would know, and we have worked very hard in trying to consult with the community and to take into account everyone's concerns.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** They are very politically literate.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** The Freo community does like to have a say on a project, which is great. Do you have a sense around how much more is likely to be needed to be spent on design and development until the project is—and when will that be completed? I do not think the final design, at least to the best of my knowledge, has been made public yet.

**Mr WORONZOW:** The design that is being done at the moment is concept design. So, if you talk about a design budget, it has probably been 80 per cent of what is going to be spent to actually build the bridge that has been done on a concept design. We know the length of the bridge. We know how wide the bridge is going to be. The final design, the final 20 per cent—so, if you are looking for a figure of how much more will be spent on design, it might be in the order of \$5 million or \$6 million. That will only be completed once the final alignment and the final concept has been locked in and has been accepted.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I have got a very quick question on a date. Do you have a final date and expectation around when that will be public?

**Mr WORONZOW:** It will be shortly.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Minister, just quickly, if we turn to page 674 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. Before I ask any questions, I will change tack if the answer is no, but is there anyone here who might be able to provide answers to questions relating to the operating subsidies there on that page?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** What agency is that?

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Southern ports.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** No.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** No-one here; that is fine. I did think that.

I go back to page 589 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, item 13, climate change and the clean energy car fund. Noting the rebates that will be offered for people who purchase those vehicles—too late for some of us—what analysis was undertaken to determine that \$70 000 purchase price or that limit?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I can tell you that this agency is administering the funds. Treasury did the work on the modelling. I know that they did look at what was in place in other jurisdictions, but for more information than that, I think you would need to go to Treasury on any modelling.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Just to be clear, that \$70 000 price is the dutiable value of the vehicle?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Correct.

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Which includes stamp duty?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will take it on notice to save time.

*[Supplementary Information No A25.]*

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Can we also perhaps take on notice the number of electric vehicles that are registered in Western Australia, perhaps if we can have a year-on-year growth?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I think we might have that here. I will just check. It is not easily found. I will take it on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No A26.]*

**Hon COLIN de GRUSSA:** Just one more question in relation to the same page, page 589, and item 6. It is around the regional airfare zone cap, but more specifically in relation to the regulated routes that are done under a deed of agreement with Regional Express. My understanding is that the Perth–Esperance and perhaps the Perth–Albany routes would come up for—the deed of agreement would expire sometime in 2023. I am wondering whether any negotiations have started and what the process is given that time line. Will there be a tender process, for example, and when are we likely to see that occur?

[12.50 pm]

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will see who I can get information from. I am advised that we think the process is currently underway, but for completeness, I will take it on notice, honourable member.

*[Supplementary Information No A27.]*

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** My question is at page 595 under on-demand transport, and specifically dot point 3 as it relates to student and pensioner travel schemes. The minister might also be aware of this in the context of being Minister for Education and Training, but concerns have been raised for some time by the Isolated Children's Parents' Association with regard to the application of the transport hub policy criteria as it relates to the student travel subsidy scheme road travel subsidy. I understand that the level payable is based on the distance to the nearest educational institution or transport hub, whichever is the nearest. The concern that has been consistently raised by the ICPA is that the transport hub is just the nearest official stop of a timetabled transport service and it does not matter how often that transport service is there or where it goes—it could actually even go in the opposite direction. There are some concerns as to how it is actually being administered. My question, perhaps through the minister but more particularly to the director general, is: is he aware of these concerns?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am being advised that we might need to take it on notice, but I will just see.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** If I could ask if he knows, that would be helpful.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** He is not across any of the detail, so I am happy to take it on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No A28.]*

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** If so, if I could add to that. I understand that there have been meetings sought with the department and the minister's office and they have not always been terribly

successful. If as part of that there is a request that there is another meeting scheduled with the ICPA, I think that would be appreciated.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I have a question for Transport and it relates to page 601 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. The line item relates to driving access and equity for learner drivers. The budgeted amount I think was \$4 700 000 and the actual amount spent was only \$2 370 000, so about half of the money was spent. I am wondering why that money was underspent and what will be its impact, potentially, given that we know that there is a very high volume of people looking to get their PDAs.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will get Mr Cameron to provide some information.

**Mr CAMERON:** Thank you, minister; thank you, member. That is around the timing of the allocations and the capacity of local providers. The bulk of the program is for grants to local providers in the Pilbara and the Kimberley. There have been a number of factors affecting their ability to deliver, not the least of which is the impacts of COVID. In some of those communities, they have delayed. We have those funds, and those funds will continue to be applied for those providers. It is really around a matter of timing, but it has been impacted by COVID, and those agencies are working through that. The other component of it is largely less affected. It has provided additional money for additional remote area staff for the department. We have employed those people and they are working, and they are delivering practical driving assessments. That bit is largely not affected; it has really been the capacity of the local providers to deliver.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Last time we spoke, we talked a fair bit about these PDAs and the length of time people had to wait. Has there been a marked improvement in those wait times or is it still significant for people looking to get their PDA?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will ask Mr Cameron to provide an answer.

**Mr CAMERON:** Thank you. I will draw the separation there. Regional is not affected. We may have talked in this house last year about Bunbury. Since then, we had allocated a temporary assessor while we assessed the ongoing demand. We have now made that appointment permanent. That was probably our pressure point regionally. In the metropolitan area, we do not talk about wait times because it does depend on where and when people are looking for an appointment. I do have a table, but in the interests of time I will not read it out. It is within days or a week, but I do acknowledge that people looking for a particular site at a particular time may not find what they want. We are making improvements to the system. The limitation at the moment, as I think was raised in this house, is that you have to go into one site at a time, make a booking and then give that up if you want to go into another site. We are going to improve that, but we have to make security improvements so that people cannot scam the system or make multiple bookings.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Cameron, you mentioned that table. Would you be prepared to table that table?

**Mr CAMERON:** If the minister agrees, what I can provide is, as at 16 June, what the availability was at various centres.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Cameron; that is tabled. Hon Neil Thomson with one question, and it has to be quick.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I always save the Broome boat facility for last, so I have to ask that, as I do each year. We have this line on page 595 on progress and design work in relation to the Broome boat facility and the continued provision of \$36.3 million over the project, pending confirmation of a third party contribution. Have we made any progress since last year about this third party contribution?

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Yes. I am advised that we are continuing to work now with the new federal government. Environmental approvals for the project are being progressed, with referrals currently with the state and commonwealth environmental authorities. We are working our way through it.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** I refer to page 600 on the Department of Transport.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Sorry, honourable member; could you just hang on a second? In respect to the table, there is other information on that page, so can we provide it by supplementary?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, that is fine.

*[Supplementary Information No A29.]*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Under the Department of Transport, page 600 tells us that there are 1 521 estimated actual full-time equivalents. Noting the time, my questions are: How many were subject to a disciplinary complaint? How many of those complaints were sustained? How many related to the unlawful access of TRELIS?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I will take it on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No A30.]*

**The CHAIR:** We have another minute. Does anyone have another quick one?

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** I will ask one, not that we will get an answer from the minister. How many times was TRELIS access unauthorised in the current financial year?

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am feeling a sense of *deja vu*. I will take it on notice. If the minister is prepared to provide an answer, she will do that.

**The CHAIR:** TRELIS is supplementary information A30.

Hon Neil Thomson, I know you are chafing at the bit, so you have two minutes, mate, if you have got one more question. If you have not got one, that is fine.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** If I can have the third crack at this issue around the question, which at the risk of —

**The CHAIR:** If you do not have one, that is fine. I will give the call to someone else.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** I will put it on notice.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** I have quite a discrete one in relation to page 617 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, in relation to the East Perth power station footbridge. It is a line item under “New Works”. Do we know the proposed location of the bridge? What community engagement will be undertaken prior to the location and design being finalised?

**The CHAIR:** It is going to bring down the government, I think, this one.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** East Perth train station, the general facility—I am trying to see if we have got something.

**Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT:** It is the East Perth power station footbridge. It is on page 617.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I think we will take it on notice, chair.

*[Supplementary Information No A31.]*

**The CHAIR:** You are going to be busy people in the Department of Transport, the PTA and Main Roads over the next couple of weeks, but that is good; you are here to help. I thank everyone for your attendance, particularly the witnesses. Members may submit their remaining questions through the electronic lodgement system, which will close at 5.00 pm on 1 July 2022. Witnesses, the committee will forward the uncorrected transcript of evidence, with questions taken on notice highlighted, as soon as possible after the hearing. Responses to questions on notice are due by

5.00 pm on 20 July 2022. Should you be unable to meet the due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons why the due date could not be met. Once again, thank you most sincerely for your attendance today.

**Hearing concluded at 1.00 pm**

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