

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND JUSTICE  
STANDING COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO THE METHODS EMPLOYED BY WA POLICE  
TO EVALUATE PERFORMANCE**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE  
TAKEN AT PERTH  
WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2015**

**SESSION ONE**

**Members**

**Ms M.M. Quirk (Chair)  
Dr A.D. Buti  
Mr M.P. Murray**

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**Hearing commenced at 9.50 am****Mr DESMOND SNOOK****Executive Director, Road Network Services, Main Roads Western Australia, examined:**

**The CHAIR:** On behalf of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, I would like to thank you for your interest and your appearance before us today. The purpose of this hearing is to assist the committee in gathering evidence for its inquiry into the methods employed by WA Police to evaluate performance; specifically, performance measures related to traffic law enforcement and road safety. I would like to begin by introducing myself and other members of the committee present today. I am Margaret Quirk, the member for Girrawheen; to my right is the Deputy Chair, Dr Tony Buti, the member for Armadale; and to my left is Mick Murray, the member for Collie-Preston. The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee is a committee of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament. This hearing is a formal procedure of the Parliament and therefore commands the same respect given to the proceedings in the house itself. Even though the committee is not asking witnesses to provide evidence on oath or affirmation, it is important that you understand that any deliberate misleading of the committee may be regarded as a contempt of Parliament. This is a public hearing and Hansard will be making a transcript of the proceedings for the public record. If you refer to any document during your evidence, it would assist Hansard if you could provide the full title for the record.

Before we proceed to the questions we have for you today, I need to ask you a series of questions. Have you completed the “Details of Witness” form?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, I have.

**The CHAIR:** Do you understand the notes at the bottom of the form about giving evidence to a parliamentary committee?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, I do.

**The CHAIR:** Did you receive and read the “Information for Witnesses” briefing sheet provided with the “Details of Witness” form today?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, I did.

**The CHAIR:** Do you have any questions in relation to being a witness at today’s hearing?

**Mr Snook:** No, I do not.

**The CHAIR:** We have some questions to ask you today, but before we do that we might ask the media to take off; thank you. Do you wish to make an opening statement?

**Mr Snook:** No, I do not.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much.

What this committee is looking into is performance indicators for police in the area of road safety. Main Roads is part of the Road Safety Council, as I understand?

**Mr Snook:** Correct, that is right; I am the Main Roads representative on the Road Safety Council.

**The CHAIR:** As part of your membership of the Road Safety Council, you evaluate strategies and proposals for particular projects?

**Mr Snook:** Correct.

**The CHAIR:** Does Main Roads—either yourself or the director general—have any performance indicators in their performance agreement relating to road safety?

**Mr Snook:** Do you mean internal performance indicators within Main Roads?

**The CHAIR:** No, just personal—within your own performance agreements?

**Mr Snook:** I have general requirements to deliver budgets from road safety, and through the road safety programs we have, we have a number of projects that fit within those road safety programs. I have responsibility to deliver that. To the extent that I am able to deliver those projects within the programs, my performance gets judged on that.

**The CHAIR:** Can you tell us a bit about the road trauma trust fund before we get on to other things? What Main Roads projects are funded out of the road trauma trust fund, as opposed to general revenue? Are there any criteria?

**Mr Snook:** Is there a particular financial year?

**The CHAIR:** Say this year we have regional and remote road improvements. I think you asked for \$91 million and you got \$35 million. Does that sound right?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, that is right. The way it works with the road trauma trust account is that there are line-by-line proposals, and then subsequent allocations by government. With the road trauma trust account—that would be for 2014-15 that you would be looking at there—each agency puts up for its projects, and that totals to a certain sum. With this one, they estimated a total amount of funding that would be in the road trauma trust account, and they used that regional roads line item as the balancing line item. The \$90 million did not represent what was likely to be available; it was just used as a balancing item. To explain that —

**The CHAIR:** Yes, good.

**Mr Snook:** The previous year we had run a regional run-off program of approximately \$35 million. That line item—you mentioned a figure?

**The CHAIR:** It was \$35 million, I think, and it is \$91 million. It is item 10 there.

**Mr Snook:** That \$35.33 million that was allocated represents an amount that was similar to the previous financial year. That sum represents some specific projects. They were specific upgrades to Coalfields highway, there was also the construction of passing lanes on Albany Highway, and there were some improvements to the Wubin–Mullewa Road.

**The CHAIR:** Why is any of that stuff not core business? Why is that coming out of the road trauma trust fund and not Main Roads' substantive budget?

**Mr Snook:** Those line items were seen to have particular road safety benefits, so that is why they were funded through the road trauma trust account.

**The CHAIR:** But is that not Main Roads' core business in any event? Should that not be coming out of consolidated revenue and your budget, as opposed to the road trauma trust fund?

**Mr Snook:** Those projects were originally nominated by us to do, so for instance —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I think the local member might have had a few words as well.

**Mr Snook:** I think we really appreciated the efforts of the local member to get us over the line on it. They were projects that had been nominated through Main Roads identifying these problems. This was a funding source that became available.

**The CHAIR:** When you say that, I have heard an account that—are you on the finance subcommittee of Road Safety Council?

**Mr Snook:** No, but I sort of get involved with the decisions afterwards.

**The CHAIR:** When you say a funding source became available, as I understand it, the Road Safety Council was given very short notice that there was, I think, almost \$100 million available that was not expected, and some projects had to be nominated. Are you aware of that situation?

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**Mr Snook:** No. We had nominated some other projects—some run-off-road-type projects—but these particular projects I mentioned were the ones that ended up being funded.

**The CHAIR:** Am I to understand that there is not enough money in consolidated revenue allocated to Main Roads to do what is core business, and therefore you are having to dip into the road trauma trust fund?

**Mr Snook:** The Main Roads roads budget is nearly a \$2 billion program that we deliver annually for the whole of Main Roads, so I do not necessarily agree with that statement that you made.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** In that case, if the money was not coming from the trust fund, would those jobs have gone ahead?

**Mr Snook:** I believe they would have, but there would have been a reallocation of funds within Main Roads. Those projects would have gone ahead because they were —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** They were on the top of the list; I understand.

**Mr Snook:** Yes.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** But that means someone else would have missed out down the other end?

**Mr Snook:** Correct, yes; projects down the list would not have —

**The CHAIR:** Because you think they are the absolute imperative in terms of road safety, they are not funded out of core budget because you think there is a really good chance that they will get up under the road trauma trust fund?

[10.00 am]

**Mr Snook:** They were originally identified through our process to go as core budget but, as I said, the opportunity came up through the funding process to do it.

**The CHAIR:** When you say “the opportunity came up”, what does that mean exactly?

**Mr Snook:** We were advised that Treasury was prepared to fund them through the road trauma trust account.

**The CHAIR:** So it is not a given on the Road Safety Council that all the money in the road trauma trust fund that is raised in the year will be spent; that is my understanding.

**Mr Snook:** Correct.

**The CHAIR:** What is the understanding of the Road Safety Council members as to how much of the trust fund will be spent a year?

**Mr Snook:** For '14-15, I do not have the exact figure, but it was in the order of tens of millions.

**The CHAIR:** Tens of millions?

**Mr Snook:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** And over \$100 million is raised annually.

**Mr Snook:** Correct.

**The CHAIR:** Is it Treasury that makes that decision?

**Mr Snook:** Yes. It is part of the budgetary process so Treasury is involved in the decision, but I do not know exactly who.

**The CHAIR:** The other one I just want to quickly ask, before we go back to issues about police, is the electronic school zone sign project. Now, that is a bid put up by you. There is a bit of an argument—I am not necessarily saying that I agree—that that is not strictly a road safety issue and that this was a political decision to do that and your department had to get the money from somewhere and so it went to Main Roads.

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**Mr Snook:** It is safety at schools. It was a policy commitment by the government, whenever there was a 40-kilometre speed limit at a school within the state, that one of these electronic school zone signs would be installed. The total value of that program is \$12 million per year for three years. There was no allocation of funding of that amount within Main Roads budget that is why the —

**The CHAIR:** So the government made a promise and then had to find money from somewhere.

**Mr Snook:** It was a government policy commitment and funding was found from the road trauma trust account.

**The CHAIR:** Just on that, does the department make the recommendations as to where those signs go and what the priority is, or is there some policy directive as to what schools get those signs first?

**Mr Snook:** Electronic school zone signs have been put at 270 schools so far. The priority to do them was to install them on high speed roads, where there are dual carriageways where there was evidence of heavy vehicles, where police had evidence of motorists speeding. We prioritised it that way. At the moment, what we are doing is following those priorities; it will just roll out. But because it will be a statewide rollout, we will start in the metropolitan area just because we have had to arrange a new contract to do this. So, with some new upgraded technology in the signs and because they are a new design, we just want to make sure that in case anything happens because they are new units, then if we do them in the metro area, it is easier for us to jump on any problems quickly.

**The CHAIR:** So, the department has a list. Does that get altered anywhere at any stage, so maybe one in Balcatta gets put up the list and one in Girrawheen gets put down the bottom, for example?

**Mr Snook:** The order of the list will change depending on community feedback that happens and that sort of thing.

**The CHAIR:** That is done at what a ministerial office or something like that?

**Mr Snook:** Sometimes when we get feedback then we take action; sometimes we get feedback from other areas.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Is there a list that you could provide us with the rollout of those signs—when it happens and where?

**Mr Snook:** I could arrange to get a list. We will be doing 73 schools this financial year.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** What about last financial year? Can you get that?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, I can get that too.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Also, can you put it into electorates?

**Mr Snook:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** In the last hearing of the committee, we were canvassing what was considered appropriate funding for the road trauma trust fund and what was not. Quite a substantial amount of money goes to WA—maybe you can tell us what you think the purpose of the road trauma trust fund is before I go on with this.

**Mr Snook:** The road trauma trust account is where the fines from speed and red-light cameras go.

**The CHAIR:** What is your understanding or what do you believe, sitting on that committee, is the appropriate disbursement of those funds—for what purposes?

**Mr Snook:** It is used to assist to deliver the Toward Zero road safety strategy in areas that would not otherwise receive funding from the organisations' normal core business.

**The CHAIR:** For example, there are certain outcomes under Towards Zero and anything that goes towards that outcome.

**Mr Snook:** Correct.

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**The CHAIR:** About \$7 million goes to Western Australia Police for administration of, basically, speeding fines. Is that something that falls into that category? What would you have to say about that?

**Mr Snook:** That is actually part of the business of the police. By them doing that business, that assists with the revenue stream for the road trauma trust account, which allows all the other things to happen. Personally, I do not have an issue with that being funded through the road trauma trust account.

**The CHAIR:** But if that is core police business, would you anticipate that it should come out of the standard budget?

**Mr Snook:** I guess it depends if that is extra effort over and above core business.

**The CHAIR:** I mean, for example, the Department of Transport does not get road trauma trust funding in relation to issuing licences and those sorts of administrative costs, but obviously having a driver's licence has a road safety outcome.

**Mr Snook:** I guess the Department of Transport licensing issue is maybe not as direct, but I can see a direct alignment for the police work in the speed fines area.

**The CHAIR:** The main core issue that we are looking at in this committee is how we measure how effective the police are in road safety. One of the arguments that police use, for example, the commissioner has taken any performance indicators out of his performance contract because he said that it is not just up to him because a number of agencies are involved. From a Main Roads perspective, how do you measure your performance indicators as to whether you have been successful in advancing road safety outcomes for a particular period?

**Mr Snook:** It is really true that for road safety, the final outcome on road safety depends on everybody doing their bit—no one organisation or person is totally responsible. Under Towards Zero, Main Roads leads two areas; that is safe roads and roadsides, and the second one is we do part of safe speeds; we set the safe speed limits on the road. For me being judged on my performance, I manage a number of road safety programs within Main Roads. I look after the black spot program, the safer road programs and the road trauma trust account program for regional runoff and metro intersections. The broad measure for my performance is a dollar performance on how successful I am in ensuring that those programs are delivered.

[10.10 am]

**The CHAIR:** So it is literally kilometres of tarmac or bitumen or whatever?

**Mr Snook:** Yes. It is a case of, "Here's your dollars in your program; make sure that they're delivered and make sure that they're delivered on good road safety projects." We nominate the projects. To do that, there are criteria around, for instance, the black spot program, the safer roads program and the road trauma programs. The projects that I nominate are required to meet those and then I have to deliver them.

**The CHAIR:** So it does not drill down to things like a reduction of the number of crashes at a particular intersection or anything like that?

**Mr Snook:** That is an outcome of it. For instance, with the road trauma trust account and the run-off-road crashes program, we go through the data. The police provide all the crash data and we get a copy of their data, except it does not have any information that can identify individuals, but apart from that we have all the data. We use that data to map out on the road network which roads have higher than average run-off-road crashes and, using that information, we have identified the areas we want to treat. Of course, there are always more roads identified than there is money you have to treat it. The works are then delivered by Main Roads regions, so we work with the regions to identify the sections of road that can be treated. We develop up the projects and they are then delivered. We then monitor the bits of road that we have treated to see if, in fact, we have made

a difference. There is a direct correlation between the work that we have done and any reductions in road crashes that occur.

**The CHAIR:** My understanding is that there are different levels of road treatments you can do. I do not know if I am using the right words. Is that grades? What is the term that I should be using?

**Mr Snook:** “Treatments” is okay. That is principally on intersections involved with black spot programs. At a national level it has been determined that for certain types of crashes certain treatments that you do to the road will have more benefits than others. On an intersection, for instance, if there is a history of car crashes—we call them right-through crashes—running into the side of each other, the best treatment you can do there is a roundabout because that slows traffic down and protects the driver more in that case. However, there are places where you just cannot install a roundabout, so your second best treatment would be a set of traffic signals. So the safety benefits that you get from a roundabout are slightly more than you get from a set of signals, and you work your way through like that.

**The CHAIR:** I was thinking more of the grade of road or something, rather than traffic treatments per se.

**Mr Snook:** Between highways, main roads and local roads?

**The CHAIR:** No. It is the actual treatment—it is like levels 1 to 5. In other words, we are not necessarily treating our roads at the optimal level for road safety.

**Mr Snook:** With the run-off-road crashes, we have identified the five levels—one to five. The levels of road are based on whether the number of crashes per kilometre along that road are up to two times more than the average, between two and four times above the average or more than five times above average. That is the five levels.

**The CHAIR:** What I am saying is that if it is at the lower level, you will not necessarily upgrade that road to the optimal level. That is what I am trying to say—badly.

**Mr Snook:** I apologise for not coming along with you.

If I can just start back, if a piece of road in the country has a history of run-off-road crashes, we can do what is called a “full reconstruction of the road”, and we reconstruct and realign it. We put it on a different alignment so that the curves are much smoother and the road is wider and has what we call a nice “grade” on it and it just drives really smoothly. You could be paying up to \$2 million per kilometre for that. If you have a history of crashes and you want to treat those crashes, we put a dollar figure on each type of crash. Within Australia there is a national agreed way you do that. If you have a history of fatalities on that piece of road, a fatality is worth \$7 million. If you then have serious crashes, they are worth so many hundreds of thousands of dollars and down.

**The CHAIR:** So something like Coalfields highway is given a high priority because of the frequency of the fatalities?

**Mr Snook:** Correct. But if it is out in a more remote area in the country and there are still a series of crashes, it is not appropriate to go out and do a full-blown reconstruction and realignment. What we do with the road trauma trust account is we know from international work that has been done that if we just widen the shoulders, and we can do those for between \$200 000 and \$300 000 a kilometre, we can actually roll out long lengths of that road very easily and the process to do it is just the widening—it is easy to do—and from a building point of view, it is an easy process because it is something that traditionally has been done for many years just to widen roads.

**The CHAIR:** And it is generally accepted that some road run-offs are in fact suicides, and I understand that police can ascertain that by looking to see whether there is any braking or even accelerating.

**Mr Snook:** Correct. Yes.

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**The CHAIR:** For obvious reasons and sensitivities, that is not generally recorded, but is that shared with other agencies so that you are aware of that and can assess that in your numbers?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, it is. The number of road fatalities that the police provide—the number of road fatalities that are distributed—the police have already taken out any suicides.

**The CHAIR:** They take the suicides out of that, do they?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, they do. So the public figures do not include suicides.

**The CHAIR:** That is interesting. I did not know that.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** In determining priorities as to which areas have the greatest need, what interaction do you have with the police force? What data do they provide you for you to determine which areas need greater work to improve the road safety?

[10.20 am]

**Mr Snook:** The police have their database, so all crashes that they have, they have a record of how the crash occurred, where it occurred, the fatalities or injuries that occurred, whether there were other influences like drink-driving or drugs, if speed was a factor, and they have the names of the people involved. The police are the only ones that have all that information. What they do is they clean that and they take out the names of the people involved and they provide that to Main Roads.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** It is an automatic thing. You do not have to request it. It is provided to you automatically, is it?

**Mr Snook:** It is an ongoing arrangement. Then what Main Roads does is we store that information and other agencies come and use our data, so local governments or other groups that want to use crash data, they come and use ours. We have one source of data for everybody to work off. So, that works well. That is a long-term, ongoing arrangement with the police.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** In determining your priorities, is it purely determined on the data that is provided by the police or what other factors do you consider?

**Mr Snook:** For the whole of Main Roads, a whole lot of issues are considered apart from road safety. So, there might be some economic development decisions et cetera. For me personally, as I have the responsibility for those road safety programs, then according to the criteria for those programs, I need to address those criteria. But what will happen is that to prioritise the order in which we do those projects from year to year, one of the issues we always consider is how easy it is to deliver that project. For instance, there might be a project that requires land resumptions and service relocations, and it could take many years to get ready to build. In those cases, that will not be the first priority. We will do the ones that are actually able to be delivered.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** In other words, while safety is incredibly important in your personal portfolio, you actually do a cost–benefit analysis that involves economic issues such as economic developments. In other words, the safety priority is not “sabotaged” but infiltrated by other factors. There is the famous film with Gene Hackman working for a car manufacturer and they know there is a fault with the car but they do a cost–benefit analysis that the cost of recalling the cars is going to cost more than allowing a few people to die. So, I am not saying you go down to that extent, but there is a cost–benefit analysis here where the safety does not override everything.

**Mr Snook:** For the road safety programs we do, the benefit–cost ratio is based on the safety. What I said was we might not do one project straightaway just because it is difficult to deliver and because the priority is to actually get good projects built on the roads.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** But if there is an economic development bonus, that might be pushed up the system.

**Mr Snook:** It could happen in some cases. I would have to say, though, just to maybe balance that out, other projects that Main Roads do, which are principally about economic development, actually



do have spinoff road safety benefits. For example, there is the Gateway WA project being done around the airport, and that is about improving the traffic flow in that area. But the side benefit of it is that it puts a bridge at Tonkin Highway and Horrie Miller Drive, another bridge at Tonkin Highway and Leach Highway, and another one at Leach Highway and Abernethy Road. They are priority areas for us as intersections—all of those are within the top 10 intersections for crashes. So, the consequential benefits are very big.

**The CHAIR:** Is there data that you would like to get in your job, which the police do not currently collect and which you would find useful?

**Mr Snook:** The best thing that the police do is they give us that access to their data. By providing that information that is what we really need.

**The CHAIR:** Is there stuff that they are not collecting that you think would be useful?

**Mr Snook:** They have got data for where they do speed infringements. They do data where they do breath-testing, so the number of breath-tests and the infringements that come out of that. Seatbelts—they do that as well. The speed infringement data that they have is sometimes useful, but at Main Roads we actually have a big speed measuring program. Every year we do a comprehensive measurement across the metropolitan area and at some locations in the country. We have been doing that for over 10 years, so we have a pretty good idea of particular locations where speed is an issue.

**The CHAIR:** Do the police have access to that?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, they do.

**The CHAIR:** Do they use that in their committee as to where they put their speed cameras and what have you?

**Mr Snook:** Yes.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Apologies for being out and it may have been asked previously. There was something I was really, really interested about—the speed limits and how they were set, and the community input. I use Collie as an example. The Collie community want the speed limit down the main street to be 40 kilometres an hour but Main Roads opposed that and the police supported it. How does that come about? I will use another one, Des, from some time back when Harvey High School, which is next to the main road coming through there and where people have been killed on that intersection. I do not blame the road itself because there was reasons for that. The high school is on one side of town and the town is on the other. There are kids crossing, yet it took a huge, huge effort to get the speed limit reduced as per other schools. I mean, who has the final say? What input do you have from councils, police and others about what the community wants?

**Mr Snook:** The way it works is Main Roads does all the speed limits in the state. Main Roads sets them and —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** No input from the police?

**Mr Snook:** They do have input from the police, definitely, and within Main Roads that is my area, so I sign off on speed limits.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Further to that then, you have got main roads where you go down the South Western Highway up and down on the speedo all the time but then you go through Capel where there is a very dangerous turn and Main Roads will not even look at dropping the speed limit there because in 20 years' time they want it to be a fast lane. I mean, we are talking about today not in 20 years' time, where the community has been crying out for a small decrease down there and the police have spoken to me about it and say, "Can you keep political pressure on because it is dangerous", and they do not want to clean up the mess. Again, we have one agency fighting the other and the community being disregarded totally.

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[10.30 am]

**Mr Snook:** So, when you set speed limits generally there are ways in which you do it. There is an Australian standard way in which you do it. Speed limits are very sensitive. From a Main Roads point of view, what we are sensitive about is that if you just post a lower speed limit and, what we call the speed environment—the speed environment is that everything is open, a straight piece of road, studies have shown that a driver's response to that is that they will go faster. If we just put a sign up without doing anything else, it is highly likely that that will have hardly any effect at all on reducing speed limits. It then relies on the police to enforce that speed limit and a lot of bad feeling then arises.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Such as the Forrest Highway and the Mandurah turn-off. When the police are short of numbers, they sit out there and get another 50 and then go back into their burrow.

**Mr Snook:** I could not comment on that but —

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I can, through my pocket!

**The CHAIR:** We have another witness, so there are a couple of issues I want to get through. Police did have as their KPIs, the percentage related to lawful road user behaviour. That was their previous KPI.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Margaret, I do not want to be rude to you, but the thing I still cannot get from Des's answer is the connection between safety, road signs, Main Roads and police.

**The CHAIR:** That is what I am trying to get at.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** I do not quite get —

**The CHAIR:** All right; maybe Mr Snook can answer that for you.

**Mr Snook:** When we set speed limits, we always check with the police. Generally, when we do speed limits, it is usually with lower speed limits—we lower more than we raise. We absolutely check with the local police before we do that. To finish what I was saying before, if we are going to reduce the speed limit and the current speed environment does not suit that, we expect that some sort of change is made to make that speed environment suited to a lower speed limit, and that is the issue about traffic calming or doing things that sort of narrow the lanes down to give that visual impression. That is what we want. If there are any particular issues, I always tell people, "Feed the particular issues back up and we'll go out and have a look at it." We try to always be responsive because if the community wants something, generally that means that there is an issue out there and the community needs it.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Five years in Harvey to get the speed limit changed—five years. That is pretty responsive!

**Mr Snook:** We do not always get it right, I acknowledge that.

**The CHAIR:** I will give it another go after that answer. The police previously had as an efficiency KPI the percentage of lawful road user behaviour and they have changed that now to the number of contacts. Have you got a view about that change and whether it accurately better reflects their performance or is less meaningful?

**Mr Snook:** I think the number of contacts is actually quite important because that shows that they are —

**The CHAIR:** Visible.

**Mr Snook:** Yes; and, again, what we know from studies is that if the police are out there with a presence, it does keep the speed limit down. I cannot comment on the other one, though.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. We have had evidence from the Road Safety Council that with some questions of police—for example, where they are deploying random breath testing or when they are doing it,

about speed enforcement—there has been a reluctance by police to disclose that information to Road Safety Council members. The police are saying that it is not the role of the Road Safety Council to look at how police deploy their enforcement resources. Is that a conflict you have been made aware of while you have been on the Road Safety Council?

**Mr Snook:** No; I was not.

**The CHAIR:** Do you consider, if you are on the Road Safety Council making decisions and signing off on, for example, road trauma trust fund applications, how and when police are going to disburse those funds is important information?

**Mr Snook:** Yes it is. If the road trauma trust account is paying for that service, then we are entitled to have that information.

**The CHAIR:** In your annual report, discussing the Road Towards Zero strategy report, you mentioned a focus on cultural change. Can you explain what that means?

**Mr Snook:** The Road Towards Zero is the internal Main Roads strategy, so the idea about cultural change is really for people to accept that you cannot expect to go out and just speed on the road, do what you like; it is really about obeying all the rules. It is about the safe system approach that you need to obey all the roads.

**The CHAIR:** Obviously, the police have got a pretty important role in —

**Mr Snook:** Correct. It is the activities of the police; they are the blanket over everything. For what I do with road safety projects in building safe roads, it is sort of a slow build. Your road will last, say, 20 years. As you build your roads, you are building up the safe road asset out there, but it takes more —

**The CHAIR:** The more the safe roads are implemented, the more it goes back to driver behaviour, which is a police thing.

**Mr Snook:** Correct. You have to have the police, because they have an instantaneous effect on making sure —

**The CHAIR:** The Road Towards Zero is due to expire this year, so what do you believe has been achieved over the life of that document and what is going to replace it?

**Mr Snook:** The Road Towards Zero has been important for Main Roads to sort of start to understand the safe system, because Towards Zero, which is the state road safety strategy, introduced the safe system approach but we then had to bring that into Main Roads. We have made some good progress with the designers in Main Roads. We had to understand that so that we could get the consultants who work for us to acknowledge that. We have done that through some of our big projects, even starting with Forrest Highway, with work that we did on Great Eastern Highway and through the Gateway. We have concentrated on introducing the safe-systems approach through those demonstration projects and with the idea that, having got some examples on the ground, we were then in a position where we could use that to educate our people. We have not finished that job by any means, but it has been a very good start. There will be a replacement for the Road Towards Zero and that will sort of follow on with that.

**The CHAIR:** All right, I will not put you on the spot now, but can you provide to the committee the source of funding for road expenditure, whether it be commonwealth, royalties for regions, state road expenditure and road trauma trust fund? Can we get the split of annual expenditure on roads—it can be percentage—and also quantum for the source of those funds? I think you have already given an answer in relation to that \$91 million bid, that that was some sort of book entry.

**Mr Snook:** Yes, that is right, line balancing.

**The CHAIR:** I am still not sure about that, Tony.

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**Dr A.D. BUTI:** We are a magnet today for the others. In the Main Roads annual report 2014 in regard to the performance targets, you have a number here on percentage of community satisfaction on road safety. How is that determined? I have a couple of others here: effectiveness of road safety awareness campaign. So, community satisfaction on road safety, the safety awareness campaign and also community satisfaction with cycleway–pedestrian facilities. How do you actually determine that?

**Mr Snook:** Every year we do an annual review. Approximately 1 100 people get surveyed.

[10.40 am]

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Random?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, it is a random telephone survey; also telephone and we have started to do an email survey as well.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Mad monkey or something it is called, is it not?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, SurveyMonkey.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Yes, that is it. I knew it had “monkey” in it.

**Mr Snook:** So we do that, and it is statewide. There are approximately 250 people in the metro area and 100 people from each of the regional areas. That adds up to approximately 1 100 people. All of that survey is based on people who have used the main roads recently rather than just local roads. That concentrates on the highways and main roads; and based on that, that is what the estimates come from.

**The CHAIR:** Are there any areas in terms of road safety that you think police are doing well and anywhere that you think they might be able to lift their game?

**Mr Snook:** I think police are frontline. They have a really difficult job. I think the work they do with the speed enforcement and drink-driving enforcement is particularly hard and particularly good in what they do. I do not know. I guess when I look at things from a regional perspective, they do not have the specific specialised traffic police out there and I think sometimes their other general duties might get in the way of their traffic work.

**The CHAIR:** Main Roads used to commission a driver-attitude survey. Was that within the Office of Road Safety or was that more generally?

**Mr Snook:** Driver attitudes, that was from the Office of Road Safety.

**The CHAIR:** Okay, I will not ask you about that. The other thing was that we have also heard evidence that the road safety advertising budget has been very much gutted in the last year or so. What impact do you think that has on the capacity to get the message out there?

**Mr Snook:** The traditional line for road safety has always been education, enforcement and engineering. So, if you covered the three Es, then it is not a bad balance. The Office of Road Safety, because it has not had its campaign funds, the education is very difficult to do.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Do you think in some areas—I have got to be careful how I couch this and try to be nice, I guess—the culture in Main Roads on safety is, “We know best”? I am seeing that. Again, I am taking from a community issue where speed signs were changed recently without notification—those sorts of things.

**Mr Snook:** I think from the old days in Main Roads it was definitely a case of yes that Main Roads built roads, we were the experts and we knew best. That is the old attitude. We have worked hard over a number of years to try to change that. The idea of customer service we started a number of years ago, and we try on that and sometimes we forget. The particular question is well made, because I have signed off on that request and I asked that if everything had been done well and had we checked it or we had not. But what is going to happen is there is a new corporate strategy from

Main Roads that will come out in the next few months that puts customer service and safety right up the top.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** Can you just expand a little on that? We see the RAC reports come out, you know. Some very good reports come out and then the police are sitting over here. Is there ever the time when the police, Main Roads and independent bodies, I suppose outside of government bodies, sit down and have a one on one, not necessarily a forum where you all sit in a room and, you know, we nod and then go home and not a great deal is done. I am talking about a high-level, focused road safety with outside people?

**Mr Snook:** No; sorry, we had a few that were organised by the Office of Road Safety a number of years ago but recently that has not occurred. And, yes, we would certainly benefit from that; it would actually give us a real good focus.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Just quickly, going back to the annual report, on that percentage effectiveness of road safety awareness campaign, it has got zero per cent actually for 2014. Do you know why it would be zero? Do you want to look at it?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, please.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** That is the effectiveness of road safety awareness campaigns.

**Mr Snook:** That one?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Yes.

**Mr Snook:** Yes, there is. Yes; it is under the Office of Road Safety, and the reason it is zero is because they do not do any.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** They did not do any awareness campaigns?

**Mr Snook:** Yes, that is right.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** But they had a target. What is this target of 65 per cent and then the actual zero?

**Mr Snook:** So they set the target at the start of the financial year where they probably thought they had funds to do the campaigns, and then at the end of the financial year they lost it.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks very much, and you will provide the committee with that information. Thanks for giving your evidence before the committee today. A transcript of the hearing will be forwarded to you for correction of minor errors. Any such corrections must be made and the transcript returned within 10 days from the date of the letter attached to the transcript. If the transcript is not returned within this period, it is deemed to be correct. New material cannot be added via these corrections and the sense of your evidence cannot be altered. Should you wish to provide additional information or elaborate on particular points, please include a supplementary submission for the committee's consideration when you return your corrected transcript of evidence. Thanks very much. And you will be providing us a list of the school flashing lights.

**Mr Snook:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** And also the break-up of the road funding.

**Mr Snook:** Yes, I will do that.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks very much, Mr Snook.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Thank you very much.

**Mr Snook:** Thank you very much. Sincere thanks. It was a very good hearing.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** No worries.

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**The CHAIR:** Good; thank you. We obviously were not tough enough on you!

**Mr Snook:** Yes, you were! It was a very good experience; thank you very much for that.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Hearing concluded at 10.48 am**

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