



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2006-2007**

**(Reference: Appropriation Bill 2006-2007)**

**Members:**

**MS M PORTER (The Chair)**  
**DR D FOSKEY (The Deputy Chair)**  
**MR M GENTLEMAN**  
**MS K MacDONALD**  
**MR S PRATT**  
**MR B SMYTH**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE**

**CANBERRA**

**FRIDAY, 23 JUNE 2006**

**Secretary to the committee:**  
**Ms S Lilburn (Ph: 6205 0490)**

**By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory**

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the committee office of the Legislative Assembly (Ph: 6205 0127).

## APPEARANCES

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## **The committee met at 9.31 am.**

Appearances:

Hargreaves, Mr John, Minister for the Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Housing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Department of Urban Services

Zissler, Mr Mike, Chief Executive

McNulty, Mr Hamish, Executive Director, Municipal Services Network

Elliott, Mr Tom, Director, Integrated Channel Management, Enterprise Services Network

Greenland, Ms Karen, General Manager, Road Transport, Municipal Services Network

Kiemann, Ms Susanna, Director, Strategic Finance, Enterprise Services Network

MacDonald, Mr Brian, General Manager, Services Group, Enterprise Services Network

Chief Minister's Department

Ottesen, Mr Peter, Executive Director, Office of Sustainability, Sustainability and Climate Change Policy

Cooper, Dr Maxine, Executive Director, Arts, Heritage and Environment

ACTION Authority

Wallace, Mr Peter, Chief Executive

**THE CHAIR:** You should understand that these hearings, which are legal proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, are protected by parliamentary privilege. That gives you certain protections but it also places on you certain responsibilities. It means that you are protected from certain legal actions such as being sued for defamation for what you say at this public hearing. It also means that you have a responsibility to tell the committee the truth. The Assembly will treat as a serious matter the giving of false or misleading evidence. Minister, would you like to make an opening statement?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have an opening statement, Madam Chair. I seek the indulgence of the committee for a while. Territory and Municipal Services is a large department and I would like to touch briefly on all parts of that department. I am pleased to commend to you the first budget for the new Department of Territory and Municipal Services. The department brings together a broad range of functions, including sport and recreation, environment, sustainability, tourism and public transport. There are obvious synergies between many of these areas that will provide a range of opportunities to create a streamlined and efficient organisation, providing Canberrans with better value-for-money services.

Over the coming year there will be significant changes to the way in which things are done. This will involve restructuring many areas, starting with organisational changes that will occur as a result of the abolition of a number of boards and authorities on 1 July. The work that Mr Zissler and his team have recently undertaken in urban services has positioned the new department well to manage effectively the challenges around more profound changes that are about to take place. Over the past 12 months urban services,

through its Taking Charge of Our Future program, implemented a wide range of organisational reforms and initiatives and made considerable savings.

One important initiative involves improving the understanding of what the community needs and expects. As part of the department's community engagement strategy, a community reference advisory group has been established comprising a broad cross-section of the Canberra community. It involves people with specific interests in the family and the environment and it has representatives from the disability, aged, multicultural and business sectors. These people are providing information and advice that is helping us to better target community engagement activities.

By providing their perspective directly to the department a clearer picture of the issues of concern to Canberrans has emerged. Cultural change has been and will continue to be a focus for the department. The department appointed a women's advocate and established a women's committee to champion women's career development, act as an adviser on gender-related workplace issues, and oversight the implementation of a women's workplace action plan. The government remains strongly committed to implementing *People Place Prosperity: a policy for sustainability in the ACT* and to working to promote and integrate sustainability principles.

The business of government will continue, as will the development of a climate strategy and a related energy policy. Maintaining safe and efficient road networks for the community is of vital importance. The government provided a major boost to the current road maintenance program with the injection of \$20 million over the next four years. In 2006-07 the government is injecting a further \$1.35 million into road safety improvements on Monaro Highway to help ensure that this popular commuting and holiday route is as safe as possible.

The upgrading of Lanyon Drive will commence with \$5 million sourced from the Roads to Recovery program and \$4.2 million has also been committed for the construction of Harrison school access roads to meet future access needs to both the school and the oval. A further \$800,000 has been allocated to the Harrison neighbourhood oval and \$600,000 has been allocated in both 2006-07 and 2007-08 for the continuing removal of a number of unsafe burnt and drought-affected trees adjacent to rural roads, reducing the risks to motorists using our rural road network.

This significant road maintenance and safety package is in addition to the large works program currently being undertaken by the government, such as Gungahlin Drive extension, which is progressing well. The government has also committed \$3.5 million to the continuation of the neighbourhood improvements and roads and bridges programs. These funds will see the provision of new streetlights, residential street improvements, road barriers, traffic safety measures at schools, traffic calming measures, bridge strengthening and road pavement rehabilitation.

This budget reinforces the government's commitment to road safety through the expansion of the fixed and mobile speed camera network. In 2006-07 we will commit nearly \$2 million to purchase and install new cameras, and \$2.4 million over the next four years to operate them. This initiative will see the installation of two new mobile speed cameras, two fixed red light speed cameras, and four fixed speed cameras at locations with a history of road crashes and speeding offences. My concerns regarding

the operation of wheelchair accessible taxis in Canberra are well known. I am pleased that \$814,000 is available over the next four years to improve taxi services for people in wheelchairs whose need for a safe and efficient taxi system is critical.

This initiative is another indication of the government's commitment to improve taxi services in the ACT. Earlier this year we released 10 new general taxi licences. In the coming months the government will hold a ballot for another 10 licences. Ultimately, we expect 40 new licences to be issued within the next two years, improving service delivery and timeliness in the taxi industry. The ACT is recognised as a safe city. This budget will enhance its status with the installation of closed-circuit television cameras in selected public areas and on ACTION buses. The government has allocated a total of nearly \$2 million over four years for the installation and operation of these cameras on ACTION buses and around ACTION depots.

In addition to this security upgrade, the budget allocates \$635,000 over four years for the installation of CCTV in strategic public locations across the ACT. Installation of these cameras will provide the government and ACT Policing with enhanced capability to plan and manage major events. I take this opportunity to thank the ACTION board: Andrew Whitecross, who chaired the board, Ian Thompson, Guy Thurston, Meredith Hunter, Allan McLean, Cathi Moore, and Peter Wallace. The board has done a fine job, contributing significantly to the high-quality bus service in this town.

We are very aware of the adverse impact the drought has had on the community's sporting programs and activities. In keeping with the government's desire for the community to get out and enjoy the ACT's beautiful environment, this budget also includes \$3.6 million for improvements to and maintenance of Canberra's sports ground facilities and urban open space. Of this, \$500,000 has been allocated to help bring back into operation many drought-affected sports grounds across Canberra. Over 40 hectares of sports grounds are to be restored, including Ngunnawal, Bonython, Chisholm and Torrens. Part of Kippax and Melba district playing fields will also be repaired.

In addition to this drought rehabilitation work, the funding will also include the expenditure of \$1.1 million on improvements to sports facilities across Canberra. Lights will be installed at Jerrabomberra oval in Narrabundah and at Garran oval. Change rooms will be constructed at O'Connor enclosed oval, a canteen will be built at Latham playing fields, and pavilions will be refurbished at a number of other sports grounds. The government remains committed to managing and protecting our environment. The brush-tailed rock wallaby and northern corroboree frog programs are fine examples of how a cooperative approach, people with passion and a supportive government can achieve great things. An amount of \$100,000 has been allocated to the recovery programs for these two iconic and endangered species.

At Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve two artificial outdoor breeding pools and a public display will be built for the corroboree frogs, and the enclosures for the brush-tailed rock wallabies are to be upgraded. An additional \$137,000 will be spent over the next four years to support these programs. There will also be greater protection for the territory's grassy woodlands endangered wildlife, with \$350,000 set aside to build a predator-free enclosure at Mulligan's Flat Nature Reserve. An investment of nearly \$5.5 million over the next four years will provide the necessary funds to complete bushfire fuel reduction works required by the bushfire operation plan of the Department of Territory and

Municipal Services.

Over the next four years almost \$4 million will be spent to upgrade and develop new fire trails. There will be significant challenges over the coming year as the Department of Territory and Municipal Services is established. I am confident that the dedicated staff that comprise the new department will continue to provide the community with the high-quality services on which we all rely every day. I would like to raise three other issues before the estimates committee process commences. The first relates to an editorial error on page 308 of BP4. The target for the annual park maintenance cost per hectare of \$6,272 is incorrectly specified. The correct number should be \$3,500.

**DR FOSKEY:** Instead of \$6,262?

**MS MacDONALD:** So that amount of \$3,500 is the estimated outcome?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. The second issue, which relates to the cost of library services per capita, is to be found on page 306 of BP4. That figure should be approximately \$44, not \$34.39 as stated. The third issue relates to the presentation of ACTION's accountability indicators. These indicators appear in the ACTION chapter on page 343 of BP4 and also in the department's chapter on page 314. Unfortunately, there was a version control error in the production of the budget papers, resulting in a previous version of the total being produced on page 314. The right indicators are on page 343. If there are any questions relating to these indicators members should refer to the table on page 343.

I welcome the committee's examination of the department and I am happy to answer the committee's questions. I advise the committee that today I am accompanied by officers from the department, in particular, Mike Zissler, chief executive, urban services, as it is at the moment; Susanna Kiemann, director, strategic finance; and Hamish McNulty, executive director, municipal services network.

Yesterday, when the Chief Minister was talking about the ACT's water supply catchments, he indicated that the government had received advice from an advisory group headed by Professor Gary Jones putting forward options for future catchment management arrangements in ACT water supply catchments. The Chief Minister indicated I would respond today. These options will be considered in the context of the new structural arrangements within government administration. It is important for the committee to know that no decisions have been made at this time, but all decisions around water catchments will be taken in the light of professional advice.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you, Minister. I need to speak to all members about a few issues. Yesterday Hansard staff had some difficulty recording the proceedings, mainly because some members were sitting back in their chairs and were not speaking into the microphones. I ask all members to ensure that they speak into the microphones. Second, people were speaking over one another. I am sure that members and witnesses will not do that today. I ask members not to speak over anyone when asking their questions, or when ministers or officials are answering the questions. Hansard staff also asked us to ensure that nobody interrupts and asks another question while a question is being asked.

I have two questions. Minister, you talked about the wheelchair accessible taxi fleet. I do not want too much detail, but could give us a little more detail about it, as it has been

problematic? You also talked about the placement of the additional CCTVs and cameras in ACTION buses. I was just wondering about the time frame for them. When might we be seeing them in action?

**Mr Hargreaves:** As we go down the track today could members let me know, if at all possible, what page numbers and budget papers they are talking about?

**THE CHAIR:** I apologise, Minister. I am referring to page 293 of BP4.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Just recapping, you asked for further information on the wheelchair taxi issue and CCTVs, et cetera, on buses. Is that right?

**THE CHAIR:** Et cetera on that subject.

**Mr Hargreaves:** As a result of representations to your office you might know something of the history of wheelchair accessible taxis. People with disabilities have immense difficulty accessing regular transport, or even their own transport, so the government stepped in and did something about it. As you know, a task force was created under the leadership of Mr Zissler, Ms Lambert from the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services, and Mr Craig Wallace from the Disability Advisory Council. They came up with a series of recommendations that the government accepted and the government put some money into the system.

At that time only eight wheelchair accessible taxis were on the road. The last information I received indicates that there are now 17 vehicles on the road. There is no barrier to more being employed. People can apply for accreditation of their vehicles as wheelchair accessible taxis, their vehicles can be checked out, and they can be on the road in a matter of weeks. I think our plate lease charges are around \$15,000, or something of that order, so that encourages people to go out and do that.

As I indicated earlier, the government will be allocating \$800,000 over the next four years and it offered Canberra Cabs \$100,000 to micro-manage the system. We believe that services for people in wheelchairs ought to be outside the general taxi system because they need a priority service. The government offered \$100,000 to whatever network is established to micro-manage that. To date, Canberra Cabs has not taken up that offer and I express disappointment about it. I wish to correct the figure I gave for plate lease charges, Madam Chair. I am advised that if people take up a new taxi lease the plate lease charge is \$20,000—something about which we will talk later—but the annual fee for wheelchair accessible taxis is only \$1,000, not \$15,000.

The \$814,000 allocation for WATs will also make the lift fee more extensively available to people. However, there will be some tougher conditions. One condition is that if an operator who wants to have one of these jobs on the side takes a mobile phone call and off he goes, he does not get that lift fee. Operators have to do that through the system so we have a measure of control over it. We are extending that fee to all disability wheelchair taxi operators, so that is an extensive change to the program.

With regard to CCTV cameras, the government allocated \$1.4 million for retrofitting CCTV cameras in ACTION's fleet. The government and ACTION are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for the public. Security cameras on buses are a

positive measure to address the personal security of drivers and passengers, as well as providing valuable information to police on suspicious and criminal activity. Currently, ACTION spends in excess of \$10,000 a month on repairs as a consequence of vandalism on buses. We hope that security cameras will act as a deterrent and assist in the recovery of costs if offenders are identified.

The Council of Australian Governments has provided a framework for a code of practice for CCTVs in the mass passenger transport sector. The COAG framework describes the desired functionality of CCTV systems in the mass passenger transport sector for enhancing counter-terrorism preparedness, prevention response, investigation and recovery. That is in line with the national counter-terrorism plan. The COAG proposes that jurisdictions apply a risk-based approach to determine their own priorities for the application of resources to counter-terrorism initiatives, such as the upgrading of CCTV.

At the moment, ACTION has CCTV cameras on 20 per cent of its fleet, so this will augment that. We will be retrofitting the remaining 80 per cent. We will also be putting CCTV cameras where there are large concentrations of people in very sensitive areas, for example, bus interchanges, and we will be strategically placing them around town. If committee members need further detail on that I am happy to have Mr McNulty advise them.

**Mr McNulty:** We have an initiative that provides \$509,000 in capital funding for 15 CCTV cameras at places of mass gatherings around the city. The places that have been identified are: the Jolimont Centre bus terminals, Canberra Stadium, Manuka oval and Exhibition Park, which are locations around Canberra where we have mass gatherings of people.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** After the Socceroos fantastic effort this morning, I congratulate the government on its expenditure on the ovals. I have produced some yellow and red cards, just in case. Minister, on the question of the ovals, will you keep up the level of service to the ovals that you have mentioned? Have you thought of any partnerships with sporting clubs?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, in the fullness of time. We have to have regard to a number of issues concerning these ovals, not the least of which is being able to manage the works in a given period—for example, 12 months, three years, or four years. We are doing as much as we can in this budget. We have had conversations with sporting organisations about looking after those grounds. I can remember recent conversations with some football codes regarding the nature of line marking on ovals. At one time diesel was used on these ovals. That creates a furrow, which is quite dangerous for people who play soccer, so we removed it.

So conversations are ongoing. Minister Barr and I have commenced relatively regular meetings. Under the chairmanship of Russell Watkinson from the Department of Urban Services a collective of sporting organisations comes together to talk about common problems and to advise the government on common issues. That collective meets regularly. Recently that collective and I visited Minister Barr. Those are the sorts of things that this government is progressing. The extent to which some organisations are capable, able or willing to do that differs across various sports.

I have a list of the sports grounds that require restoration. I am happy to table that list rather than go through it because there are quite a few. Members will remember I said in my opening address that some of the sports grounds on the list are being refurbished. We have also had regard to their placement. We do not believe they all need to be in the one part of town. If we have a restricted budget, a restricted work force and all that sort of thing, we need to ensure that everybody in Canberra gets a fair slice of the cake. So members will notice an equitable placement of those ovals. I will table a list of sports grounds, divided into north and south, that require restoration.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you very much Minister.

**DR FOSKEY:** Minister, could you advise me in more detail on the advisory committee to which you referred in your introductory remarks? What is the role of this committee? How often does it meet? What groups are represented on it and how are its members chosen? What other advisory committees and groups is it meant to reflect?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Are you talking about the community advisory group, Dr Foskey?

**DR FOSKEY:** If that is the group to which you were referring earlier.

**Mr Hargreaves:** There are quite a number of advisory groups in the department.

**DR FOSKEY:** The one you spoke about earlier.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I talked about the professional advisory group on water catchments and I referred also to the community advisory group. For the purposes of your question I will assume you are talking about the community advisory group. You asked how people were appointed, what it does, and all that sort of thing. That group advises the government as part of its community engagement strategy. I will ask Mr Zissler to answer specifically those parts of your question relating to how people are appointed and what they do.

**Mr Zissler:** The community advisory group was established after a lot of work was done by urban services early last year, after its restructure and reshaping. We focused on local government municipal services and felt we could not make decisions about how best to use the land and assets of the territory without talking to members of the community and engaging with them. So we appointed a community engagement manager and established the community advisory group.

That group includes nine or 10 individuals, and the numbers are fairly loose. Some were selected through a process within our department that identified areas of special need and others were self-elected. We advertised, people nominated and we went through a process of recruitment, if you like. The group is chaired by Tanya Parkes, who is well known for her community engagement strategies. This group is not about giving us direct advice; it advises us how to get that advice from the community. So it really talks about the strategies that we seek to apply.

Rather than going to public meetings and telling people what we are doing, we are now running different forums or, if you like, focus groups, and distributing specific and targeted questionnaires in the community. If, for example, we want to do something for

people with disabilities, we talk to the community advisory group, it suggests ways in which to engage with that group of people, and that is what we apply. So it is more about expert advice rather than advice. That urban services group has been very successful but we will need to modify it. As we go forward as the Department of Territory and Municipal Services, we will need to add to that group because we now have a broader purview. However, it is our intention to continue in that way.

**DR FOSKEY:** Would it be possible at some point to produce a list of members for the committee? What roles will need to be covered in the expansion of that group?

**Mr Zissler:** The list is available. I will provide it to the minister's office.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will think about whether or not we should make that list available, Dr Foskey.

**DR FOSKEY:** To the committee?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, indeed. I do not want to commit to that instantly. I start from the premise that we will, but I just want to have a bit of a think about it. In all probability we will make that list available. If I have a concern I will discuss that concern with the chair, but I do not think it will be a problem. This is not a departmental committee; it is a committee that advises the government.

**MR PRATT:** So why would there be a problem?

**MR SMYTH:** Why would there be a concern?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not have a concern at the moment; I am just not prepared to provide that list without giving it some thought, that is all.

**DR FOSKEY:** Let us hope that that issue is resolved positively.

**MR PRATT:** Do you think this committee will sell the list?

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt, you were not present earlier when I said that Hansard staff had—

**MR PRATT:** Is one of those yellow cards on its way?

**THE CHAIR:** I do have yellow and red cards. In addition to that, Hansard staff asked us not to talk over the Minister or talk over one other because they are having difficulty picking up what is being said.

**MR PRATT:** It is not my habit to do so, madam chair. I apologise.

**THE CHAIR:** It is not your habit; I am just informing you.

**DR FOSKEY:** Are you happy with the question?

**Mr Zissler:** The second part of your question referred to other groups. Currently we

capture individuals who are conversant with aged care, disability, and those sorts of issues. As we go forward in the new department we will need to consider our environmental credentials, if you like, and seek some advice from that sector. Clearly, we are also responsible for ACTION buses, tourism and some of the sporting issues. So we will probably expand the committee to ensure we have people with that expertise as well. I have yet to give that issue great thought, but I will do that now.

**DR FOSKEY:** Perhaps community engagement groups that are located within other sections of Mr Hargreaves' portfolio could assist with that.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you for that piece of advice, Dr Foskey. Thank you also for congratulating Mr Zissler on having the initiative to run a program such as this uniquely within the Department of Urban Services. I appreciate that.

**DR FOSKEY:** I am not aware of how successful it is, so I withhold my congratulations. However, they are not empty, Mr Hargreaves.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I thought that this sort of community engagement strategy and determining how to engage with the community was in line with Greens policy. The alternative is not to have it at all, but I am sure that is something at which your party would look with some negativity.

**DR FOSKEY:** I doubt whether I would ever have made such an inference, Mr Hargreaves. I am interested in the first dot point in your list of priorities on page 293 of BP4. Because it is a large dot point it encompasses a major challenge for the department. What processes are in train to integrate "Environment, Heritage and Sustainability, Sport and Recreation, Tourism, the Stadiums Authority, and the Australian Capital Tourism Corporation" into departmental functions?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you, Dr Foskey, for an opportunity to describe the process that we will be going through. I will get Mr Zissler to give the committee some detail about that process. You will see from that detail that a considerable amount of thought has gone into this process. I need to give you a bit of background about it. This is the second stage of the transformation of the provision of municipal services in the ACT. You may remember last year I indicated to the committee that we were going through the process of changing the silo mentality, if you wish, that existed in the Department of Urban Services. You may recall that we changed that into two streams—municipal services and enterprise services.

That was effected by putting in place a specific and changed management process. The melding of large organisations, such as environment, heritage and sustainability, sport and recreation and all the others that are listed in that first dot point, requires a significantly changed process. Mr Zissler will detail that part of the process, but I seek the committee's indulgence to refer also to these issues. It should be remembered that tourism, the stadiums, and sport and recreation are not my responsibility; they are the responsibility of Mr Barr. However, they will be involved in the same process. ACTION buses are my responsibility.

We are trying to combine all municipal services in the ACT into one entity. I want to ensure that that entity provides the best municipal services in the country at a cost-

effective price to taxpayers. I am confident that, at the conclusion of the first stage of the process that is being conducted by Mr Zissler, we will have changed the silo mentality on self-government that we inherited. Members might recall that we talked about changing the cultures and processes in the department of works and the department of the interior. A number of those old commonwealth facilities came forward and we changed the culture completely. People from the Department of Urban Services are particularly proud of what they have done for the ACT, and we are particularly proud of them. I want the same culture to exist in the Department of Territory and Municipal Services.

Synergies also exist, for example, in the current Department of Territory and Municipal Services. We have a land management responsibility, so there is a focus on the environment. When environment is integrated into our departmental functions we will have an opportunity to decide how to manage urban land, rural land and national parkland. But it does not stop there. Air quality and sustainability also come into the equation, and then enters ACTION buses. We are keen to go to compressed natural gas, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Having all those people in the same tent means there will be more coherent and consistent conversations regarding activity in each element. Members might recall my saying in the past that I would like to see all those elements in that same departmental grouping. I am pleased to advise that that will now occur. As we go forward this entity will provide the best cost-effective municipal services to people in the ACT, compared with services that are provided interstate. We are providing services that are above the national benchmark. The challenge for us is to bring expenses down and closer to the national benchmark while still providing the best quality services. That will require a change process. I will ask Mr Zissler to inform you of that change process.

**Mr Zissler:** This time last year I talked about Taking Charge of our Future, a program we implemented in urban services that broke down the conventional silos and thinking around how we supply local government services. On 1 July last year we ended up with two networks of services that were focused on how to deliver on-the-ground services to people in the community.

Those two networks, which have been developing and building throughout the year, have enabled us, as others join us in the new department, to put in place the templates and frameworks. The creation of the Taking Charge of our Future strategy was a fully consultative strategy with staff at all levels—with the community through our community engagement groups, through various other community engagement strategies, and with the union movement which, of course, represents a large number of our employees.

Over the last 12 months we have continued to deliver high-quality services to the community. While we face considerable challenges at times, those services are maintained by people with a commitment and passion to deliver them, whether it be people who are litter picking in Garema Place at 5.00 am or other people we see during the day. On a number of occasions throughout the year I have said with some pride that every Canberran probably comes into contact with people from urban services five or six times a day and does not know it.

We do everything from litter picking all the way through to emptying rubbish bins, pruning trees, cutting grass, and providing services from Canberra Connect. When people drive on our roads they use our traffic lights, and they visit our shopfronts. So every day people frequently run into urban services employees. While we get a large number of complaints, they tend to be very personal complaints about something we have missed. People talk about us missing their rubbish bin collection, or their piece of grass has not been cut. We do not get broader scale attacks on the quality of our services; these are very personal things that happen in a human organisation.

As we go forward we have a fairly big challenge. The minister said earlier that this is about delivering the best quality local government services we can for Canberrans; this is not about urban services taking over all these other areas. On 30 June urban services will be abolished and closed and on 1 July a new department, which takes on urban services, tourism, sport and recreation, environment and all those other bodies, will be created. Again, we are doing that in a consultative way. We met with various boards and explained to them how they will continue until 1 July and how we will then be working with them.

I have met with as many staff as I can from the organisations that are joining us. You would appreciate that ACTION has 850 staff. Currently I have met with about 200 or 300 staff and explained to them the implications of the budget and how we will take that forward to the new department. So the process has been consultative. In each organisation we have created project groups that will provide feedback. I have actively campaigned with those staff and said that we want all the issues relating to these changes on the table. We want to ensure that their concerns are raised and facilitated.

So we have a network of change champions in the current organisation and we are taking it forward to future organisations. We announced that an interim organisational structure will commence on 1 July. It is not yet public, even though most staff members have seen it, so in some ways it is public. It will have a three-stream network structure. The structure focuses on recreation and land management, the stuff we do on the land, which incorporates things like environment, heritage and sustainability, and the former Canberra Urban Parks and Places. We are working on how to bring those things together to create better synergies for the future.

Another group will be looking at the infrastructure of the community services we provide, so that is very much our roads people, Canberra Connect, our libraries, and other services. We have what we call an enterprise agreement for those standalone business units—we expect them to be standalone because of their uniqueness—ACTION buses, the stadium, tourism, and our laundry at Mitchell. Those business units, from which we expect to get cash returns if they make a profit, will meet their community service obligations and be able to live up to the community. Those standalone businesses have their own management structures in place.

These are early days and those legal structures will not be put in place until 1 July. As I said, we have probably met 200 or 300 ACTION employees, large numbers of employees from environment, and all the sport and recreation employees, and we are working through that. We have been sharing with people in urban services how we will close that department and open the new department. These are early days.

**DR FOSKEY:** What about physical locations? Can people in environment expect to stay in their existing premises, or will there be a pepper and salt approach?

**Mr Zissler:** There are two overlaying strategies. One is a whole-of-government strategy that looks at whole-of-government property needs. That question is probably best answered by the Chief Minister's Department. However, within the new Department of Territory and Municipal Services we are developing a plan for accommodation. The intention is to co-locate organisations that are best together so the synergies can be maximised.

People in environment, the Office of Sustainability, parks and places, and heritage can work together, but there are no detailed plans as yet. Clearly, in an organisation such as ACTION there will be no major changes. The depots and the services they provide will remain. The stadium organisation will remain with the stadium. We are looking at minimalist changes. Where there are real, sensible, driven synergies we will make those happen. Again, these are very early stages.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Earlier I was asked to provide a list of members in the community advisory group. I have a list of members in front of me and a brief biography of each member. I am happy to provide that list to the committee. To prevent any raised eyebrows, I wanted to cast my eyes down the list and satisfy myself that the people on it were comfortable with having that information in the public arena. I am satisfied that they are comfortable, so I am happy to provide that list. My only worry was about the discomfort of people not party to this discussion.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you, minister. Mr Pratt, do you have a supplementary question?

**MR PRATT:** Yes. Good morning, minister. How are you?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am very well, Mr Pratt, and I am delighted to see you on such a beautiful day.

**MR PRATT:** I am overcome. Minister and Mr Zissler, you talked about reducing the number of silos. Could you tell us a bit more about the structural aspects of this streamlining? In structural terms, how will that streamlining occur? Will you describe how those efficiencies will occur and how the organisation on the ground will change?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is important for Mr Zissler to answer this question because, at the end of the day, he and the officers supporting him are the architects of these changes. I am insisting on doing what I did last year; that is, talking to people, as Mr Zissler has done, and making sure they understand this is something we are all doing. This is not an "us and them" issue. I want to identify for staff what it is we are trying to achieve. We have identified the targets we are trying to achieve, we have identified environmental issues, and we have identified the cultural changes we want to make.

We want to give people an opportunity to say, "I want to be part of this," or, "I do not want to be part of this," in the same way as we did when we made changes to the Department of Urban Services. Members might recall that, over the past 12 months, there has been very little angst or concern in the community. In the change process delivered by Mr Zissler we were sensitive to the disappointments people might have and

we supported them through those disappointments.

**Mr Zissler:** I wish to correct the minister immediately. Mr Zissler did not deliver the change process; all the staff in urban services delivered the change process. The model we are using is the same model we used last year. We established 12 project teams on a simple project management basis. Various recommendations we deliver on how to become efficient are embedded in those project teams. The leadership team sponsors those projects and each project has a project sponsor. We either nominate a project manager or staff members elect a project manager. Above and beyond that, the team includes people in directly affected areas and anyone from within the organisation who wants to have a say.

That crosses the whole organisation both vertically and horizontally. We have very junior staff and some of these teams are yet to form. It is still early days and we are not yet one department. We can have junior staff, as junior as ASO2s, on our teams, all the way through to executive directors. I am the project sponsor for a number of projects. A steering committee then looks at that change. The label or branding, if you like, for this new change management structure is “Going Forward Together.”

Our steering committee comprises the strategic management team and our change champions network. I am getting into language that is important; it is about people who work inside the organisation to help with cultural change. They manage all the projects and processes of the working parties. It is a very consultative process. We have about five levels of consultation through personal presentations to staff. In the last two weeks I have met about 800 staff through forums. We have an intranet web site that contains all presentations, information and frequently asked questions. If staff ask questions we identify them and put them on the web site so everybody sees what questions are being asked.

A joint union-management consultative committee meets monthly and consults unions at that formal forum. In each place there are also workplace committees. We also have a number of due diligence forums where we analyse the risk. So it is a risk assessed process. Let me refer to some of the challenges. When you have continuous change—we have been there for a while now—you start getting some disinterest. We have identified that as a risk. With risk one the things you lose is the good people, so how do we continue to engage with the good people and keep them on board? We understand that that is risk-based. It is a very consultative process.

**MR PRATT:** I refer to page 293 of BP4 and to the overview. Minister, you said that the new department would be based on the integration of a range of new functions. Could you tell me some more about it? I do not think you answered my question. What is your vision for the new structure? If you are integrating a number of services, presumably you are looking for savings. What will the new functionary organisation look like? What savings do you anticipate from the streamlined department? If you cannot tell me that now perhaps you could take that question on notice.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thanks, Mr Pratt. Mr Zissler answered the first half of your question when he indicated that all these additional organisations would join the Department of Urban Services to create a new Department of Territory and Municipal Services. We will have three streams of activity. So Mr Zissler told you what the organisation would look

like. However, I am happy for him to go over that again.

**MR PRATT:** He referred to the reduction of silos, but what will the organisation look like?

**Mr Hargreaves:** He described what the organisation would look like. We will not just have the Department of Urban Services; we will have environment, heritage and sustainability, and ACTION. We will have three streams with specific approaches to activities within those streams. We will have a firm structure. I will get Mr Zissler to go into more detail for you, because it was a rather complex answer. I am happy for him to go through that process again.

In the context of savings, I pre-empt a question on job numbers. It is too early for us to put a specific figure on it. Targets were given to us in the budget but we have to be fluid in achieving them. We are talking about people as well as services. We have to organise this change process in such a way that we indicate to people that we value their services. We want them to be a part of the organisation. It is not a case of treating people like numbers. That was the beauty of the change process completed by Mr Zissler's team. Before these changes were implemented I met 2,500 members of staff in the first 12 months of my ministry. That is part of the process.

In the bringing together of functions the greatest saving will be in the change to support mechanisms, back-end services and administrative structures. That is particularly difficult to quantify at this point in time, remembering that the shared services entity—that is, people management or financial management—will be part of that process. We will probably not need the same number of policy positions. At this point in time we cannot put our finger on any one job or any one dollar until the change process is much more clearly advanced.

**MR PRATT:** Is it not true that the staff headcount in 2005-06 for urban services, as we knew it, was 1,018? In 2006-07 the estimates are that the staff headcount will be 1,185, which is an increase. How is your streamlining rationalised against the fact that you will be increasing staff? Clearly, staff numbers are the most costly part of your operation.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The biggest issue, Mr Pratt, is that it excludes ACTION, which I acknowledge is a difficult thing for the committee. That is why we will be as cooperative as we possibly can. In this process we are trying to compare apples with pears. We had a Department of Urban Services. We are now saying that we will grab ACTION, DUS, environment, sustainability and heritage, and put them all together. I know it is a difficult thing for the committee to understand.

**MR PRATT:** What will be the number of net job losses when like functions in urban services are transferred to DTMS? What is the number for which you are aiming?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Again, it must be remembered that we have to talk in full-time equivalents. You must understand the complexity of the types of jobs that exist, so any number I give will not be spot-on. We can talk about FTEs in dollar values.

**MR PRATT:** There is a bit of a fudge factor in that.

**Mr Hargreaves:** A wild stab in the dark would be around 100 or so.

**MR SMYTH:** Are you saying there will be 100 job losses?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, that is an incorrect assumption. I am sure you will agree that I did not say that; I said it would be FTEs.

**MR PRATT:** So there will be 100 fewer FTEs?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, give or take a bit. I put a heavy caveat on that. We cannot be precise about these things until the change process is completed. For example, if we find the elimination of job X is accompanied by considerable systemic administrative savings, it might not be necessary to eliminate job Y. We cannot do that until the investigation is complete.

**MR PRATT:** Is that your estimate of the worst-case figure?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is my best-case figure at the moment. I am not confident in any figures at this point because the change process has not gone far enough down the track. With the change process we need to identify, in concert with these people, what they do in their jobs and what those jobs cost, other than the salary component. That is a significant issue. When you talk about administrative background stuff that can be a significant figure.

**MR PRATT:** You are budgeting for positions. How can you budget for positions if you do not know, or you have no vision of what you are aiming for, what the structure will look like, or what positions you will retain? How can you budget for that?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, Mr Pratt, budget estimates are just that—estimates. They are best-case scenarios at any given point in time. Secondly, I do not think you quite understand the nature of the process. The process involves all staff; it is not an edict from on high—for example, “X number of jobs will go and you guys will wear it”. That is not the process at all. The process is to identify, in conjunction with staff, the synergies that exist now. I mentioned a couple of them. The land management issue is a good example.

Prior to this you were critical of the government having too many people involved in bushfire operation plans, which I think was a valid criticism. That criticism no longer exists because some of those people are in the same department. People did not talk to one another because they were separated. We have brought them together and they can now talk to one another. In that sense there will be savings right across the department.

**MR SMYTH:** Following up on that, how solid are your figures? There is an employee expense of \$76 million and superannuation of \$14.7 million. We know how much you are saving on IT and we know how much you are saving on accommodation. What is the rubber factor? Is it plus or minus five per cent, 10 per cent, 20 per cent or 40 per cent, as we found out from the Chief Minister yesterday on the 500 job losses?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will not entertain that sort of silly question.

**MR SMYTH:** It is not a silly question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is a silly question from a silly person. Madam chair, these are the best-case estimates. Of course they are estimates.

**MR SMYTH:** The estimates inform the Appropriation Bill.

**Mr Hargreaves:** For those who missed it, this is the best estimate we have on the changes that need to occur with the departments coming together. It should be remembered that I indicated earlier that our costs were well above the national benchmark and they have to come down. We provide these estimates because our activities are funded through this process. These are our best-case estimates at the moment. The mid-year review indicates how accurate those estimates are and whether we can do better than this. If we do not do better than this we have to find some other way of doing it. It is as simple as that.

**MR SMYTH:** So you do not know whether you can live within your budget?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I do know whether I can live within my budget. I can live within my budget.

**MR SMYTH:** How do you intend to live within your budget if you do not know how many staff you will have at the end of your change process?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have said probably three times to the committee this morning that the costs incurred by the department are not only salary costs. Anybody would know that back-end costs are accompanied by systemic costs, so systemic costs can also affect it. We also have to change the way in which we do things, the way in which we deliver services, if necessary. That can affect the costs. For example, the height of the grass that you mow has a financial cost or saving to it.

So the change process is about melding all these synergies and coming up with departments to provide the services that I have talked about. It is also about saying to the ACT community, "That is the budget. There is a bottom line in that budget and we will meet that bottom line."

**MR SMYTH:** To meet that bottom line you can employ only so many staff. You are saying that you do not know how many staff you will end up with. You have 12 teams, structure changes, a plan and a steering committee and you are going forward together. If you have done all that, why is a consultant about to be appointed to review what is going on in the department? What is the consultant's view of this and at what services will he be looking?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not know much about the consultant.

**MR SMYTH:** Who does? Recently there was a report in the media.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will have a look to see—

**MR SMYTH:** You are the minister responsible.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, I cannot be expected to know who in this town does or does not know something. I know Mr Smyth does not know anything.

**MR SMYTH:** I am asking you the question. Recently there was a report in the media that a consultant would be put in place to review the department. How is that adding into the change process?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Smyth misunderstood the issue. We do not use only one consultant; we use expert advice all along this change process. I am a bit mystified at Mr Smyth's mind-set that one super consultant would come in and tell us how it is all going to work. That is not the way it works at all. In fact, that is inconsistent with the process outlined earlier by Mr Zissler.

We are given a budget and we develop that budget in cabinet. We develop some targets in cabinet and we then set off to achieve those targets. Sometimes we have to change direction because of a change in the process, or because we want to save money for the Canberra community. If we have to change direction a bit and abolish fewer positions to make greater administrative savings and provide greater quality in service delivery, so be it. I will not apologise for that.

**MR SMYTH:** Could we have a reconciliation of staff? What is coming in and what is going out? Can you give us a written reconciliation of how you travel from 1,018 staff to 1,185 staff?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Not in 30 seconds, madam chair.

**MR SMYTH:** Will you take that question on notice?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will take that question on notice and see what we can come up with.

**THE CHAIR:** Take that question on notice.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am advised, madam chair, that it will take three months, or even longer than that, before we are able to do that. We do not know. The entities are coming together and this is an integral part of the change process.

**MR SMYTH:** If you do not know—

**Mr Hargreaves:** At this point we are not one entity. Those organisations have not yet come together.

**MR SMYTH:** Minister, that is ridiculous.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I would like to deliver certain things but if I cannot do that I am obliged to advise the committee that I cannot.

**MR SMYTH:** Minister, that is ridiculous. The government put a number before the Assembly. You are here to state how you arrived at that figure of 1,185 for 2006-07. Are you not the minister who will be responsible for territory and municipal services? You

need to account for this. If you cannot account for this you need to justify why you believe this budget is correct and why we should appropriate that money.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you for the lecture, Mr Smyth. We will take the figure from the 2005-06 budget and the figure from the 2006-07 budget and attempt, in the best way we can, to show the travel of those two figures. I make this point absolutely clear: we cannot guarantee that figure until the change process is completed.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you, minister. I think you have made that point clear. We will take Mrs Dunne's question and then go for morning tea.

**MRS DUNNE:** I hope my question sheds some light on the issues Mr Smyth has been raising. Firstly, you cannot state why we have a firm headcount in the budget papers because some departments do not. Secondly, can you provide to the committee a list, now that you are the minister responsible for all the entities that are coming in? No, you are not responsible.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No I am not, and therein lies the problem, Mrs Dunne.

**MRS DUNNE:** It might be necessary to ask this question twice of respective ministers. Mr Zissler, is it possible for you to provide to the committee a list of the agencies and the bodies that are coming into the entity that will be formed on 1 July, in addition to the calculations you are doing for Mr Smyth, so we have some sort of starting point as we go through this process and the annual reports, and we can get further down the track?

**Mr Hargreaves:** With the committee's indulgence, I accept the clarification Mrs Dunne has given us. I neglected to indicate to the committee one of the problems I have about this reconciliation. I am not responsible for some of the entities that are coming forward. I have no idea, for example—and neither should I have any idea—specifically how many officer positions are in the sport and recreation entity or the stadiums entity.

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, but Mr Zissler would.

**Mr Hargreaves:** He may do, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** No, he should do.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Smyth is accusing me of not knowing what I am doing. He is asking me to provide this committee with information that applies to another minister's portfolio, which I think is inappropriate.

**MR SMYTH:** Those are weasel words of the worst kind, Mr Hargreaves.

**THE CHAIR:** Order!

**MR SMYTH:** The question I asked was quite clear and you know it.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Smyth, we are going to morning tea. When we come back from morning tea we will deal with output 1.1.

**MR PRATT:** I have a supplementary question to ask after morning tea.

**THE CHAIR:** No, we will deal with output 1.1, otherwise we will not finish today and we will have the same problems we had yesterday. We are going to morning tea and we will come back at 11.00 am.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you, madam chair.

**The committee adjourned from 10.39 to 10.58 am**

**THE CHAIR:** We will resume.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Minister, we see on page 295 of budget paper No 4 the allocation for information services. Can you tell us what it costs the people of Canberra for somebody to visit a library?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The actual per visit cost: I think we can probably dig it out. I might get someone to do some shovel work in a moment and get back to you. I don't have the figure off the top of my head. One of the things we need to understand is that, as I was saying to one of the illustrious members of the fourth estate only yesterday, when comparing the cost per service, if you want, in our public library services one has to be a bit careful about the interpretation of that number, because, for example, each library has a different approach to it.

**MRS DUNNE:** I have the answer. It is on page 306—\$8.02. The budget target is \$7.30.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Good on you.

**MRS DUNNE:** Can I have a gold star now, please?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you very much for your help, Mrs Dunne. I am sure there is a position on our back bench for you if you ever choose to. You will be welcomed with open arms, and need not look at your back.

**MRS DUNNE:** But you might have to.

**THE CHAIR:** No, they go for the throat!

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have faith in Ms Porter, can I tell you. Mr Gentleman, the reason why I make that point is that we have, as you well know, in our electorate, a couple of joint use libraries. We have partnerships in there with the Department of Education, so you have a combined library and a combined service. We also have specialist parts of the libraries. Phillip library, for example, has a heritage library up within it. The visitation there is not as extensive as the public library down below. There is a specific Chinese part of the library situated at Dickson. Just looking at the per-visit cost can be a tad misleading, but we provide the information. I just say to people that I would rather have a conversation around what sort of service than that sort of raw figure.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** What sorts of strategies have you got to encourage people to come and use the library services next year?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We have quite a number of events during the year, as you probably know, within the library service, some targeted at older people in the community and some targeted at the kids. We have book reading exercises at the libraries and we promote some of the library services. You might recall that last year, in fact, we changed the mobile library service from one big van to two smaller vans. They are both wheelchair accessible. They both have computer services contained within them. We have linked them up with the home library service as well and, of course, we promote those all around the place.

When the mobile library comes to suburbs we try to put it in places such as the Lanyon marketplace. We had, for example, almost no access to the public library service by the people of Tharwa and the rural community down there. As soon as we sent the mobile library service down to the village the usage went up. We try to encourage that. We have the heritage library. We have conversations as much as we can out there in the community to see how much we can get people to use it.

**DR FOSKEY:** On page 26 of budget paper No 3, under the summary of savings and revenue measures there is an item for consolidation of libraries, with an estimated saving increasing as the years go by from half a million dollars to \$1 million and then to \$1½ million and \$1½ million again as we get up to 2010. What does this mean for the delivery of library services in the ACT, given that it actually costs a lot more to run a library today that has the services people need, such as internet access, electronic data access, new books and magazines, et cetera.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I know you have an abiding interest in this, Dr Foskey.

**DR FOSKEY:** I do.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I acknowledge that and I would like to acknowledge that publicly as well. We need to understand, of course, that the library service is globally the same as most of the other services that we have, in that it is above the national benchmark in its cost and in its back end services, and we need to bring that down.

We cannot just say, “Okay, we will just rip X dollars out of it and not affect those services.” We have to look at consolidating services. We have to look at which parts of the library service we can actually bring together. I have to tell you that it has not been determined exactly how that will be effected just yet. That is part of the change process that Mr Zissler was talking about earlier on. We will be doing that in conjunction with the people in the library itself.

We need to remember that this government is about to open the new Civic library. I don't have an exact date yet, but it is not that far away. Some time between September and December we will be opening the new Civic library. Therefore we will have a brand new facility and we can then consider just how that can be used to deliver services to the people of the ACT. We need to consider, for example—and we have no answers to these questions—whether or not it is appropriate to have the heritage library at Phillip. In fact, are we using the heritage library the way we should be? I suspect not.

How are we using those services? Are they directed to the people who need them? Who

are the major users—and do we need to worry about the major users? For example, we know that older people use the library services quite extensively. We also know that people aged 16 to 25 very rarely go near them. So the challenge for us was to do that. One of the ways they met that challenge, of course, was to go into CDs, DVDs and the sorts of internet access you talked about before. We do a fair amount of survey work trying to sort that out. One of the beauties of having joint use libraries is that we get that feedback from the context of those college communities.

**MR SMYTH:** As a follow-up to that, there is a *Canberra Times* article on 22 June headed “Hargreaves fails to rule out closure of libraries”. I go back to the question I asked just before the break. I will quote from the article. It says:

Territories and Municipal Services Minister Mr John Hargreaves said yesterday he would not rule out closing libraries as part of his review of the department.

The review will be conducted later this year and will take about six months.

**Mr Hargreaves:** That is right.

**MR SMYTH:** The article continues:

A consultant will be appointed to head a project team and oversee the process.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, that is correct.

**MR SMYTH:** And you are going to review all the services. I go back to where I started from: if you have your 12 teams, your new structure, your plan and your steering committee and you are going forward together, what is the need to then review the department again?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, can I just address that article, because I think it needs correction in the public arena. The headline is the usual manufacture of the twisted and warped mind of a subeditor in the *Canberra Times*. The journalist, on the other hand, actually accurately reported the conversation that we had over this issue and I congratulate the reporter on that. It is sad, occasionally, that some of these subeditors decide to take their butcher’s knife to articles. They have done the same thing to you, Mr Smyth, as you know only too well. This particular article says that I refuse to rule out the closure of public libraries. That is 100 per cent wrong.

I actually said to the reporter, “I will guarantee that there will be a library closed; it will be the Civic library, because we don’t need two within 150 metres of each other.” Of course that did not find its way in there, did it? I also said, “Every single part of the territory and municipal services’ customer services will be looked at in the context of this change process”—or words to that effect.

These processes that we have involving our staff are actually enhanced and augmented by the use of consultancies in a particular professional area. With respect to your specific question, the consultancy we talk about is professional consultancy to do with library-type services. Whether they are public or professional libraries matters not. It is people with information services expertise, and they will assist in the process.

We will review other parts of the department. When we talked about the six months, that is how long it is going to take to do the whole lot. Every bit will be subject to the same thing. The actual final process I imagine will take about 12 months or maybe even a tad longer, but we will have an absolutely accurate idea of what is going to happen at about the end of six months. This is just one element of the process.

**MR SMYTH:** Is the article wrong? Will you guarantee that no other libraries apart from the old Civic library will close?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I don't guarantee anything or rule anything out in the context of this review. That would be pre-empting the considerations that the professional consultancies give us. I am not in a position to rule in or rule out. I believe we have been through that before.

**MR SMYTH:** How much will the review cost?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I cannot answer that at the moment, but I can find that out for you. We have not put the thing out yet. You put it out for expressions of interest and people do these things. You don't know until they actually come in. We can give you a rough estimate.

**MR SMYTH:** The rough estimate might be?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am advised that it will be less than \$20,000, but we won't know—

**MR SMYTH:** This is just for the library component of the department?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** How many other areas will be reviewed?

**Mr Hargreaves:** How many beads are on your rosary bead list?

**MR SMYTH:** Normally there are—let me see—10 each decade. So that would be 55 with the Our Fathers and then five in the start—a total of 60. So are there 60 reviews?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Smyth now has announced that his next press release is that 60 parts of the Department of Territory and Municipal Services will be done, and they will be done with decades with a “hail, holy queen” at the end.

**MR SMYTH:** How much have you put aside for consultancies for this entire process, for the department?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will take that one on notice and get you a figure.

**MRS DUNNE:** Minister, you have just spent \$3.5 million on a new library at Kippax.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Will you rule out that it will close?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** The Kippax Library will possibly close in this library review?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will rule out the closure of Kippax Library.

**MRS DUNNE:** You said you would not rule anything out.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I just did, but it is a special favour to you because you are such a sweet person.

**MRS DUNNE:** I will keep you to that, Mr Hargreaves.

**DR FOSKEY:** Does the \$20,000 consultancy include community consultation on this one? I think you are aware how passionate the members of the library are. I see it has 41 per cent in the documents. Will they be consulted? They are often not the most powerful people in our community.

**Mr Hargreaves:** When you say these people are not the most powerful people in our community, you obviously have not been on the wrong end of their wrath, let me tell you. I have seen what those people can do to people. Just ask Tony de Domenico how he feels about their wrath. Let me tell you, you are dealing with some really strong people.

**DR FOSKEY:** I am very pleased to hear it.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I don't think you should denigrate their power of wrath at all. Can I also correct something you said about this \$20,000 review. That is an assumption on your part. These are your exact words, if you want to check your *Hansard* later on. You said, "It is less than \$20,000 review." It is not an exact number yet because we have not had the expression of interest go out. It could be anywhere between \$1 and \$20,000. Okay?

**DR FOSKEY:** Community consultation is the prime part of that question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The community consultation: this is the expert information coming into the department. We will determine that. Obviously, to me, we have not been clear enough in our description to you on how community consultation will be actually conducted in the context of our change process. Mr Zissler has tried on a number of occasions, but clearly he has not been clear enough. I will ask him to go through it yet again for you.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes. We know, minister, that community consultation is trying.

**DR FOSKEY:** Specifically.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I know, and I am aware, madam chair, that the party which the good doctor comes from would have this whole town ruled by governance by committee and by community consultation, but that is not the way we are going to do it.

**DR FOSKEY:** You haven't got a clue on that, Mr Hargreaves.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will ask Mr Zissler to actually explain to you again. I am sorry, I have left the pictures behind to enable you to do that.

**DR FOSKEY:** Let us make it specifically about the library, thanks, Mr Zissler.

**Mr Zissler:** With the minister's agreement I will use the library as an example of how we are going to deliver on one of our projects.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Certainly, Mr Zissler. Did you bring the pictures?

**Mr Zissler:** No. Each of the project teams, as I said, has a project sponsor and a project manager who will deliver on that project. For the project that looks at the libraries, the team will be formed. That will involve people who work in the libraries and around the libraries, and other interested parties from within the department. They will be given a number of tasks to do. Some of those will be around savings efficiencies and delivering better models of service and care.

Each project will then choose—so it is a generic answer in some sense—whether they need expert advice or not. Some will not use consultants and some will. In the case of the libraries review we will be using a consultant because it is a review of the general public libraries, and indeed of the professional and specialist libraries, we hold. I have said to the minister that it is likely to be less than \$20,000, and that is likely to be true. However, there are likely to be two consultants. They may cost us nothing or they may cost us some money.

The most complicated specialist libraries that we have are our legal libraries. We have spoken to the Attorney-General's Department of the federal government and sought that their head librarian assist us with that review, because it is a very specialised area. I suspect there will be nil cost; however, there may be some cost.

We have also spoken, for the more generic review of the libraries, to the State Library of New South Wales and sought that one of their senior experts on providing library services help us with the review. They may or may not do that—they have yet to advise us—and they may or may not charge us.

Once we understand the scope of the work and got that advice on board, we will absolutely consult with the community. The community advisory group will be shown what the project is about. They will be asked how we best consult, and they will put forward a number of strategies, depending on the demographics of the community we are trying to get to. Clearly, libraries are used by certain demographics and we will approach those demographics and ask the questions. There will be consultation, yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** On that subject, seeing that you are reviewing the libraries, and reviewing the whole scope of the libraries, do you envisage that, as a result of the review of the libraries, the services provided by the library in this Assembly will increase, in the way that other parliamentary libraries provide services to parliamentarians?

**Mr Zissler:** I am happy to take that. All the specialist libraries will be looked at and, yes, those sorts of demographics will be considered as well.

**MRS DUNNE:** It is a very discrete demographic. This is not to denigrate the service provided, but they don't have the resources to provide the research that other parliamentary libraries do.

**DR FOSKEY:** Good point.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Of course, if we were to have the wisdom to go to 25 members, it would make it even worse, wouldn't, Mrs Dunne?

**Mr Zissler:** I cannot comment on that.

**THE CHAIR:** Have you finished your answer, or would you like to say something else?

**Mr Zissler:** Certainly we will be looking at all libraries and yes, there are special needs within every single library. As was alluded to earlier, we have a specialist Chinese group that works out of Dickson library. We have to make sure that is the best service we can deliver—and we will examine that, of course.

We know from the demographics of the ageing profile in certain communities that many of them visit libraries, but many don't. They take our mobile library services; they take our home delivery service. We have a very active home delivery and pick-up service. It is actually getting a balance between all those things, and it is generally very important to get those things right. That is why we need some expert advice. It is not something where we have all those things in-house, but we will look at that.

**MR PRATT:** Mr Zissler, I just want to clarify. I think you just said that you may be looking into other things as well as the libraries. Will you just clarify that this study we are talking about now is the only other TAMS study being undertaken outside of the just finished \$350,000 review, and that you are only looking at libraries and nothing else.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will take that question. You are talking about the policy. You are talking about the \$350,000 review. Which one is that?

**MR PRATT:** The functional review just completed.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I see. You have read it, of course.

**MR PRATT:** Yes, I have—instead of watching the soccer, actually—in bed this morning.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I guess it was a nil-all draw again too, was it?

**MR PRATT:** That is right. Can you just clarify that that is all—this one that you think may be about \$20,000?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. Can I say to you, Mr Pratt, that it was not a bad fishing trip to find out whether or not the libraries got a specific mention in the strategic and functional

review. We are not going down that track and we are not going to play soccer with you on that issue.

Secondly, in terms of your substantive question, which I think is the more meaningful one of two—are there other areas that will be considered for examination by consultancies as we go through the change process with TAMS—we will be looking at all areas of TAMS. Of course the answer is going to be yes, there are going to be more consultancies used.

Where we have a particular profession or expert part of the place and we don't have the expertise in-house to do it, it would be inappropriate if we did not. Of course we will. "Which ones are we going to use?" he cries, trying to trap the minister into making a mistake. We will consider that when we go through the change process.

**MR PRATT:** I would not try and do that to you, minister. Do you have a budget for what those reviews may cost?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is in the general base budget of our department and, of course, the whole change process is about administering the department. It is in there. It is not a specific figure that you can point your finger at so you can then divide that by the number of people, or divide that by the number of entities, and come up with a number. No.

**MR SMYTH:** Mr Zissler, in your answer previously, you said there would be a number of reviews. Can you detail which areas are about to be reviewed and what the timetable for those reviews are?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MR SMYTH:** Why is that so?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I told you this, and this would be about the 14th time I have said it in this committee so far. The change process is not to the stage where we can tell you that. We don't know the answer to that. The entity, in fact, has not even come into being. It comes into being on 1 July. Those entities that are coming in don't come in until 1 July.

**THE CHAIR:** We will move on to output 1.2 at this stage.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I have received a number of queries regarding the Tharwa bridge upgrade, one directly from Ms Valda Jeffrey, whom you have probably met. Can you explain to the committee what the progress of this project is and the plans the office of transport has for 2006-07?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I can. Thanks very much, Mr Gentleman. I acknowledge publicly your interest in the Tharwa village. I know your personal connection with the village and I wish to acknowledge it. For those members who don't know, the Tharwa bridge is actually an historic Allan truss span bridge. It is the only one in New South Wales with four spans.

**MRS DUNNE:** Hands up if you didn't know that.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is the only one in New South Wales with four spans. It is important that the committee understand that it is the only bridge in New South Wales of its type.

**MRS DUNNE:** It is in the ACT.

**Mr Hargreaves:** All right, it is in the ACT. The point is that there are no more bridges in the whole of Australia which are four-span Allan truss bridges. Okay? So we know, of course, it was rendered unsafe and we have now propped it up with some Bailey bridge support. It is important for the committee to know that the Bailey bridge supports for the current bridge are on loan to the ACT and it terrifies us that somebody might want their bridge back. This is because in recent times there has been a collapse of the central part of the bridge onto the Bailey bridge support.

The bridge is not unsafe at all, I am advised, because of the Bailey bridge that supports it. We looked at the various options for the bridge, in terms of whether we could put another one next door or refurbish that one. We also sought the views of the ACT Heritage Council. Their views have been sought and considered now. The cost estimates vary, actually, between \$8 million and \$20 million plus.

We have to think very seriously as a community whether or not we can actually afford this. There is the question about whether it should be—I don't think it is at the moment; I'm pretty sure it is not—listed nationally. We need to give some thought to that because if it was in good nick we might be able to get it done and the feds might come to the party with a couple of dollars to actually maintain it that way. But if it is in a state that we believe it to be, the feds are going to say that they don't want a broken-down old bridge; so we are in a lot of trouble here.

I can only advise the committee that it is a subject that in my office has top priority. I have one of my officers working on it. The officer is dedicated to solve this issue. I had indicated to the community at Tharwa that I would be coming back to talk to them when I had something solid and I believe I am not far away from being able to do that. But at this point in time I am not in a position actually to advise them on the way forward.

**MRS DUNNE:** Minister, wearing the heritage hat, what does the heritage council say about the bridge?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The heritage council's advice is that we should restore the bridge to what it was previously—in other words, a one-way bridge that can take low-weight vehicles; what it was built for. But we need to understand that that bridge—

**MRS DUNNE:** That was horses and sulkies.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Exactly; 100 years ago it had horses and sulkies on it. We also know that if we wish to encourage ecotourism in a very responsible and objective way in the Namadgi National Park, if we want to make sure that it is possible for buses, for example, to get across that river, whether they be school buses or whether they be tour buses—and I am using that example because—

**MRS DUNNE:** The buses taking the kids from Tharwa to school.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am using that example because that is the heaviest vehicle I can think of that would need to get across that bridge, then we really need to have a bridge which is of modern steel and concrete construction. It ought to be two-way. We have problems about where a replacement bridge could go. I am advised that you cannot put it north of the bridge because of the flow of the river. If, for example, a disaster happened and the Murrumbidgee flooded, as it has in years gone by, and it took the bridge away, then both of them would go. So we need to consider the placement of it.

We did look at a block and section map not that long ago. We found that at one point in time there was an intention for another road. Those people that know the area will know that as you come down from the Lanyon Homestead and you actually approach the village the road takes a right-hand turn to go to the bridge. It is a slight right-hand turn. There was at one point an intention in the planner's mind to have the road continue straight through and therefore connect up with the road that goes between the school and the general store at Tharwa. We need to give some thought to whether those planning intentions can be resurrected. I don't know the answer. There is so much more to consider.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Minister, the other access, of course, to Tharwa is Point Hut Crossing.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Has Point Hut Crossing been closed at all over the last 12 months?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Not to my knowledge, no. There does not seem to be a lot of water about, but of course it has a history. It has a history of flooding a couple of times a year in an ordinary year, which we have not had for some five years or so. But it's also important to understand, I think Mr Gentleman, that that particular bypass puts about 10 minutes to 15 minutes on the journey from, say, Gordon through to Tharwa. I do not think that is acceptable. I think for the viability of the village and for a whole host of other reasons, we need to have—

**MRS DUNNE:** And getting the school bus—

**Mr Hargreaves:** a sustainable, viable bridge that goes across that river, and right now we have not got one.

**MR SMYTH:** Two points on the bridge issue: have you done any work that gives you an indicative cost of the steel and concrete bridge that you mentioned?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, we have.

**MR SMYTH:** That cost would be?

**Mr McNulty:** Off the top of my head I don't know, but the range the minister mentioned—\$8 million to \$20 million—included the range of costs from restoring the existing bridge, building a standalone steel and concrete bridge, or having both bridges together. It was in that range—up to \$20 million. I don't have the detailed or the separate

estimates.

**MR SMYTH:** Could you take that on notice and provide us with the costings.

**Mr McNulty:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. Mr Smyth, can I just by way of clarification to you also acknowledge your interest, as a member for Brindabella, in the Tharwa village and the bridge. One of the problems of course that we are faced with is whether or not we have a choice about the Tharwa bridge. We do have a choice about whether to isolate the people or continue the isolation of the people of Tharwa, and I am not keen on that at all, and I am sure nobody else is either.

So in a sense, there is some choice about the construction of a second access—whether, for example, we go with a single lane bridge that can take buses but we do not go with a double lane bridge. It is that kind of choice. We may very well have, and it would appear as though we have, no choice about the existing bridge. That will require an injection of a lot of money to bring it to a certain level, and then it will be a fair amount of money just to maintain it forever more, even if it was a footbridge or even if we closed it off and just made it a sight or an attraction. The worry that I have, of course, is that this is the second failure in 12 months to 18 months. We had white ants and other problems.

Part of our advice has been that we should use the same timber that the origin bridge was constructed with. That stuff, unfortunately, is specific to a forest just outside Dorrigo. You cannot just chop a tree down and bring the stuff here and then build it. You actually have to season the timber for X number of years. This is some advice that we received, as it is heritage related. If we actually took that advice it could be up to five years before we could do anything. Then there is no guarantee that will go on anyway. It is a very complicated issue.

**MRS DUNNE:** And is it still a working forest?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, who knows.

**MR PRATT:** Dorrigo?

**MR SMYTH:** Well, the second point—

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am just now advised—thanks Mr Zissler and Mr McNulty—that it would take 12 months to season the timber, and then of course we have to schedule the construction and all that sort of stuff.

**MR SMYTH:** As a comment on behalf of the residents, they are concerned that, as you said, if the road, instead of veering to the right as you approach the village of Tharwa, actually went straight ahead it would cross the only flat part of land that they have for recreation.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I'm aware of that.

**MR SMYTH:** They are quite concerned—and my understanding is that their preference

would be—that it goes on, I think you called it, the northern side.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am not very good at directions, but you understand the side I am talking about.

**MR SMYTH:** I think I do, yes. The second problem: if this is the second collapse of this bridge in the last 18 months, why is there no money in this budget to fix the problem?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We have money in the bridge renovation levy, I think it is called. There is a budget for the maintenance and upgrade of bridges in the ACT and that—

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, but that is primarily a budget to cover double-Bs.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, the point is, Mr Smyth, we had hoped that we would have had a solution and a costing to put into the budget for that and we just don't. A lot of our assumptions that we made when we went to the village and talked to the people were based on our, I guess, anticipated response from the heritage council. The heritage council came back with a very much stronger view than we had anticipated; so we have to do some more thinking about it. And I can tell you that it is top priority, but I do not have the numbers to be able to provide to you at this stage.

**THE CHAIR:** Can we move on to Dr Foskey.

**DR FOSKEY:** Yes, thanks.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We've crossed that bridge then?

**DR FOSKEY:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes.

**THE CHAIR:** We have, I think.

**MRS DUNNE:** I think we got there several times.

**DR FOSKEY:** The Tharwa people are still on the other side, though. Now that the office of transport is being established as an integrated office rather than being split between two departments, can you please detail how the government's commitment to sustainable transport will be improved?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Mr Hargreaves will be running it.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I've been waiting for that.

**DR FOSKEY:** On your bike.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, would you like me to send you a copy of my bus ticket? I'm happy to do that.

**MRS DUNNE:** It would be a collector's item.

**Mr Hargreaves:** \$2.50 it cost me. It was a great trip too, let me tell you. I advise everybody around the table that if you want to take public transport, ACTION's the way to go.

**MRS DUNNE:** It's a monopoly, Mr Hargreaves.

**Mr Hargreaves:** But the answer to your question, Dr Foskey, is that you must remember that some of the transport policy questions are around the future provision of things like roads. This will be done within the context of the ACT Planning and Land Authority; so not everything to do with transport is coming across.

The office of transport of course will bring together—we talked about synergies earlier on—such things as the ACTION network. It will join the group that already exists within the current Department of Urban Services. The totality of our provision of road and transport services will be now collected in the one mind-set within the department.

I think the answer to your question is that when we talk about on-road cycle paths and the retrofitting thereof, we must remember that the planning people do the planning and we do the delivery; so there is a bit of that. For new roads and things like that, ACTPLA talk about whether we are going to have on-road cycle paths and all that. We are actually doing the retrofit.

In terms of our sustainable transport plan, having the accent on cycle lanes, on buses, on the whole of the taxi reform process is all about trying to reduce the number of motor cars that are on the road in a city that is designed for this. So we have a very big mountain to climb on our mountain bike.

**DR FOSKEY:** But it looks as though there is now ongoing funding for the sustainable transport plan after 2006-07.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Which page are you looking at there, Dr Foskey?

**DR FOSKEY:** I'm looking at my page.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Very good. Would you like to answer your own question then?

**DR FOSKEY:** No, I am looking at my typed—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, you did it last year; you can do it again this year.

**DR FOSKEY:** I'm sorry, I don't have that page but I don't—

**THE CHAIR:** Minister, you might need to take this on notice then.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. One of the things I need to point out to you, Dr Foskey, of course, is that these budget estimates are incrementally based. They are not zero-based budgets. The difference is, of course, as one would imagine with a zero-based budget, that you

start with nothing and then apportion the costs. With an incremental budget there is a certain amount of money in the base itself. We only talk about the pluses and the minuses, and that is what you have got in front of you. If you look at BP4, page 318, you will see halfway down the page in the capital upgrades—

**DR FOSKEY:** That is where I was looking.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Happy now? Pleased to be of service, Dr Foskey.

**MRS DUNNE:** On the subject of the office of transport, can you give an exposition about how the office of transport will work, bearing in mind that various bits of transport planning are still with ACTPLA? I presume that will continue to be the case. The planning is done in ACTPLA, the service delivery is done in territory and municipal services.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** And what elements of the sustainable transport plan will be implemented in the office of transport?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will use by way of an example the Gungahlin Drive extension just for the application of this particular question. The planning of it went to a certain point by ACTPLA and then it came time for it to actually materialise out of the ground or on the ground. Then the Department of Urban Services took responsibility and pushed it forward. That is the way it will work into the future.

ACTPLA will do the planning, as far as our urban infrastructure is concerned, into the future. For example, it will determine the width of the roads in new suburbs—possibly in Molonglo or wherever. They would look at, for example, the modes of transport that we could expect to see materialise in the future, but that is the planning perspective. They make future provision for it and then they hand it over to the Department of Territory and Municipal Services. We then do the budget bid for the delivery part of that.

So they would make a budget bid for the policy development and the planning stuff. They would do that bit, and then off they go. We would then make budget bids through budget cabinet for the money to do the work and we would do the work.

**MRS DUNNE:** So there is no continuity between the planning and the execution.

**Mr Hargreaves:** There is a continuity, in the sense that—

**MRS DUNNE:** You agree, Mr Zissler?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The conversations are not done in isolation of each other. For example, one of the things I was concerned about some 18 months ago was that when we planned some new suburbs I asked the hypothetical question: “did we take into account the need for Emergency Services access?” Therefore, did anybody from ACTPLA talk to ESA? I was the minister responsible for that at the time. Did we talk to ACTION and ask whether they can get their buses around these small roundabouts? In other words, did we not repeat some of the things that went wrong at Gungahlin and at areas of Kambah?

So those conversations now happen from a sort of an inter-agency perspective but the responsibility and the carriage of it rests with the planning and land authority. Once they have got to a certain point, they then propose that certain works go ahead. If cabinet agrees to fund it, then they hand it over to my department to actually go down the delivery side. Then we will look at when it can be delivered in the context of the works that we have already got on at the time. We will then put it into a work schedule—

**MRS DUNNE:** And that is why the busway is not happening in your lifetime.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. And that is why many things won't happen in my lifetime, Mrs Dunne.

**THE CHAIR:** So we will now go on to the next output which is—

**MRS DUNNE:** I've got more questions.

**MR SMYTH:** Sorry, no; I have got questions on roads.

**DR FOSKEY:** There are more questions.

**MRS DUNNE:** I have still got lots of questions on roads.

**THE CHAIR:** On roads?

**MR SMYTH:** On roads, yes.

**MR PRATT:** Roads.

**MR SMYTH:** The Monaro Highway over Canberra Avenue is—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Sorry, I missed the first bit.

**MR SMYTH:** I am referring to the Monaro Highway over Canberra Avenue.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes, there is no on, no off.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I have got it.

**MR SMYTH:** At Fyshwick.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Right.

**MR SMYTH:** And when is it scheduled for duplication?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I would have to take that one on notice for you, unless we have got it straight up. All right, there's a short answer: it is not.

**MR SMYTH:** It is not scheduled for upgrade?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MR SMYTH:** Okay.

**MRS DUNNE:** And you cannot get on and off at Canberra Avenue?

**MR SMYTH:** You can get off but only southbound.

**Mr McNulty:** You can get on going towards Tuggeranong and get off coming from Tuggeranong—onto Canberra Avenue.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes, it is a real pain in the—

**MR SMYTH:** We actually asked the Minister for Planning the other day about Majura Parkway and he said we should ask you.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Fine, ask me.

**MR SMYTH:** What is the future of Majura Parkway?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Ask the Federal government; they won't give us the money to do it.

**MR SMYTH:** When is it likely to be done and how much is it expected to cost?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The back of the envelope, being my understanding, is something like \$104 million. Is that right, Mr McNulty?

**Mr McNulty:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Give or take 50c. The problem of course is, Mr Smyth, that the federal government has denied the ACT access to AusLink funding, which is supposed to address the major corridors. When I went to a transport ministerial council about a month or so ago I raised the issue at that council to be told the following by Mr Truss, the federal minister, who is in fact in conjunction with Minister Lloyd the person who gives out that bit of largesse. He said, "Why should we give you anything when the majority of your roads are paid by taxes from people who don't live in your territory?"

**MR SMYTH:** What are you going to do to rectify that?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I took immense offence at that.

**DR FOSKEY:** Do they live in Australia?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I took immense offence to that, but as I was on a promise of good behaviour I decided to be on good behaviour. I was absolutely appalled by that attitude and the point that we make is that all of the AusLink funding stops at the border. If we had access to the AusLink funding then we could do the appropriate cost-sharing arrangements into the future in relation to Majura Parkway.

**MR SMYTH:** The upgrade to Fairbairn, Pialligo and Morshead drives?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thanks for that one. That is one I can hit over the fence. In relation to the Pialligo Avenue one, I think actually it would be reasonable if we can create a mind picture like Mr Smyth did with the other one. I think this is a good idea. It is actually from the Russell Hill roundabout—

**MRS DUNNE:** Top of Kings Avenue.

**Mr Hargreaves:** past the roundabout which gives access to Clare Holland House, onward past Duntroon's main gate. Then it becomes Pialligo Avenue and then it becomes—it is not Fairbairn Avenue. What is the name of that great road that goes out and—

**MR SMYTH:** Fairburn Avenue comes in from Campbell.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Anyway, the issue then is the entrance to the airport—the roundabout there. In fact, it is a little bit beyond there. So my mind-set in fact is between the Russell Hill roundabout and the entrance to RAAF Fairbairn. That would be a better way of describing that. And it is in segments.

**MRS DUNNE:** And it is a dog's breakfast.

**Mr Hargreaves:** And it is a dog's breakfast. But it is a dog's breakfast for about 30 minutes or so twice a day.

**MRS DUNNE:** No, it isn't.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have been in it. I have been in it on a number of occasions now. Without wishing to go down the track of whether it is a horror or not, and make comparisons with interstate experiences, we do acknowledge that it is an area that needs fixing.

We do know the reasons why it is congested. Horse Park Drive was particularly successful in allowing people to come down the parkway from Gungahlin. We do know that it is particularly congested because people in the rejuvenated Queanbeyan area are coming along that particular part of the road in the morning. We do know that it is because of the emergence of the 5,000 employees at Brindabella Business Park, which is intended to go to 15,000 or so in the not too distant future.

**MRS DUNNE:** You could put a bus out there.

**Mr Hargreaves:** There is a bus out there. In fact, it leaves every half hour I think.

**MRS DUNNE:** And it costs \$8 a fare.

**THE CHAIR:** Excuse me, Mrs Dunne!

**Mr Hargreaves:** It costs \$7 to the city, but not if you are a business park employee. It costs them \$2.50, the same as it does anywhere else in town. The congestion will only get worse because of the impact of the strategic headquarters that defence are going to

build on the Bungendore road.

We know that the traffic coming in off the Monaro Highway includes a hell of a lot of people going into that particular part of the intersection. We also know that not every segment of that bit of road is congested. For example, the actual Pialligo Avenue section, funnily enough, isn't bad; it's the bits on either side of the Pialligo Avenue part of that road, the bits on the airport side and bits up near the Russell Hill roundabout.

One of the congestion points is when people going towards the Russell Hill roundabout from the airport hit the roundabout near the Clare Holland House exit and turn right at the roundabout to go up to the car parking area of Russell Hill. Everything coming from the city to the airport grinds to a halt and then you have congestion.

We know that the National Capital Authority have some plans for the Russell Hill roundabout area, which is within their purview. We know that the airport have some plans for better access to the airport in the redevelopment plans, and we support those. We know that the usage of that particular road by residents of New South Wales is significant and we are receiving no, or at least insufficient, compensation for that.

So, to that end, I have called for people to come together next Wednesday for a round table. I will be chairing it. I have asked both ministers. Both ministers have declined, but I think they might send somebody. I have asked Dr Nelson to come in his capacity as defence minister. He has just said that he is not interested. He has got some attitude problem. I have invited the New South Wales government to come to the table. They are sending a significant representative.

I have invited the Mayor of Queanbeyan and the local representatives from the New South Wales parliament and the federal parliament, Gary Nairn and Steve Whan. I understand they are both coming. We tried to get the defence officers themselves. In other words, I want as many people who have a stake in it and have money to bring to the table. The airport group, of course, are coming along. I want people who can bring to the table some money and commitment to that problem that you talk about. We will set up a task force which will report back by September on how we are going to fix things.

We need a holistic approach. You talked about Pialligo Avenue. There is a rather large roundabout now where the Duntroon dairy was, or is, and then there is the big area where Urban Contractors are sitting. There is a triangular area almost the size of the Glenloch Interchange. Quite frankly, the solution to that, with the Monaro Highway, Majura Parkway and Pialligo Avenue bits and pieces all put together, may very well be an intersection which looks a bit like the Glenloch Interchange. We don't have the dough to do that, but all of these people may very well.

I don't want it to drag on and on, so they will be coming together next Wednesday and we hope to charge a task force with coming back with solutions and some cash by at least September to come. I cannot answer your question, Mr Smyth, but I can show you that we are dinkum about this, we are really keen on this, and the approach that I have taken has received incredible support from people like the airport and New South Wales people.

**MR SMYTH:** The last one on roads is about Tharwa Drive. There is no money for

upgrading Tharwa Drive.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, there isn't because the delay that people caused on the Gungahlin Drive extension increased the cost to us and I have taken the money and applied it to the Gungahlin Drive extension, but it is not a forever thing. It will be high priority when we get money available to do it.

**MR SMYTH:** And "high priority" means when?

**Mr Hargreaves:** When I have got the money to do it, but it is not down the list. It is one of my dreams and I am sure that it is one of yours that we will have a double-lane highway all the way from the roundabout at Banks to Sydney and Melbourne. Ultimately, we will get there.

**MR PRATT:** I have a supplementary question on Pialligo Avenue and a couple more on roads in general. Minister, in the 2005-06 budget, and I refer to page 239, which shows the avenues, the project total is listed as \$5 million, to be completed in June 2006. The figure is now only \$500,000 for 2006-07 and 2007-08.

**Mr Hargreaves:** For what project?

**MR PRATT:** For the Pialligo Avenue upgrade. It is listed as being completed in June 2007.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR PRATT:** Why has there been a 12-month delay and a \$4.5 million decrease in the cost of that project?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Pratt, I might just refresh your memory on the attempted flogging that you tried to give me in the media when I took money from three projects and applied it to the Gungahlin Drive extension cost increase. Had we used the correct alignment in the first place, had the Save the Ridge people not delayed it for so long, had we not had such incredible delays we would not have needed to pay anywhere near the additional costs and there would have been no need for me to redirect the money that you talk about in the 2005-06 budget to the GDE. We advised this Assembly of that reprioritisation and that is where it went. I am surprised you do not remember that.

**MR PRATT:** Do you not recall that it was Minister Corbell who fuffed around for two years on the realignment issue, adding to the other delays, some of which were out of your control?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I remember nothing of the sort, Mr Pratt. Mr Corbell doesn't fuff around, but you do.

**MR PRATT:** You have got your head in the sand, minister, if you do not remember that.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt, do you have another question?

**MR PRATT:** Minister, in relation to road upgrades—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Which page?

**MR PRATT:** I am looking at page 318 and I am looking at new capital works, capital upgrades and works in progress. If you look at the entire list of those and if you take into consideration the Roads to Recovery Lanyon Drive project, estimated at \$5 million and then financed at \$5 million over two years in the outyears, you have a total of only \$12 million to \$14 million, if you are lucky, for road upgrades over the next year or two. Minister, isn't it true that the GDE, due to your mismanagement, delays and blow-outs, has sucked all the money away and therefore you are failing to be able to put in another five-year funded road plan? You don't have one, do you, for upgrades?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, I reject the nonsensical notions put forward by Mr Pratt. He asked a question and the only thing correct in the whole thing was the word "and".

**MR PRATT:** Will you answer that question, minister?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have answered the question.

**MR PRATT:** Do you have another five-year funded plan for road upgrades, in addition to the paltry \$11 million or \$12 million, including federal funding, in the budget to replace the five-year funded road plan which expired in 2005? Do you have one?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am waiting for you to ask the next half of your question, Mr Pratt, because you seem to have had a pregnant pause in the middle.

**MR PRATT:** Chair, will you ask the minister to answer the question, please?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I was waiting for you. Have you finished?

**THE CHAIR:** Is that the rest of it?

**MR PRATT:** Come on, chair, you know that I have just asked a question.

**THE CHAIR:** I am asking you whether you have finished your question.

**MR PRATT:** Chair, you know I have just finished the question.

**MRS DUNNE:** Can we just ask the question and answer the question because other people have questions and time is getting on?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will answer the sensible part of your question, Mr Pratt, and that is that when the Gungahlin Drive extension is completed we will develop a further five-year plan.

**MR PRATT:** Where do you have the money in the budget to—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, I think I have answered the question.

**MR PRATT:** I haven't finished.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am not going to answer any more questions from Mr Pratt on this subject.

**MR PRATT:** Chair, I don't think the minister can do that. I don't think the minister can pick and choose which questions he will or will not answer.

**THE CHAIR:** Can we have the last question again because, unfortunately, people were talking over one another and it was very hard for the minister to hear the question?

**MR PRATT:** Minister, does it concern you that you don't have sufficient money available to you in this budget to be able to put down another five-year funded road plan for upgrades, or don't you care?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, it concerns me that we don't have so much money that I can fix every single road in the ACT and have a little bit left over to help New South Wales.

**MRS DUNNE:** I have a couple of electorate-based things. This might be a question for Mr McNulty. I have noticed in the last couple of weeks the deterioration in the pavement on the new duplicated piece of William Hovell Drive, especially between Coulter Drive and Bindubi Street. Do you know the cause of that and is there, dare I say it, such a thing as a warranty on a road that is only three years old?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will take that question on notice, get technical advice on it and get back to the committee, but it is an asset.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes. The next is a territory-wide issue but it will particularly affect people in Gungahlin. It concerns the restructuring of the Glenloch Interchange as part of the Gungahlin Drive extension. Generally speaking, I do not want to be critical of the concept for the restructuring of the Glenloch Interchange because it is a dog's breakfast now, but it has been put to me by a number of engineers that the westbound bit of Parkes Way that will go under the Glenloch Interchange and go up Coulter Drive, so that you are coming in west out of Civic and turning right into Belconnen, is exceedingly low, level with the level of the lake, and will present problems with big rain incidents of flooding that would close that carriageway. That has been put to me by a number of engineers and I would like your comments on it, Mr McNulty.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, that is a question requiring a certain degree of technical expertise and we will take it on notice, because I think it is a very serious one. I had a chat with people when I went out there to look at the intersection and the interchange and they did advise me of that particular issue, but I just can't recall exactly what they said. So we will get technical advice and get back to Mrs Dunne, through you.

**THE CHAIR:** That's fine.

**DR FOSKEY:** Going back to the sustainable transport plan and the money for cycling and walking, page 318. I am aware that the \$700,000 there is half for cycling and half for footpaths. Given the budgetary constraints, I am interested in how that is going to be used to fill in the missing links. Secondly, from my own perspective as someone who

likes to cycle in and who now lives in a place where there is a lack of coherence in the cycling—from Narrabundah particularly, which is where I am—I was just wondering if there is some way that you could perhaps do what is done in some other cities where back roads are identified as routes, in this case a route to the city, because it is highly dangerous to ride to where one eventually does join the cycle paths. Anyway, tell me about the cycling missing links and also the thought about looking at other ways, apart from installing new cycling lanes and so on, to make cycling safe to encourage commuting.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, the \$700,000 is, in fact, for shared cycle paths and pedestrian access. So let's not split it between pedestrians and cyclists; it is not half each. It is in fact intended to have people being able to access various parts of the suburbs like that. Missing link parts are something that we have forefront in our mind when we talk about these cycle paths. It is just something that we continually work at. You have to understand, of course, that this is retrofit stuff, so it is not all that easy, but we will get to it over time.

With respect to your suggestion about people having identified to them some of the quietest routes that they can use to ride their bike on to get from point A to point B, I draw your attention to the *Yellow Pages* maps, on which you will find cycleways identified and all manner of little streets and major streets identified. If you have a *Yellow Pages* you can photocopy that, stick one on the backpack and off you go, done. That gives you a route from every house in Canberra to every other one.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Seselja?

**DR FOSKEY:** Hang on, I am not sure that that answer is entirely complete.

**Mr Hargreaves:** That is the answer that I am giving, Dr Foskey.

**DR FOSKEY:** It is unsatisfactory.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Don't forget, and I am sure you will be congratulatory here, you've got a copy of the bike path maps. Have you got a copy of the bike path maps?

**DR FOSKEY:** No, I haven't, but I don't believe there is a route from Narrabundah—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Dr Foskey, we will get you a bike path map and we will also give you a copy of the *Yellow Pages* map from Narrabundah to Civic. We will mark one for you so that you can do it. We will get that for you.

**DR FOSKEY:** I don't think you've answered my question, and I am sorry about that.

**MR SESELJA:** This question is probably more about something that is not in there. It relates to the office of transport and the sustainable transport plan you have that is part of that. I refer to the busway—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Whereabouts are you looking?

**MR SESELJA:** Sorry, I am asking about something that is not there.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Can I answer a question on something that is not there, too?

**MR SESELJA:** Page 295 talks about the office of transport and it talks about the sustainable transport plan. Part of the sustainable transport plan was the proposed busway for which investigations have been going on. I understand that that is now going to shift to you. Are you able to give us an update as to whether you stand by your comments in the media that it is not likely to go ahead in your lifetime? Maybe you could give us an idea of how long you expect to live.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I can give you that one.

**MR SESELJA:** That would be great, but if you could give us an update as to what, as a result of that money being spent, the government now knows that it didn't and when we can expect to see this busway go ahead.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Certainly. I would like to answer that question in two parts. Firstly, with regard to my longevity, I intend to live forever, Mr Seselja. I hope you do, too, and that the last voice you hear as you die is mine. The second half of your question I answered before you got here. I am sorry it took you so long to get out of bed and get down here because I answered the question—

**MR SESELJA:** I've been up since 4.30.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Have you? Well, sock it to me!

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Hargreaves, please answer the question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Seselja, the answer to your question is that the ACTPLA people and my colleague Mr Corbell provide the planning for the future. He makes sure that provision is available for such things as transport corridors, transport links in and out of new suburbs and all that sort of thing. He makes sure that the provision is there. He then hands over to me responsibility to deliver those things, and I do that within the context of budget restraints.

**MR SESELJA:** So, we will expect a budget submission on the busway maybe next year or something?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Probably before you die.

**MR SESELJA:** But it is not going to be built until—

**MRS DUNNE:** Sorry, Madam Chair, can I follow-up on this, please? It relates to the choice of the route for the busway.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I cannot answer that, Mrs Dunne. It is nothing to do with me.

**THE CHAIR:** No, that is a question for the Minister for Planning.

**MRS DUNNE:** Sorry, I need clarification. A two-option discussion paper was put out.

Has that been finalised?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I cannot answer any questions in relation to the busway, because responsibility for that has not passed to me.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Seselja, have you finished your transport questions?

**MR SESELJA:** I am wondering when it will pass to you. When all those things are completed, when that \$6 million is spent, the findings will be given to you and you will say maybe we will build it one day, or you will just chuck it on the shelf? How does that work?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Sorry, Mr Seselja, I had a cup of coffee this morning. Had I had tea I could have looked at the leaves and told you the answer to your question.

**MR SESELJA:** Could the process be that when they are finished they would hand over to you the findings and the planning work in relation to a busway, and sometime in the future you would make a decision as to whether you go ahead with it? Is that the way the process will work?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It would appear to be that way, but I will not know until it happens.

**MR SESELJA:** You will not know if it is going to be handed over?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not know. Until somebody says to me, “Now the responsibility is yours, minister,” I cannot look into the future. I do not know how long it will take or anything like that. I know that the current responsibility for the provision of future transport corridors, nodes, the whole lot of planning, is that of my colleague. Quite frankly, I have enough trouble with other parts of the road to even contemplate when that might come.

**MR PRATT:** Minister—

**THE CHAIR:** Is this a transport question?

**MR PRATT:** Yes, it is.

**THE CHAIR:** We need to move to other things. This is the last question and then we move to the next output class.

**MR PRATT:** Minister, I refer to budget paper 4, page 315, and speed cameras is the subject. Now, \$385,000 is estimated for 2006-07 and increasing. What is the number of fixed speed cameras now, what will the total number be after the introduction of the new ones and can you please indicate where they will be located?

**Mr Hargreaves:** There are five mobile speed cameras currently and there are nine fixed red-light speed cameras. I answered the second half of your question in my introduction and I do not need to do it again. You can check the *Hansard*.

**MR SMYTH:** You did not tell us the location though, Mr Hargreaves?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The locations of what?

**MR SMYTH:** Of the fixed.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The current ones?

**MR SMYTH:** No, the new ones.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I cannot tell you that. The reason I cannot tell you is that the placement of these things is not open to ministerial discretion. An independent committee takes into account crash history and a whole range of other issues. It has DUS, the police and NMRA road safety trust on it. It determines which places they will be. With regard to the non-red-light speed camera—in other words, the fixed ones like the one on the back road to Queanbeyan—we are looking at a couple of spots on the Tuggeranong Parkway and a couple of spots on William Hovell Drive.

I put a caveat on this: it is up to that committee to tell us where to place those. We do not place them, because there is a possibility I might say here is a good revenue making spot, I will stick it there. That is not what we do. We also considered whether or not one should go on the Monaro Highway, expecting, of course, that in the ski season it might mean that people slow down on the way to and from the snow. But again, those are the ones that we have advised the committee that we reckon are good ideas. It will then tell me and I will then put into regulation where they will be installed.

**MR PRATT:** Will any of those cameras be used by police, either individually or in conjunction with TAMS?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Not as far as I am aware. I certainly have had no conversations with the Minister for Police around this at this point.

**MR PRATT:** Is it possible then?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Anything is possible—except you guys winning the next election.

**MR PRATT:** Earlier you made a song and dance about the failure of the federal government to come to the party on AusLink funding. Is it not true that in September, October last year it was your failing to sign up in time that jeopardised a couple of million dollars being made available by the federal government when we could have at least done something about Pialligo and other places? It was your dragging the chain, not them. Is that not true, minister?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MRS DUNNE:** Could I ask something to be put on notice, Madam Chair?

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, to be put on notice.

**MRS DUNNE:** Could the criteria being used by the specialist advisory committee about the placement of cameras be provided to the committee?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Absolutely, Mrs Dunne. I will also ask the department to tell you, for the record, exactly which people are represented on that committee, so that you can get confidence that it is out of the hands of the executive government to do it.

**THE CHAIR:** Okay. We move to output class 1.3, waste and recycling.

**MRS DUNNE:** Minister, can you tell me what progress you have made in determining a solution for putrescible waste in the ACT?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will ask Mr McNulty to address the issue, Madam Chair.

**Mr McNulty:** We just continue to monitor what is going on. Unfortunately, Eastern Creek is not doing all that it is meant to be yet. They had a fire in their compost hall recently. So, as far as we are concerned, there is still not a working alternative waste-processing plant in the country.

**MRS DUNNE:** Are there working alternative putrescible waste plants anywhere else in the world, Mr McNulty?

**Mr McNulty:** Yes. As we have talked about in previous hearings, Mr Thomson, when he was chief executive, and I went and had a look at some. A number were based on a sorted waste stream, not a co-mingled waste stream which we had been looking at. One of those was a plant using water to separate waste. It is in Israel. They are about to construct one of those in New South Wales, I believe, so I will be looking at that. We are not keen to make an investment until we are satisfied that it is going to work and work properly for us.

**MRS DUNNE:** Why are we only looking at things that go from its waste stream? Why would you not try to do something that was separating it, more towards separating at source?

**Mr McNulty:** Because we believe what we saw overseas, even when there was a source-separated putrescible waste stream, there were significant levels of contamination in it, and you still have to do a sorting up front anyway.

**DR FOSKEY:** How are the conversations with ANU progressing about working with it towards a green waste treatment plant it is prepared to invest in, but which would work a lot better if it was augmented by waste from Civic? The restaurants would probably be the best source of that.

**Mr Hargreaves:** What page are you talking about, Dr Foskey?

**DR FOSKEY:** I am talking about no page. We are talking about waste here. I am talking about something that is not in here. It is a follow-up from Mrs Dunne's question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not wish to sound evasive on this. You are asking me what progress or conversations were held between the ANU and us?

**DR FOSKEY:** Yes. Cost effective way of dealing with it.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I cannot answer your question, I am afraid, and the officer who could normally do that is overseas at the moment at a conference representing the ACT—Mr Chris Horsey, to name him. He has that detail.

**DR FOSKEY:** Will you put that on notice?

**Mr Hargreaves:** So I cannot answer your question now. But if you put that question on notice for us, we will not be able to answer it within your time frame but as soon as he gets back. Alternatively, Madam Chair, if the committee considers it reasonable, we will respond directly to Dr Foskey, and copies to you as committee chair, otherwise it will hold up your considerations of your estimates committee. Do you have the time? We are happy to do it.

**THE CHAIR:** A week is okay.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, you are missing the point, Madam Chair. He does not get back for a week.

**THE CHAIR:** Okay. We will just accept it later.

**DR FOSKEY:** With a drop of almost \$1 million in the waste and recycling budget how will you advance the goals of No Waste by 2010?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, Dr Foskey, every single service in this town is being provided at above the national average cost and we just have to bring it back. We cannot afford it. It is not sustainable, and the Chief Minister and Treasurer has said that until he is blue. We just have to do that. In the context of No Waste by 2010, as I have said repeatedly in the media in recent times, the no waste is not a zero thing. It is about five, and I have said that a dozen times. We have our programs of encouragement out there and we continue those programs of encouragement, but when we bring all these other elements into the department there are other synergies that we would hope to achieve in it, and that is where we will make the savings. We are hoping to make a heck of a lot of savings out of this in back-end services and the system that we employ delivers the services. Again, we will have to wait and see on that one, but we are committed to reducing the waste and stuff sent to landfill.

**MRS DUNNE:** On the subject of the back-end processes, minister, how are we going with the development of the two recycling estates, the one at Hume and the one at Belconnen—Parkwood?

**Mr Hargreaves:** When you say how are we going with them, my answer to you is very well, thanks for asking. Can you be a bit more specific about that?

**MRS DUNNE:** Okay. Do you have any tenants in any of those places other than the big bee and hive thing or whatever? Do you have any tenants who are there doing recycling services?

**Mr McNulty:** Yes, there are some tenants at Parkwood doing recycling activities.

**MRS DUNNE:** Are they new tenants or are they existing tenants?

**Mr McNulty:** I am not sure, because the administration of that estate is now handled by a property group not by ACT NOWaste. I do not have the details at my fingertips but there are definitely people there doing waste reduction activities. We are doing as much as we can to try to promote that estate for those purposes.

**MRS DUNNE:** And at Hume?

**Mr McNulty:** At Hume we are currently having discussions with a number of people about moving into that estate.

**MRS DUNNE:** You do not have new tenants?

**Mr McNulty:** Not at the moment, no.

**MRS DUNNE:** Minister, could you get back to me on notice about who is at Parkwood, who is conducting recycling and whether they are new tenants?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. Can I clarify that, just so that my officers understand what I am committing to. We will get you a list of the tenants at Belconnen Estate?

**MRS DUNNE:** Parkwood, yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, the one at Parkwood, yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Indicating on there the commencement date of their tenancy?

**MRS DUNNE:** And whether they are involved in recycling activities or not.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Sorry, and whether they are involved in recycling activities or not. Yes, we are happy to do that.

**MRS DUNNE:** On the subject of Parkwood, has anyone taken over the concrete recycling site?

**Mr McNulty:** I do not know, not off the top of my head.

**MRS DUNNE:** So it is Property ACT. Where is Property ACT? They are not part of—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Property Group. They will be here later. The guy in charge of Property Group is in Germany on leave.

**MR SMYTH:** Recreation leave?

**Mr Hargreaves:** He is on recreation leave—soccer supporting leave.

**MRS DUNNE:** Could somebody get me the answer to the question?

**Mr Hargreaves:** To what, the question about the tenancies?

**MRS DUNNE:** And the concrete recycling.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, sure. We will try and get that for you this afternoon to save us taking it on notice.

**MR SMYTH:** Mr McNulty, I ask you this as the head of municipal services. I refer to one of the descriptions in output class 1.3. This is on page 296 for the minister's benefit. The last point refers to the development of the resource recovery industry in the ACT.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** We know that we have two estates. What have you done to develop the resource recovery industry in the ACT?

**Mr McNulty:** At the Mugga Lane landfill there is now a well-established demolition waste reprocessing business. We have had discussions with a number of potential tyre recycling organisations. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, mainly over their businesses, they have not come to fruition yet. We are talking to whole range of people about a whole range of activities, but because people have to make business decisions it is out of our control whether or not they proceed with those business decisions.

**MR SMYTH:** So is there anything concrete, so to speak, that will happen in the coming year that will facilitate the development of the resource recovery industry or is it all dependent on other folk?

**Mr McNulty:** It is about our encouraging other people to set up businesses in the territory, yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Are you waiting for people to come knocking on your door or are you looking for them?

**Mr McNulty:** It's a mixture of both.

**MR SMYTH:** So back to you, minister. On page 308 under the output class municipal services 1.3, waste and recycling, there are the accountability indicators. It refers to the percentage of recovered material from the total waste stream. The target was 75; you got 75. It is 75 again in the coming year.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, that's right.

**MR SMYTH:** If you are going to achieve no waste by 2010, why is the target static?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is an average target in totality. Where we are having a lot of success, as you may know, is with domestic waste reuse and recycling. The recovery is in the high 70s. Firstly, the good news is that the construction industry is doing particularly well with its reuse and recovery, but some of the softer industries, some of the retail packaging and that sort of stuff, are factors outside our control. The national packaging

covenant has not actually bitten yet. The figure is an averaging out of those particular three sectors and what we are trying to do about this is to tackle the softer industries—the retails and the professional services—and trying to get them up. These are what we believe are realistic targets. They are not what we are aiming for, but these are the realistic targets against which we would expect to come back to the Assembly and say what we have achieved.

**MR SMYTH:** Can you give a breakdown of the three sectors, because if that is an average of the three sectors, obviously at least one of the sectors is overachieving and one of the sectors is underachieving. Can we have that breakdown, please?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will try to do that work for you, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** Is the government still committed to the objectives of NOWaste by 2010?

**Mr Hargreaves:** With the caveat that I don't believe that is zero waste, for reasons that I have said before here. One of the major reasons, of course, is that we have a whole stack of asbestos in a lot of our buildings in town. We will always have to take that to landfill. Having zero waste will not be achievable, but having about five per cent is. The answer to your question is yes, we are committed to getting it to what we can consider a no waste position.

**MR SMYTH:** Okay, by what time? Is 2010 still the time?

**Mr Hargreaves:** By 2010 if we can, but I have to tell you, Mr Smyth, as we go down the track, 2010 is an ambition. All of these things are ambitions and they are things that we would strive to get towards. I don't think it is appropriate to say to the Canberra community, "Heck, you only got to 80 per cent instead of 95 per cent. You haven't done it. Bad luck, let's lynch you." I think that is not on. If you don't put up a high jump bar that people only just meet, if you don't do that, then they don't achieve anything. But am I committed to it? Yes, I am. Will I achieve it? We will see in 2010.

**MR SMYTH:** How do you intend going about achieving it, given that this is the budget for 2006-2007?

**Mr Hargreaves:** As I said before, there are a number of initiatives that we have and some of the bigger ones are the encouragement for people to actually do it. You will have seen the advertisements on TV. We have the awards that we give out each year. We find heroes in the particular industries, put them up in front of the public and say, "Look, this is it." We actually have conversations with industry to say to them, "You can actually make money out of this, and as a community we can actually make jobs and make money out of this." All of those initiatives take time to bite. We will just continue doing what we are doing at the moment and try to be a little bit smarter; that's all.

**THE CHAIR:** Move on to—

**MRS DUNNE:** No, sorry, one more question.

**THE CHAIR:** One, and that is the last.

**MRS DUNNE:** On waste again. Minister, do you have any idea how much unsorted, undifferentiated waste goes to the private tip at Pialligo, at Canberra concrete recycling?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is a private tip.

**MRS DUNNE:** And therefore are you actually achieving anything like what you set out to achieve? Because they undercut the tip, a great deal of building waste actually goes out to Pialligo and is not subject to recycling. What is happening through ACT NOWaste? I suppose it is a question for me to also take up with the environment people later on.

**Mr McNulty:** We request every year from the Pialligo people a percentage recycle. They give us a number. We have no way of verifying that number. But we believe, and I think there is a recent audit by the Auditor-General of this, that our numbers are reasonably conservative. If anything, it is understating the level of recycling, not overstating it.

**MRS DUNNE:** Sorry, your numbers on recycling?

**Mr McNulty:** I am referring to the numbers we put in this document.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes, but does that take into account any of the thousands of tonnes of stuff that goes into that big mound out Pialligo?

**Mr McNulty:** No. As I said, we request from them a proportion of the material they take in, which they recycle. They give us a number but, once again, we cannot compel them to verify that. It is a private business and we are relying on their good faith.

**MRS DUNNE:** And there are no efforts to do anything to encourage the undifferentiated waste that goes into that hill out there to be differentiated on their site?

**Mr McNulty:** We cannot control their business.

**MRS DUNNE:** What you are actually saying, Mr McNulty—

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, that is not—

**MRS DUNNE:** is that what you are doing is actually transferring the intractable waste to a private company—

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MRS DUNNE:** or allowing it to be transferred—

**Mr McNulty:** No.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MRS DUNNE:** so that it is not measured in your figures.

**Mr McNulty:** No, I am not saying that. We have our own construction and demolition

reprocessing facility on Mugga Lane landfill, which is taking a considerable amount of waste.

**MRS DUNNE:** How much?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will have to get back to you on the exact figure.

**Mr McNulty:** I will have to get back to you.

**MRS DUNNE:** Get back to me, okay.

**Mr McNulty:** But because that site is on commonwealth land our ability to influence what goes on there is limited.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The other thing, though, that Mr McNulty has not said, Mrs Dunne, is that we actually have got the conversations going out there with the construction industry to get them to try and do this thing at source. Whether they actually do it or not and whether we can compel them to do it or not is another matter. But we are actually doing the things that we have authority to do, which is to have the conversation with these people. And I have to say to you that overall the advice that I have received from the department is that the construction industry is not doing that badly, particularly when you compare it with the softer industries like the retail industry. So we can only continue with our conversations with them, with the promotional programs that we have running, with the award system, and initiatives like this.

As Mr McNulty said, there are two difficulties about that site with which we have to deal. One, it is on commonwealth land and not ours. Two, it is a private business and we don't have that power to compel them to achieve a certain thing. Can I say here that the results—

**MRS DUNNE:** So do you have concerns about a privatised—

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am concerned about it; yes, I am. The thing is that it is on commonwealth land. If it were on territorial land I would be seeking to see to what degree we could compel certain outcomes in exchange for the lease. But it is not our land.

**MR SMYTH:** But are they subject to ACT law?

**MRS DUNNE:** Do you talk to the commonwealth about that?

**THE CHAIR:** Excuse me!

**Mr Hargreaves:** We have no more control over that site than we do over the airport.

**THE CHAIR:** So I think we will move on to output 1.4. Have members got questions on 1.4?

**MR PRATT:** Minister, I am looking at point F in the accountability indicators on page 308 under annual park maintenance costs per hectare. Is that the activity which—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Is this the right one?

**MR PRATT:** Page 308, output 1.4, parks and places accountability indicators.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am just getting confirmation, Mr Pratt, that the figure is the correct one because I did correct some figures earlier on.

**MR PRATT:** I'm looking at your corrected figure.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR PRATT:** Is that the activity where I would expect to find fuel hazard reduction along the urban edge, or is it somewhere else?

**Mr Hargreaves:** This is maintenance costs per hectare. I'm sorry; I can't see the connection.

**MRS DUNNE:** So what does maintenance consist of?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, that is a more clear question. We can actually get you a description of what we are talking about here with annual park maintenance. We have got all sorts of things for that. It is just mowing, clearing litter and taking away grass—all that sort of thing.

**MR PRATT:** Can I ask you what your budget is for the mowing of grass and for the taking away of grass along the urban edge, specifically during the bushfire season? Is it any more than what it was last year? Has there been an increase?

**Mr McNulty:** The level of mowing would be about the same, subject to seasonal variations in growth.

**Mr Hargreaves:** What happens, Mr Pratt, is that our expenditure varies during the year, according to the rate of growth of the grass—whether it grows or whether doesn't. We have peaks and troughs in terms of expenditure, but we do not expect that the cost is much different, no.

**MR PRATT:** So you are not concerned after the bushfire season in 2005-06, given, for example, the failure to stop fire getting into Yarralumla via the brickworks, that there needs to be an increase of resourcing and management of fuel hazard reduction of grasslands along the urban edge, minister? You haven't contemplated that?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, Mr Pratt, you need to understand that—I'm sure you did know but you have just forgotten it—the brickworks area was mowed 10 days before that fire hit. And I have to say to you that—

**MR PRATT:** But not completely, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** in that case your example is a bit off the beam.

**MR PRATT:** I will table photographs.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Secondly, it is not a question of the amount; it is a question of the targeting.

**MR PRATT:** Would you like me to table photographs showing that your preparations around the brickworks were, indeed, incomplete in the bushfire season 2005-06? Would you also like me to table photographs which would prove that on a good 20 per cent of the western edge of the urban edge you, minister, allowed firebreaks of no more than five metres in width? Are you not concerned to provide additional budgeting to better manage the fuel reduction hazard? I repeat the question: do you need me to table photographs to prove my point?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Pratt, I don't need photographs from you of either that information or of your grandmother. Quite frankly, it is of absolutely no consequence to me if you table photographs for the committee's benefit or not. You won't be doing anything for me at all. You will not be upsetting me, nor educating me.

**MR PRATT:** So you're not—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, as I said before in answer to Mr Pratt's question, it is a question of targeting these particular activities, and that is what we do. The bushfire operation plans are done in conjunction with the emergency services people and I am confident that the levels of response that we have at the moment are quite appropriate.

Mr Pratt, in his pre-Christmas recreational activity, was skulking about the back fences of many people taking photographs of long grass. In fact, he was writing to these people saying to them, "Aren't you afraid that the bushfire is going to come and burn your house down? If you are, please write back to me." So he was actually trying to solicit responses, and we have copies of those letters that went to the good burghers of Kambah. In fact, I had one given to me by a woman who was most concerned about it.

We have tried to do something that I don't think has sunk through to Mr Pratt. I talked about the targeting. That is one of the reasons why we can put environment together with parks and places. It is because we have got those synergies, we have got that conversation with everybody who has a concern about these things. We will be able to provide those sorts of activities in Canberra considerably better than we do now. I don't really know what Mr Pratt is fishing for, but it certainly looks like he has landed a carp.

**MRS DUNNE:** Could I follow up on this question about the cost per hectare?

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, and this will be the last question, because it is now 12.30.

**MR PRATT:** Can I—

**THE CHAIR:** No.

**MRS DUNNE:** The note is important.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** It refers to the reduction in the estimated outcome reflecting a review of the calculation methodology. What has changed and where has the money gone? I mean, it used to be \$6,000; now it is \$3,500.

**Ms Kiemann:** Sorry, that note is in fact incorrect, as was stated in the minister's opening remarks.

**MRS DUNNE:** I am sorry; I missed the opening remarks.

**Ms Kiemann:** It probably was not very clear but it ties up with the fact that there was a mistake in the number, which should read 3,500 instead of 6,000.

**MRS DUNNE:** Sorry, the six is wrong?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**Ms Kiemann:** And the note was tied up with the six—

**MRS DUNNE:** Sorry, I do apologise; so it was never six?

**Ms Kiemann:** It was never six.

**MRS DUNNE:** It was never six, okay. I do apologise.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you, minister and officials. We will be back at 2 o'clock after a lunch break.

**The committee adjourned from 12.31 to 2.02 pm.**

**THE CHAIR:** We are continuing with 1.4.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I thought we had finished 4, madam chair.

**MRS DUNNE:** No, we haven't finished 4.

**THE CHAIR:** We only just started on it at lunchtime.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I just thought the lunch break felt a good time to finish that.

**THE CHAIR:** We will have a couple more questions from Mrs Dunne and then immediately to Mr Pratt.

**MRS DUNNE:** I presume that parks and places is where we talk about the arboretum.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You can talk about it but it doesn't have to be in there. We can talk about it anywhere you like.

**THE CHAIR:** It is in capital works, parks and places.

**MRS DUNNE:** Are the parks and places people responsible for the implementation of the arboretum? I didn't think that was going to be the difficulty.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, the difficulty, Mrs Dunne, is that the changes are effective from 1 July and I have not seen the full—

**MRS DUNNE:** But the arboretum is coming to—

**Mr Hargreaves:** I put it to you this way: Mr Zissler and I are responsible for it.

**MRS DUNNE:** Okay.

**MR SMYTH:** I raise a point of order, madam chair. The effect of this budget is from 1 July. Mr Hargreaves, you are the minister responsible under these headings. Surely you can answer the question

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, that is right. I have just said that, Mr Smyth. For those people whose hearing aids are turned off—

**MR SMYTH:** Well, you should speak up, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have just said this is in fact the responsibility of Mr Zissler and me.

**MR SMYTH:** It starts from 1 July.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Grow up.

**MR SMYTH:** Grow up? You grow up.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Smyth.

**MRS DUNNE:** What we have here is a fairly cut-down project from what it was originally. There was a great deal of fanfare under the previous minister responsible for the arboretum, and now it is being cut back to something much less than it was. It has been put to me that it is now no longer an arboretum but more a shrubbery. Can you tell me—

**Mr Hargreaves:** You have been watching too many Monty Python movies, Mrs Dunne.

**MRS DUNNE:** It would be very nice and not too expensive. Actually, any money that is spent on this would be too expensive but can you tell me what it is that you are planning to do in the sort of cut-down footprint that we are now proposing?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will ask Mr Zissler to give you some more precise details.

**Mr Zissler:** The intention for next year with the capital funding is to continue with the program that commenced this year. There have been a number of trees propagated and are being grown in various nurseries, as I understand it. That may be single nursery, but I believe it is more than one. They will be planted in the correct realignment next year and there will be some shaping works to ensure those realignments make sense.

**MRS DUNNE:** Sorry, realignments?

**Mr Zissler:** The plan for the arboretum has a grid-like plan, and to get the right trees in the right grid patterns there needs to be some realignment, but very modest, just creating pathways.

**MRS DUNNE:** When you say “realignment” do you mean earthworks and so on?

**Mr Zissler:** There will be a scraper scraping dirt piles, basically, and then those trees which are already propagated will be planted. That is the extent of the works planned for the arboretum.

**MRS DUNNE:** This year. And how much will that be?

**Mr Zissler:** There is a number there.

**MRS DUNNE:** \$1.3 million.

**Mr Zissler:** \$1.3 million.

**MRS DUNNE:** And in the—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Just a second, madam chair, that is on page 319 of BP4.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes, okay. But also in last year’s budget there was money set aside, \$100,000 last year and \$400,000 this year, in recurrent money for operating costs. Has any of that been spent and what will it be spent on?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have to take that one on notice, if you don’t mind, madam chair, on two levels. The first one is I want to make sure the information for Mrs Dunne is correct. Also, it helps me understand what has happened before I actually get responsibility for it on 1 July.

**Mr Zissler:** I only have a briefing next week on the arboretum at handover next week. I have not met with the individuals as yet, so I could not give you an accurate number.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you. I have a supplementary question from Mrs Burke and Dr Foskey.

**Mr Hargreaves:** But madam chair, with your indulgence—

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, of course, you want to respond—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. I just wanted to respond to a couple of things this morning and be able to table some information. I was asked about the costs associated with Tharwa bridge. This information which I am about to table was actually given to the Tharwa community during the community consultation processes that we underwent some time

ago. So it is already out there in the public arena. There are altogether possibly nine options. Seven of them are the ones that we actually went to the community consultation with. They talk about everything from the restoration of the Allan truss spans of the existing bridge through to the demolition of the existing bridge and the construction of a new single-lane plus walkway prestressed concrete bridge. So the capital cost, the cheapest cost, was \$5.4 million and the dearest one is \$19.8 million, and it's got an annual maintenance cost attached to this for your information and the total net present value on it. I hope this will be of some assistance to the committee.

In relation to Dr Foskey's quest to find a cycle path between her home and Civic, perhaps—it could have been anywhere—

**DR FOSKEY:** You're going to build one?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I undertook to do two things. One was to go to the *Yellow Pages* and photocopy a sheet of it. I found that the fold in the paper made it a bit difficult, but you should look at that. However, there is this cycling and walking map available from the shopfront service for \$6, so we bought you one, Dr Foskey.

**DR FOSKEY:** You beauty!

**Mr Hargreaves:** In fact, inside it, when you have a look, it shows you—because it's a nice wee legend—how you can go across these wee blue lines, which are cycle and pedestrian shared paths, onto really safe streets, onto really safe cycle paths and get your little self all the way to Civic and enjoy a lovely time. So that is with the compliments of Mr Tom Elliott from the Department of Urban Services. Other members should feel free to go and spend \$6 at the shopfront at their leisure.

**MRS DUNNE:** Hang on, that's a little discriminatory.

**DR FOSKEY:** Do you ride a bike?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No. I promised the committee to get Dr Foskey that one.

**DR FOSKEY:** Thank you.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It's a pleasure.

**DR FOSKEY:** I'm just putting a question on notice to explain exactly what I meant, but thank you very much for this anyway.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It's a pleasure. Always hoping to be helpful.

**MRS BURKE:** Minister, just in relation to the arboretum, it is more of a point of clarification; you may or may not be able to answer this. Some time ago I attended a community meeting. The whole project in toto was actually presented to that forum and I've now got my head thinking around what is meant by the project being scaled down, because at that meeting we were advised—and I want you to see if you can confirm this; take it on notice if you have to—that the first phase of this arboretum project would in fact be a bonsai garden. Is that what you mean by “scale down”? I am actually being

quite serious, because we should not mislead people. That is the first part of the question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Can I answer the first part of the question first?

**MRS BURKE:** I'll give you both parts and then we can get it in total.

**Mr Hargreaves:** There are only two?

**MRS BURKE:** How can the Stanhope government continue to put trees before people? You've just cut \$1.7 million from the community services sector, yet you are persisting with this project. Can you answer that?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I certainly can and I'll give you a short answer, given it's a bonsai question. I have not had the briefing yet and neither has Mr Zissler. We won't get that until next week. So I am not in a position to give you that level of detail. I think the second part of the question was: are we going to continue to put trees before people? I don't want to go down that track. I'm not going to answer that one.

**MRS BURKE:** Well, you need to, because you are doing—

**Mr Hargreaves:** I'm not going to answer that question.

**MRS BURKE:** That's \$2 million that you have taken away—robbed Peter to pay Paul.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MRS BURKE:** Sorry, you have.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I don't accept the premise.

**MRS BURKE:** It is a disgrace.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam Chair, I don't accept the premise and I don't think that these sorts of hypotheticals do anybody any good.

**MRS BURKE:** It's not a hypothetical, minister; it is real.

**THE CHAIR:** Excuse me, Mrs Burke.

**MRS BURKE:** Thank you, Chair.

**THE CHAIR:** Dr Foskey.

**DR FOSKEY:** I'm getting a sense that you do not have the detail about the arboretum.

**Mr Hargreaves:** That's good.

**DR FOSKEY:** Certainly I observed when I went to the open day last year—

**MRS DUNNE:** Perhaps we could have a second shrubbery over here, slightly higher—

**DR FOSKEY:** Remember we are not meant to be talking over each other, but I know that sometimes we've got great things to say. It did look to me even then that it was going to be scaled down, and it did make some sense. Are you familiar with the site, in vague terms? Is it called Dairy Hill?

**Mr McNulty:** Dairy Hill, yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** Dairy Farmers Hill.

**DR FOSKEY:** It is an amazing spot from which you overlook Canberra. There were plans to put some sort of, I suppose, restaurant, because that's what you normally put on these things.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Or some toilets, perhaps. I was just thinking about your earlier question.

**DR FOSKEY:** In the scaling back, is it a matter of acreage dedicated to plantings or infrastructure such as restaurants, toilets, footpaths, disability access and all that sort of thing?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Dr Foskey, against the background that we have not had the briefing yet from the other department, the relinquishing department, I think Mr Zissler has already indicated that the money should be spent on trees this time, so I cannot give you any more detail than that because I haven't got it.

**DR FOSKEY:** You are having the briefing next week?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**DR FOSKEY:** Is there any chance of getting some of these questions answered on noticed?

**Mr Hargreaves:** If you want to give me a question on notice and then extend to us an extension of the three-day reporting time, we can endeavour to get the information for you, but clearly I don't have responsibility for it at the moment; that comes to me on 1 July. I therefore do not have the authority, in fact, to answer the question. So I need to work my way through that.

**DR FOSKEY:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** So if you want to go down that track, we are quite happy to try and do the best we can for the committee.

**MRS DUNNE:** And we'll give you an extension until 2 July.

**DR FOSKEY:** We've already fast-tracked that process.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Until when?

**MRS DUNNE:** Until 2 July. Is the minister going to go on a fact-finding tour overseas to look at shrubberies? Don't prompt him, Mr Zissler.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**THE CHAIR:** Do we have any more questions?

**MR PRATT:** I have a question for Mr Zissler. Mr Zissler, you have got \$46.676 million budgeted for parks and places in 2006-07. How much of that is for bushfire fuel reduction on the urban edge?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Pratt, we will take that on notice; it is part of another subject. When I say we will take it on notice, we will search for it and, if we can move on, come back to you probably this afternoon.

**MR PRATT:** Can I ask you also on notice: how many hectares will you manage for that cost?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, we can get that information.

**MR PRATT:** Also can you please tell me, unless you can tell me now—

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, we will endeavour to get it for you this afternoon.

**MR PRATT:** All right. Mr Zissler, if you can tell me now: how much did you budget for the urban edge in 2005-06 for your bushfire fuel reduction?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Pratt, you need to understand the way in which the budget is constructed. Of course 2006-07 is different from 2005-06, in the sense that we didn't have Environment ACT in those numbers in 2005-06. We don't have them. We would have to put them all together. That is what I'm telling you. The 2006-07 budget includes those areas that were land managed by the Environment ACT people and now coming into territory and municipal services. In 2005-06 they were not; they were separate areas altogether. So if you are looking for a comparison of how much one year against the other, we need to put the two numbers together, and only one of them we have.

**MR PRATT:** Can you give me a breakdown on the 2005-06 budget for that task, for both DUS and ACT Environment, and then a comparative analysis of what you are budgeting for this year for the same tasks against the same responsibilities?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, but not this afternoon.

**MR PRATT:** No; that is all right.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The reason for that is that I do not have responsibility for the budget for 2005-06, so I need to obtain that and the authority of the minister for it—that is, the Chief Minister. Then we will put the two numbers together and get that for you as soon as we can.

**MR PRATT:** I appreciate that. Under sports, looking at the management of sport and

recreational facilities—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Which page are you on?

**MR PRATT:** It is 1.4 on page 296, parks and places continuing. What part of sport and recreational facilities involves the building of an \$85,000 bike shed at Macarthur House?

**Mr Hargreaves:** That was expenditure in a year which is not part of these budget estimates. That was a really privileged question and I propose to treat it with the contempt that it is due.

**MR PRATT:** Chair, if I may continue. Why are we spending \$85,000 on a bicycle shed at Macarthur House for staff when that money could be spent elsewhere?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It has been spent, Mr Pratt. The bike shed is there and the people at Macarthur House are actually leading the way, in my view, in terms of responsible commuting to work and in terms of using bicycles.

**MR PRATT:** Can Mr Zissler tell me why that decision was actually made?

**Mr Hargreaves:** This was a decision that was taken prior to Mr Zissler becoming the chief executive officer.

**MR SMYTH:** But what has been the usage of the shed? How many bikes does it hold and how often is it full?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have to get back to you on that one, Mr Smyth. I'll go and do a count for you.

**MR SMYTH:** That'd be kind.

**Mr Hargreaves:** About 30 or so.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** What would be the comparison in building that bicycle shed if you had to do the same for the same number of motor vehicles?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We would have to have an aboveground car park, wouldn't we?

**MR PRATT:** Does every department have a garage?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have to say that, firstly, this is a decision of some years ago—a goodly number of years ago. It was made, before Mr Zissler became CEO, by a previous CEO. It was made before I became minister—

**MR PRATT:** You couldn't reverse it?

**Mr Hargreaves:** and before I became the minister for urban services, so I do not propose that I answer any more questions on that one.

**THE CHAIR:** I think we need to move on from this. Does anyone else have a question?

**DR FOSKEY:** Yes. With the ongoing water restrictions and, of course, the drought, many of our sportsgrounds have suffered, 25 of which have ceased to be watered at all. Could you tell me how many of the sportsgrounds are now utilising grey water or other forms of recycled water on a regular basis?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We don't know the exact number, Dr Foskey. We will have to get back to you on that one.

**DR FOSKEY:** Okay. In regard to the management of pools, I'm just wondering which ACT pools are totally government owned. You might have to get back to me on that.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No. Madam chair, the government owns five pools.

**DR FOSKEY:** Five. Which ones are those?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Four pools: Civic, Dickson, Manuka and Tuggeranong.

**THE CHAIR:** So it's four.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Four, yes.

**DR FOSKEY:** So the others are all privately owned?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**DR FOSKEY:** I think I read in the paper about a review or some process to consider their future?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The review into the pool issue is part of the total review of the amalgamation into the territory and municipal services department.

**DR FOSKEY:** I can see from the paper that it costs you about \$7.20 per attendee each visit. That is an investment really in people's health. I am just wondering whether, in doing your assessment, you will be able to add in those kinds of things and take a more holistic look, not just what it costs but what we might be saving.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We are talking about the provision of pools generally. Some people have rather wildly suggested that pools will close in this town. Such is not the case. Our involvement with the four pools is, in fact, in the management of contracts to deliver services from those pools.

**MR SMYTH:** I understand that earlier this year it was the intention to have a consultant do a scoping study on the future of the Civic pool. Has that gone ahead, how much has it cost and when will you get the report?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am advised that there was a technical report into the pool. It wasn't a scoping study per se; it was purely a technical report. I have to say to you that one of the things that concern us about the pool is the safety and the life of the dome over the top of it. We are not talking about whether the diving platform is involved and whether it is the

right size or wrong size, all that sort of stuff. It is purely about the safety of the dome and how much it would cost to repair it, whether we should repair it or take it down, all of those sorts of things. It is purely a technical report on that.

**MR SMYTH:** How much did the report cost?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will find out for you. I do not know off the top of my head. It wasn't expensive.

**MR SMYTH:** Have you received the report?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Can we have a copy of the report?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MR SMYTH:** What action is likely from having received that report?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have been charged by cabinet with bringing back a recommendation around that report and, as yet, I haven't taken the report to cabinet. In fact, I decided that what we really needed to do was to advise cabinet in terms of government involvement in pools generally, not just one in isolation. For example, I am concerned that some people out there have wildly suggested that we might close Manuka pool. You can't close Manuka pool. We are not going to close it anyway but, remember, it is a heritage site and all sorts of things go with that. I wanted to make sure that our information on all of them was up to date.

I also undertook on notice before lunch to give the committee information on speed and red light camera site selection and that sort of stuff. I table that information for you.

**MRS BURKE:** To follow-up on the Civic pool dome, you did raise the issue of safety, which is of concern to me. What liability does that pose for the person running it in term of occupational health and safety?

**Mr Hargreaves:** At this stage of the game the roof is okay. We are talking about the rate of deterioration of the roof vis-a-vis the chemicals and whatnot that are in the pool and the natural deterioration. That is what we are actually talking about. Today, there is no liability for that.

**MRS BURKE:** Perhaps you are not aware that it has been known for nuts and bolts to fall from the roof into the pool. You are saying that that is not an issue. I was very concerned to hear that and I am wondering how that leaves the government and the person managing the pool.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am not aware, and neither is Mr Zissler, of nuts and bolts falling into the pool. That is the first thing: I am not aware of that. Secondly, the dome itself is inflated by air and if it does collapse it will collapse particularly slowly. So we will have plenty of notice about that. I propose to take a series of options to cabinet around that roof. The questions that we are asking ourselves are: do we keep it and fix it? Do we take

it down and turn it into basically a six months of the year only pool? How do we do it and what do we do? Do we put a permanent structure over it and therefore what would be the cost of that? All of that will be considered in that context.

**MR SMYTH:** Will you look at the option of moving it into Glebe Park?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I would find it very difficult to get it onto the back of a truck, quite frankly.

**MR SMYTH:** Okay. Will you consider the option of establishing a new pool to replace the existing Civic pool in Glebe Park?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is not on my horizon, no. I hadn't thought of that, though. Thanks for that.

**MRS BURKE:** There you go; you can have our ideas any time, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I think I will just put an Olympic-size pool on the top of the casino. That would be the go, wouldn't it? I am also reminded, and I acknowledge Mrs Burke's interest in it, that it has some type of heritage listing, the pool itself under the dome, so that we would have to be particularly careful about how we do that.

**MR SMYTH:** It is the change rooms. They won the 1956 Sulman Award.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Righto. Also, the National Capital Authority has a significant interest in the land and we need its cooperation before we do anything, really.

**MRS BURKE:** On the safety issue, are you in regular contact with the people who currently have the lease from government?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR PRATT:** Returning to the bushfire fuel reduction that we were talking about earlier, Mr Zissler, as of 7 January 2006, 25 per cent of the western facing edges of suburban Tuggeranong Valley had as a maximum five-metre firebreaks. Is that your benchmark for fuel reduction on the urban edge?

**DR FOSKEY:** We have asked this before, haven't we?

**MR SMYTH:** No, he has not asked for a benchmark.

**MR PRATT:** No, not quite that way. It is a different question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not know about the detail of that, madam chair, and I will take the question. What we need to understand, and Mr Pratt knows this detail far more than probably anybody else in the whole of the ACT, is that we have complied with the requirement under the Emergency Services Act to do bushfire operational planning. It has been ticked off by the commissioner for the ESA and it has been audited at the same time and we are totally in compliance with that act.

**MR PRATT:** So you will be able to take it on notice and advise whether the five-metre benchmark complies.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have answered the question.

**MR PRATT:** Will you take that on notice, minister?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I have answered the question. We have complied with our requirements under the Emergency Services Act.

**MRS DUNNE:** There is money in the budget concerning dead and dangerous trees. Is that here or is that in Environment ACT? Where is it?

**Mr McNulty:** It is actually in roads. It is along the rural roads.

**MRS DUNNE:** Are those trees, dare I say it, earmarked? Do you know which ones you are going to cut down and do you know which sections of road you are going to do?

**Mr McNulty:** Yes. I can actually tell you the roads, I think.

**MRS DUNNE:** Is there a list of the roads?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**Mr McNulty:** The initiative in this year's budget will see work on Boboyan road, Apollo road, Orroral road and Tidbinbilla road.

**MRS DUNNE:** Tidbinbilla road? Is that for the one that goes to the tracking station or the main road?

**Mr McNulty:** The main road, I think.

**MRS DUNNE:** There was money in the last budget, there is money in this budget and I think there was supplementary appropriation the year before. How much more work of this sort will we have to do after this financial year as a result of the fires?

**Mr McNulty:** I think that completes it.

**THE CHAIR:** I think it was before you arrived, but it may not have been, we had an agreement that we would leave 1.5 and 1.7 until Dr Foskey and Mrs Dunne came back and that we would move on to output class 2, which is about enterprise services. Do you have any questions, Mr Gentleman?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Yes. Minister, I take you to page 298 for this output class. Can you tell us what savings are made from using online services as opposed to normal methods of payment?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will get Ms Kiemann to explain some technical stuff about that vis-a-vis the actual estimates documents before we kick off.

**Ms Kiemann:** On page 292, halfway through the page, just to clarify for the committee, customer services and information has now been desegregated. That was in output class 1 in last year's budget but it is now in output class 2; 2.1 is Canberra Connect.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Are there any plans for 2006-07 to increase online payments and get away from the normal practice of customers visiting a shopfront?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We want to encourage people to use online payments as much as we can. It is cheaper for everybody, really. We understand, though, that we have a generational issue around that. There are older people who are still a little bit PC scared, and we understand that. We understand that there is not a PC in every home. We understand that people don't feel inclined to go to public libraries and do that sort of stuff. We are in the midst of a generational change in terms of the way people do their banking and their payments and we are seeing a great uptake commercially in online payments. We are just going to keep pushing it along gently. I refer to page 311 of BP4. Remember, I said it is cheaper. It is cheaper for us as well. If you look at indicators D, E and F you will see a dramatic drop.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** It is a lot cheaper.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. That is one of the ways in which we can effect savings. If we can actually convince people to do a lot of their transactions online it is the way to go.

**THE CHAIR:** Minister, on the same subject, I note that for those people that do come to the shopfront you have a target of a less than 12 minutes. How does that compare with other shopfronts, such as post offices, banks and those kinds of things?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is a bit hard to know without knowing what is actually achieved at places such as Telstra and post offices.

**THE CHAIR:** I am just wondering what you based it on. Was it an average of those kinds of things?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is an industry benchmark. Also, we have won awards for the timeliness with which people are receiving services at our shopfronts.

**Mr Zissler:** We do a lot of benchmarking outside the ACT, notably with Brisbane City Council, which has shopfronts not dissimilar and the same sorts of transactions, and, through our customer service structures, we benchmark interstate as well. Twelve minutes is about the best you are going to get all round Australia, so we are well on top. I should say that you should bear in mind that not all transactions are alike. Some transactions take considerably longer and some transactions are very short.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, but that is the average time.

**Mr Zissler:** Correct.

**MR SMYTH:** How many staff does Canberra Connect currently have, output class 2.1?

**Mr Hargreaves:** About 130.

**MR SMYTH:** There was a report that 25 shopfront staff may go. How many staff do you intend to have in Canberra Connect for 2006-07?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have never heard of that number, Mr Smyth, quite frankly. Can I say that one of the things that we are looking into with respect to the new regimes within the department is the different nature of shopfront services that we have round town. Housing has got some, disability has got some and the current DUS has got some. Once we are able to see how we can actually put a lot of those things together and have joint things, we will be able to answer that question, but at the moment we can't answer it.

I was just told that the 25 figure wasn't to do with the urban services shopfronts, the Canberra Connect shopfronts; they were the housing shopfronts. I guess that is a question for me on Monday. I will just hop into a Tardis for a second. For your information, we have identified over 75 counters and shopfronts across the ACT. For example, Treasury has the revenue office, Chief Minister's has BusinessACT, JACS has quite a few, we have Canberra Connect, libraries, ACTION, environment, the tourist centre, and so it goes on. We are talking about shared services or like services coming together. This is not a shared service perspective, but this is a like service perspective. I can't answer your question definitively, but I think it is reasonable to expect a number of job reductions from the aggregate when you put them together so that systems management is more consistent across that group.

**MR SMYTH:** Mr Elliott is in charge of Canberra Connect. Perhaps he could answer.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Answer what?

**MR SMYTH:** Will there be 130 jobs at the end of 2006-07?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Elliott can't answer that question, Mr Smyth, because we have not actually finished the work on that. We can't answer your question because we have not finished the work on it. All right, I will put it another way: we haven't started the work on it.

**MR SMYTH:** How much money will be appropriated for the Canberra Connect services in the coming financial year?

**Ms Kiemann:** Output 2.1 is completely related to Canberra Connect. So in 2006-07 it is just over \$11 million, on page 298.

**MR SMYTH:** Sorry, you are very hard to hear.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Just over \$11 million.

**MR SMYTH:** So, \$11 million for 2006-07?

**Ms Kiemann:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** How much was appropriated for it in 2005-06?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Whilst Susanna is looking up that information, we need to look at this against the background of the rationalisation of the services of all of these shopfronts. One of the things that has been beaut about the Canberra Connect service and has been a really major uptake is that people are now using that one port of call. I am really keen that we do that. I do not see the need to go to one shopfront to pay your rates, to another shopfront to pay your registration and another one to work out your housing stuff. It seems to me to be an opportunity to bring a few of those together.

**Mr Zissler:** If I may, before we give you the number—and I do not know the number, so I am not trying to pre-empt that—the industry is changing significantly. As I said, the minister may have pointed out, Canberra Connect recently won a mature services award. That is not just about the call centre or the shopfront; it is the whole bundle of transaction points of contact, if you like. We are clearly trying to change the points of contact. You saw from the point-price change, more people online means we can redistribute our money elsewhere versus people coming to the shopfront. So there are a whole bunch of things we are trying to do and they change over time. Consequently, the budget being applied may vary over time as well. The muted consideration of all these various shopfronts may indeed make Canberra Connect a bigger entity and, indeed, I would expect to get more funding than currently is in the budget as we bring out the bid. But clearly that is a net gain for us, maybe not so for other departments. We have not had that discussion.

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, it was an excellent initiative of the previous government.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You asked me a question on the numbers. It is about \$11 million.

**MR SMYTH:** So there is no significant change? It is about the same amount?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No significant change.

**MR SMYTH:** Could those numbers be provided in writing, please?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, one is an extraction. I can tell you now, it is \$11,165,000 for this year. It is in the budget papers on—I have forgotten the page now.

**MR SMYTH:** Page 298.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Right. Well, in that case you already knew the answer. Why you would ask me a question when you already know the answer I am blessed if I know. The other one was a combination of two numbers. One was about \$9.5 million, roughly, and a proportion of another item that had \$4 million in it. So it is around about the same number. There is no material difference between the two.

**MR SMYTH:** That is interesting because the number on page 298, you have just said, is \$11,165,000.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** The number for Canberra Connect output class 2.1 is \$12,869,000. So if last year it was just over \$11 million, there is a growth, of which you should be either

aware or proud.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am always proud of my people, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** I am pleased to bring that to your attention, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** They are absolutely magic. Sorry, the figure that I have given you was the government payments for outputs on page 298. You are quite correct: total budget is \$12,869,000, and it is about the same number. I told you it is a combination. It was \$9,639,000 and a proportion of the overhead of \$4,513,000. To find the exact amount of the proportion of that overhead would be too time consuming.

**MR SMYTH:** No, that is okay.

**Mr Hargreaves:** But they are the numbers.

**MR SMYTH:** Mr Zissler, how many transactions are you responsible for, and how many of them are currently online? Sorry, transaction types, not actual number of transactions. So how many different payments could somebody make through existing urban services and soon to be TAMS?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will take that on notice, Mr Smyth. We will have to go back and find that out for you.

**Mr Zissler:** Sorry, it is the type of transaction?

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, not the number of transactions.

**Mr Zissler:** It is not the number of the type of transactions?

**MR SMYTH:** So, my plumber's licence, my car licence, my rubbish permit.

**Mr Zissler:** We will take it on notice. But just to note, they vary every day. Almost every day we have new transactions.

**MR SMYTH:** That is fine. Give them to me at a point in time, and what the percentage of them online is.

**Mr Zissler:** Yes.

**MR PRATT:** Mr Zissler, can you tell us what the cuts to staff are in the shopfronts?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MR PRATT:** No?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I am not going to tell you.

**MR SMYTH:** I have just done that point. We have done that bit.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We have just answered the question. I refer you back to the *Hansard*, Mr Pratt. Perhaps you ought to listen to the questions from Mr Smyth.

**MR PRATT:** I was outside, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Were you?

**MR PRATT:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, I cannot help that.

**MR SMYTH:** I will fill you in.

**THE CHAIR:** Okay, we are finished with Canberra Connect. We will go on now to the next output class in this area, which is government services, 2.2.

**MR SMYTH:** In output 2.2 this year you have \$68 million to provide that service.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** What is the change from last year?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The change from last year? I refer you to the budget papers of 2005-06, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** Very droll, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Droll? Not droll. I am not here to do your work for you. You can go away and do it yourself.

**MR SMYTH:** Okay. Mr Zissler, is there an increase in the budget for this service?

**Mr Hargreaves:** They are fee for service, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** Well, the expected budget seems to drop about \$2.5 million.

**Mr Hargreaves:** How so?

**MR SMYTH:** Government services in the 2005-06 budget is \$70,948,000 and this year it is \$68,505,000. What is the drop, minister, in this budget?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The publications and records part of the department were in the department for seven months before they went to shared services, so that what you see is a pro-rated figure.

**MR SMYTH:** You gain property, according to this year's document. That is not listed in last year's budget paper.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Gained property?

**MR SMYTH:** No? Was property included in this output class last year?

**Ms Kiemann:** By and large, government services was classified as output class 3 in the past financial year as a separate class.

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, but I am quoting output class 3—last year, output 3.1—government services, which—

**Ms Kiemann:** Yes, the property was in output class 3 last year.

**MR SMYTH:** It was?

**Ms Kiemann:** This year it is in output class 2.2.

**MR SMYTH:** I appreciate that. I am comparing class with class. I am trying to work out what are the ins and what are the outs. So publishing and—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Records.

**MR SMYTH:** Are going out, and that is the half-year effect?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Seven; it is the five months.

**MR SMYTH:** It is the five-month effect, the drop of \$1.5 million?

**Ms Kiemann:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Is there anything coming into this area?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Not that we can recall, Mr Smyth. I am pretty confident to say to you the answer is no, but we are in a major structural change here at the moment. So at the moment, as we sit here now, tonight, I reserve the right to look at the structural change later down the track.

**MR SMYTH:** All right, thank you. In the outputs on page 311 of budget paper 4 I see the reduction starts on accommodation utilisation rate, metres squared per employee?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Is that the figure just for urban services or is that for all of the departments?

**Mr Zissler:** It is common to both. We have a territory-wide standard. This one applies to urban services, but that will be common for all ACT government properties that we manage on behalf of.

**MR SMYTH:** Is there a given rate of metres per employee? Is there an accepted rate of what is acceptable?

**Mr Zissler:** There are a number of indices you might choose to look at. The

commonwealth agencies tend to be around 15 to 17. They each have their own indices. We are clearly trying to move in a downward direction, because that is an efficiency measure of how you use buildings. So we are trying to get down to about 15. Clearly, that will take a number of years to do.

**MR SMYTH:** Is it possible to supply a copy of the indices?

**Mr Zissler:** I am happy to supply you with a copy of the policy that sets those indices out, because sadly it is not just a simple square metre per person. There are special-use clauses. For example, if we look at the court, you cannot count the courtroom in that per person. If you went to a fire station, clearly there are some functions there that are not counted in that, but the 15 squares per person tends to be about accommodation for officers, if that makes sense.

**MR SMYTH:** It is interesting. You are going to drop the rate from 19.5 metres squared to 18.3 metres squared.

**Mr Zissler:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** But the cost per employee is going to remain the same at \$7,300. Does that mean we are paying more and getting less? Is that a misprint? Has that not been thought out?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Believe this or not, Mr Smyth, but the price of real estate has gone up.

**Mr Zissler:** Gone up, yes.

**MR SMYTH:** That is all I am looking for.

**Mr Zissler:** It is very simplistic, but I think that answer is not unreasonable. The price has gone up. This is about managing our assets better—basically, a rudimentary measure of office accommodation.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Had we left the figure at 19.5, Mr Smyth, we would have had to put in an increase, and I do not know what that figure would be.

**MR SMYTH:** That is what I was expecting—just checking. Under (c)—and I am sure Dr Foskey is interested in this—of output class 2.2, government services, on page 311, I notice “Use of Greenpower”. You had a target for the existing of 17 per cent, you achieved 20 per cent and you are now going to attempt 23 per cent?

**Mr Hargreaves:** And we are going to achieve it too.

**MR SMYTH:** How did you overachieve this year and how do you intend to continue that trend?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The way the government buys its electricity, it pays for green power or brown coal stuff, if you like. We set a target of 17 and we asked agencies to commit in their expenditure on power to meeting that target or exceeding it. All I can say to you, Mr Smyth, is that I congratulate the departments on going down this track and not asking

for extra money to do that. The government, or cabinet particularly, believes it is not an unreasonable expectation—given the rate of willingness on the part of agencies to embrace cleaner, greener power—that we would set that target at 23. Ultimately, we would like to see 25 in the fairly near future as well.

**MR SMYTH:** Thank you for that. Perhaps Mr Zissler can answer the question. How did you achieve it?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is across the whole of government here. You would have to ask that question, for example, of the Department of Health with respect to the use of power in hospitals.

**MR SMYTH:** But you are responsible for the output class.

**Mr Hargreaves:** When we purchase electricity we do it through ActewAGL and we then nominate the rate of green power that we purchase, and that is how we have done it.

**MR SMYTH:** Can you tell us where the sources of green electricity came from?

**Mr Hargreaves:** You would have to ask that question of ActewAGL.

**MR SMYTH:** How do you know, therefore, that you got green power?

**Mr Hargreaves:** They warrant it. They guarantee us that the power we are paying for at the extra premium of green power is indeed green power. For the specifics and the technicalities you would have to ask ActewAGL that one.

**MRS DUNNE:** Can I ask a question that follows on from the green power question? In addition to the green power, which is purchasing green energy, what are you doing in relation to energy efficiencies?

**Mr Hargreaves:** You would have to ask the Chief Minister that, Mrs Dunne. It is within his portfolio responsibilities—energy and water. They are not part of my responsibilities.

**MRS DUNNE:** No, but the properties run by the ACT government are your responsibility.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. I understand now. I understand your question, sorry.

**MRS DUNNE:** There used to be the perennial upgrading of the lights in Macarthur House. What else are you doing?

**Mr Zissler:** More of the same. As we go through and refurbish government properties we take account of our energy requirements. If we can use smart switching for lights we will. Indeed, as we replace hot water systems if we can use solar power or other types of power sources we will. So it is part of our refitting or retrofitting of buildings as we go forward, in day-to-day efficiency, aside from the electricity we purchase. But we have these green targets.

**MRS DUNNE:** Do you have environmental officers whose brief it is to improve the

energy efficiency and water efficiency of buildings?

**Mr Zissler:** Inside the property group we have a policy on how we do that. Whether there is a person who goes and checks it I could not comment.

**MRS DUNNE:** So there is no-one here from the property group?

**Mr Zissler:** No, there will not be a dedicated person who goes out and checks that. It is certainly part of our policy framework, though.

**MRS DUNNE:** Can you, on notice perhaps, provide me with an indication of the sort of average per capita energy consumption over, say, four financial years, so that we could look at how energy efficient we are?

**Mr Zissler:** Per capita? You mean the total territory?

**MRS DUNNE:** I am not going to prescribe how you do it, but I would like you to be able to report to the committee on how you are going on energy efficiency; what is the energy use by departments and how it has risen or fallen. If per capita is not the appropriate way of doing that—

**Mr Zissler:** For the property group, as it is being managed, I can give that information.

**MRS DUNNE:** Or per square metre or something?

**Mr Zissler:** Yes, I will find that indicator. That tells you how we are going.

**Mr Hargreaves:** But that is only for properties that we manage and for ourselves, Mrs Dunne. We cannot give you that for, for example, schools. I would not have a clue.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes, I understand.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Madam chair, before Dr Foskey asks her question, I wish to table a response to the question on Glenloch Interchange.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I corrected the spelling of the word “Glenloch”, so that is one question on notice that has been fixed up.

**DR FOSKEY:** Do you have an environmental plan for your buildings and your department that covers issues such as water, energy and paper? It would also set targets and indicate how you were progressing towards them.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The short answer to your question is no. We do not have a plan in that sort of form, Dr Foskey. We can take advantage of that sort of thing when all the synergies are together. Environment ACT is joining the department and it will be benefiting also from the Office of Sustainability. You asked whether the department had an environmental plan. The answer to your question is no. I am not aware of anybody else who does. On the other hand, we are acutely aware of our responsibilities. It should

be remembered that we have a number of properties, some of which we own and some of which we lease. I am hoping to take advantage of those synergies as we go forward and see how we go.

**THE CHAIR:** ACTION representatives have arrived, so we will deal with them now and then go back to environment.

**Mr Hargreaves:** While Mr Wallace is here, I express appreciation for the work done by the board, in particular, its chair, Andrew Whitecross. Mr Wallace and the board took ACTION forward and they have done some really magic things for public transport in this town. I publicly acknowledge that.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Hargreaves. Those people who have just arrived should understand that these hearings, which are legal proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, are protected by parliamentary privilege. That gives you certain protections but it also places on you certain responsibilities. It means that you are protected from certain legal action such as being sued for defamation for what you say at this public hearing. It also means that you have responsibilities to tell the committee the truth. The Assembly will treat as a serious matter the giving of false or misleading evidence. I ask everyone to speak into the microphones, as Hansard staff are having trouble recording proceedings. Mr Gentleman, do you have a question?

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Yes, thank you, madam chair. Page 343 of BP4 shows that passenger boarding numbers are up. The figures show an increase of 262,000 boardings over the expected figure. That is an indicator of a growing service, which is as a result of the hard work done by men and women in the ACTION work force. ACTION drivers were advised yesterday that the 60 to 40 full-time and part-time ratio will be reversed, that their leisure leave will go, that their overtime will go, that weekend details will be slashed, there will be a large reduction in midday services, that most drivers will be part-timers working split shifts, and that interchanges will be unmanned.

Their hours, their ability to become full-time workers, their job security and their standard of living will all be gone. Minister, how do you expect to meet your first dot point under strategic indicators on page 342 of BP4, which states “increasing patronage on ACTION Buses to 17.1 million passenger boardings” when you are removing the very people that have driven that strong increase?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I thank Mr Gentleman for his question. He read very clearly the ACTION members update from the Transport Workers Union. I congratulate him on maintaining an interest in the affairs of the Transport Workers Union and on ensuring that the rights and privileges of his old colleagues are maintained. I respect the position he has taken.

**MR SMYTH:** I did not realise preselection was up.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** It is not.

**Mr Hargreaves:** These conversations are conducted in the industrial arena. At this point I have no intention of discussing these issues in the public arena.

**MR PRATT:** The preselection?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have no problems about that. If I were you, I would be really careful.

**MR SMYTH:** Are you still confident, John?

**MR PRATT:** I heard you have a pretty good track record, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I would match my vote against yours any day.

**THE CHAIR:** Order! Mr Hargreaves, this is not the place.

**Mr Hargreaves:** How does “triple your vote” grab you, Mr Pratt?

**THE CHAIR:** Order! Dr Foskey will ask the next question.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** He has not finished answering my question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have.

**THE CHAIR:** I thought you had finished your answer.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will not continue to refer to ongoing industrial conversations in the public arena.

**THE CHAIR:** I thought the minister had finished his answer.

**MR SMYTH:** That is appalling. Quite clearly we should be able to ask the minister questions about policy and he is obliged to answer.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You can ask me whatever you like.

**MR SMYTH:** Mr Wallace, do you have anything to say about that matter?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will answer the question. Mr Wallace does not have anything to add.

**MR SMYTH:** Is the minister just going to shut down debate?

**Mr Hargreaves:** You have it in one, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** The minister is avoiding public scrutiny yet again.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I am not, Mr Smyth.

**MR PRATT:** You are famous for it, John.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Is that right, Mr Pratt?

**MR PRATT:** Yes, you are.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you very much.

**THE CHAIR:** Order!

**Mr Hargreaves:** At least fame is better than notoriety, Mr Smyth.

**MR PRATT:** You have plenty of fame, John.

**MR SMYTH:** You have plenty of notoriety too.

**THE CHAIR:** Order! Dr Foskey will ask the next question.

**DR FOSKEY:** My question appears trivial in comparison to the points raised earlier by Mr Gentleman. I thank him for raising them and I will let him pursue those issues, given that he has the information in front of him. I believe that split shifts would be an absolute nightmare. My questions relate to constituents' concerns. The famous bike racks are appreciated by many of my constituents but people have been told they are not allowed to place their bikes on them if they have carrier baskets on the back. People who are commuting are likely to have carrier baskets so that they can carry things. My constituents do not know why that is not feasible as it really limits the use of the racks.

My second question relates to people with prams. A fair number of people who use buses often find they are not welcome on them. Prams take up a bit of room and do not fold up into small packages. Is it the policy of bus drivers to welcome people with prams? Do they go out of their way to provide space for them when buses are not full?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Everybody in Canberra is welcome to use our buses. Just the other day a bus driver welcomed me onto a bus. In my view, customer satisfaction with bus drivers in the ACT is probably second to none. Our bus drivers are magic people. They are welcoming and they are concerned about passengers.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Let us keep them then.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Dr Foskey might find that that constituent's concern is atypical. If she invites her constituent to contact ACTION or me directly, we would be delighted to discuss that issue.

**DR FOSKEY:** Are you referring to my constituent with the pram?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. Bike racks are built for bikes and not for the panniers attached to them. So it is not a good idea to tell people to tip up their bikes. If those panniers are not locked down, their contents could empty out onto the highway. With the irregularity of pannier sizes we do not know whether that will preclude other bikes from being able to use those racks, so it is our policy to permit only bikes without panniers.

**DR FOSKEY:** Could that decision be reviewed?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MR PRATT:** ACTION is to lose 16 staff in 2006-07, but will there be a reduction in

ACTION staffing?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Quite probably, Mr Pratt.

**MR PRATT:** If there is a reduction in staff, from what areas will they be lost?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have not yet looked into that.

**MR PRATT:** Will you look into it?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I will.

**MR PRATT:** What impacts are likely to occur as a result of those losses?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Not yet, Mr Pratt; I have not looked into it yet.

**MR SMYTH:** If you have not looked into it how do you now that you will lose 16 staff?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is an FTE number, Mr Smyth. You have been around long enough and you should know how it works.

**MR SMYTH:** I am asking you for an explanation, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We know that we have to bring public service delivery costs across the whole of the ACT back to the national benchmark. We know roughly how much we have to trim from our budget so we can go forward. This relates to a reduction of FTE positions in the budget. At this point I do not know how many there will be. I cannot be specific, nor should I try.

**MR PRATT:** What is your priority? What is your vision? You must have some idea. As a minister that is what you are paid for.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Earlier today I told you about this in the context of the budget for the Department of Territory and Municipal Services. We have not yet begun that episode or that planning stuff. When we get to it all will be revealed. At this point ACTION has not been melded with DUS. Until it is melded as from 1 July we have nothing to talk about.

**MRS DUNNE:** I want to ask a threshold question. Minister or Mr Wallace, can you explain to the committee how ACTION will fit back into the new department?

**Mr Hargreaves:** In the context of the office of transport, the synergies, and all the things we are doing about transport delivery, that is where the ACTION network will sit. I will get Mr Zissler to let you know how that restructure will occur.

**Mr Zissler:** As I identified this morning, from 1 July the interim structure has three networks. One network is called the enterprise network, which comprises a number of standalone business units that return a dividend to the community and the government, either in money or in community service obligations. ACTION is one of those units.

**MRS DUNNE:** It fits within the community service part, not the money part.

**Mr Zissler:** It returns a number of community service obligations on behalf of us all.

**MRS DUNNE:** I do not have my head around it currently, Mr Wallace, but are you the chief executive of a freestanding organisation?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Currently it is a statutory authority. Mr Wallace is the CEO of a statutory authority.

**MRS DUNNE:** How do we integrate the management part of ACTION, and here I am referring to buses? How will the management structure be integrated into the Department of Territory and Municipal Services?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Zissler was just saying that it would be melded with enterprise services. The government is saving costs by sharing those administrative infrastructures. Once those organisations are melded some of those things will go into shared services, finance operations, and human resource operations. Some of the back-end support services will be common to other parts of the current Department of Urban Services. They will be rolled into the operation and we will then see how we travel.

**MRS DUNNE:** I really want to know about the chain of command. Does Mr Wallace answer to Mr Zissler, or does the head of ACTION answer to the head of the department?

**Mr Hargreaves:** From 1 July the chain of command will be from the minister to the CEO of the Department of Territory and Municipal Services, to the executive director of that enterprise services group, and then to the person who will be heading up the ACTION group.

**MRS DUNNE:** And the board is gone from 1 July?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The board disappears from 1 July.

**THE CHAIR:** Page 349 of BP4 indicates that ACTION fares are to rise. Will you give the committee the details of those rises?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. Members would be aware that the latest draft determination was released last week. Over the past four years the Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission froze fares for two years and proposed CPI increases in the last two. ACTION sought an increase of six per cent to cover a proportion of the increased costs attributed to fuel and labour. Members would be aware how the cost of diesel compared to the CPI over the last year or so.

The ICRC's fare determination of an increase of six per cent in weighted average price cap will be applied from Monday, 3 July 2006. ACTION's pricing strategy aims to minimise ticket sales on buses, that is, cash ticket sales on buses, for reasons of security, accountability and to expedite loadings, while sales from agency outlets are encouraged, with commuters provided with a variety of ticket options at discounted prices.

As such, most of the six per cent increase has been applied to cash fares, with the adult

fare going from \$2.50 to \$3—that is, a 20 per cent increase—while the cash fare for concessions increased from \$1.30 to \$1.50, which is just over 15 per cent, and all other ticket types had modest price adjustments of about the CPI or lower, or minimal amounts of 10c. Another issue is that of change. We want one denomination of change to give to people rather than a whole range, if we can help it, as it just slows down the process. I think I responded to your question, madam chair.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, thank you very much.

**MRS DUNNE:** Does that mean there will be a bigger discount for people who buy adult fares?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. Only the other day Mr Wallace chastised me for buying a cash fare when I travelled on a bus. I would have paid a considerably cheaper fare for that trip if I had bought a monthly ticket. I could then have looked forward to 29 more trips, could I not, Mrs Dunne?

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have to say that I was a silly man. I should have done that because I had a most enjoyable trip on the bus.

**THE CHAIR:** On page 349 of BP4 there is a reference to a minor increase in charter and advertising revenue. How much of ACTION's revenue comes from these sources? What strategies are in place to increase that revenue?

**Mr Hargreaves:** If Mr Wallace cannot answer that question we will take it on notice. It is a very technical question.

**Mr Wallace:** Approximately \$550,000 comes from charter operations. We also have revenue from our advertising activities—advertising inside buses and on the outside of buses—of about the same amount.

**THE CHAIR:** Are you trying to increase that revenue?

**Mr Wallace:** We are always looking to increase, in particular, our charter operations. We have been very successful this year; there has been a 20 per cent increase in our charter revenue over the year.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will not allow Mr Pratt to put his advertising slogan on buses during the next election.

**THE CHAIR:** Mrs Dunne, does your question relate to this matter?

**MRS DUNNE:** No, it is a new line of questioning.

**MR SMYTH:** I have a follow-up question on fares, which Mr Wallace might like to comment on. When the ICRC put out its draft ACTION bus fare determination it made the following comment:

The Commission is concerned that recent significant increases in ACTION's costs appear to reflect real labour cost increases in the absence of productivity improvements.

What productivity improvements are you putting in place, Mr Wallace?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will answer that question because, in my view, it is a policy decision. We are talking about changes to the way in which we deliver ACTION services. We will deliver those services in the same way as we deliver all other services in this town. ACTION will be brought within the Department of Territory and Municipal Services and we will create the synergies that exist in the current office of transport. Mr Smyth wants me to say how many jobs might be lost or how many routes might be changed, but I am going to let him down.

**MR SMYTH:** I was more interested in the nature of the fleet. I do not know whether Mr Wallace can answer my question, but I understand that maintenance costs are increasing significantly. What percentage of this year's budget will be devoted to maintenance, as opposed to existing years? In the 2006-07 budget how much will be for maintenance as opposed to what was spent on maintenance in 2005-06?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will take that question on notice, madam chair.

**MR SMYTH:** Over the past five years what has been the trend on components of that—the cost of labour and the cost of parts?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will also take that question on notice.

**THE CHAIR:** Mrs Dunne, I think you are next to ask questions, and then Dr Foskey.

**MRS DUNNE:** Thank you. This is probably a question for Mr Wallace because it relates backwards rather than being prospective. I raised this morning the busway. I know as a result of freedom of information requests that ACTION had very little input to issues relating to the setting of the route or the discussion on the route. Does ACTION have a view about a desirable route for a busway, if it is ever built?

**Mr Hargreaves:** ACTION is an arm of the executive government, Mrs Dunne. It is a case of whether or not executive government has a view. You would need to take that up with the Minister for Planning, in terms of his consultation process.

**MRS DUNNE:** The consultation process, by virtue of the information that I received in the freedom of information requests, seemed to indicate that ACTION was given one presentation to a meeting of its board. That seems to me a highly circumscribed piece of consultation.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You need to take that up with the Minister for Planning.

**DR FOSKEY:** On page 343 there is a list of accountability indicators. Most of these are very good but one that is particularly good is C, increase in adult work trips in accordance with the sustainable transport plan. I note that the outcome over this current financial year is 12.8 per cent, yet your target for next year is back to even lower than the

target for this year. I am just wondering why you set next year's target so low. I am sure you plan to continue the service at at least the level that it is already, and hopefully improve it.

**Mr Wallace:** Yes, I will answer that question, Dr Foskey. The targets for 2006-07 are the targets that were set within the sustainable transport plan. We were able to work with the results that we have had from this year. We have a number of measures that we have put in place in the last year or two to assist in achieving that target or that result. But going forward, we are obviously not optimistic at being able to reproduce that stellar performance, and, rather than have an unrealistic target to shoot for in subsequent years, we are relying on the sustainable transport plan for our targets until they are updated. We saw the importance of keeping our alignment between the plan and our plans as well in moving forward. Obviously we are hopeful of overachieving on that target as well.

**DR FOSKEY:** When is the sustainable transport plan due for revision?

**Mr Wallace:** I'm not sure. You would have to ask the people—

**Mr Hargreaves:** Sorry to interrupt you, Mr Wallace. Dr Foskey, the sustainable transport plan is within the responsibilities of the Minister for Planning. Your question would be best directed to that minister, in terms of the review time. However, I think it is reasonable to suggest to the committee that we will be talking to their office regarding ACTION's significant overachievement against the targets, and that is sustained. It is interesting to note that in terms of adult passenger boardings, I think at least on three occasions in the last couple of months we have had record adult boardings in a day. What is it—27,000 in a day at one point?

**Mr Wallace:** 24,000, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** 24,000 in a day. That's right, and the target was 17,000, if my memory serves me correctly, or thereabouts.

**Mr Wallace:** 19,300.

**Mr Hargreaves:** There you go. I have got a bad memory.

**DR FOSKEY:** Have you noticed a seasonal variation?

**Mr Wallace:** Yes, there are seasonal variations.

**DR FOSKEY:** Would winter be lower?

**Mr Wallace:** In the winter it does drop off a bit. But our trend over this year is 13 per cent to 14 per cent over the last year, continuing through. And I just should add that that 3.2 per cent is on top of what we are now.

**DR FOSKEY:** I see, so that is an increase of—

**Mr Wallace:** It is an increase.

**DR FOSKEY:** So you are talking really of 16 per cent. That clarifies that. With the oil prices going up you don't have to do that much.

**MR SMYTH:** Minister, you have just said that the cost of a fare will go from \$2.50 to \$3 for an adult.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** And \$1.30 to \$1.50 for the concession.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Yet the commissioner said that they should only go up by the increase in the CPI.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, he didn't. He said it can go up six per cent across the board. That means that we can have fluctuations within the types of tickets that we make available, provided that the total amount of fare increase across the lot comes to six per cent.

**MR SMYTH:** So it is an increase on the total take, not an increase on the individual fares.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**THE CHAIR:** Can I just ask a quick question. I am just wondering about the new ticketing system. I am sure it is in here somewhere. Are we going ahead with that and do we have a budget leading up to that?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, thanks very much, madam chair. I can answer that. The government has funded \$200,000 for a feasibility study to assess the type of system to be implemented. This will include a full market plan, including technology types, scope of works and cost-benefit analysis. The cost will also include consultancies and tendering.

ACTION's current ticketing system was installed in 1994 at a cost of \$3.6 million. The system was fully written off in April 2005. Operationally, the system is causing extensive problems in encoder reading and software. Modifications to the system and tickets are an ongoing project, but maintenance costs have been increasing considerably.

Technically, the system is dated and new and evolving technologies need to be investigated in order to protect current revenue and assist with improvements to customer service with the objective of increasing patronage. The indicative cost of a new replacement ticketing system is \$8 million but this can only be clarified when the initial feasibility study is completed and, of course, when the tendering process is over. We know it is around that number, but that is as much as we do know.

The project has a direct link to the sustainable transport policy on service and a projected increased target to be derived on patronage levels. Of course, when we want to do such things as real-time advice to people we need to make sure that the ticketing system is actually in good working order. At the moment it is not; so that is holding us back a bit.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt, you have a question?

**MR PRATT:** Yes, it relates to output class 1.1 and the output description.

**Mr Hargreaves:** What page is that, Mr Pratt?

**MR PRATT:** I am referring to page 342. I am referring to the general output description of the composite transport plan. Minister, I refer specifically to the issue of services to the airport and back. Why have Canberra Cabs had to wait since November last year for an answer to their application on what would seem to be a reasonable application to provide an airport-to-city service?

**Mr Hargreaves:** My understanding, Mr Pratt, is that you are referring to demand-responsive transport.

**MR PRATT:** Yes.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You have to remember that we approve the service, in terms of accrediting the service and the route it takes. What we do not have a say in is the pick-up and the delivery points. They are the prerogative of those pick-up and delivery points. Canberra Cabs has a fight with the airport, not with the government.

**MR PRATT:** Is it in your interest to see them win that fight? Can you help them? Have you tried to help them?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have had discussions with the airport on the whole range of issues regarding transport in and out of that particular facility. Mr Pratt, to find out why the Canberra airport makes a given business decision is, I believe, outside my prerogative. I had discussions about what the government would like to see about access in and out of the place. Interestingly, the conversations that we had with the airport and the introduction of the DRT concept have been applauded by a number of people.

In terms of getting in and out of that airport to the city, for example, there is a half-hourly bus service run by Deane's Buslines now. It costs about \$7, if my memory serves me correctly, to go from there. Every half hour you can go there; it is a huge bus. For those people who work out at the airport, though, the airport subsidises the difference between that price and an ACTION fare.

Where there is difficulty, I suppose, is getting groups of people who may wish to go from the airport to Parliament House. There are two processes that Canberra Cabs needs to go through to enable, say, a minibus to pick up people, and all that sort of stuff. They can actually rent them; they can be a taxi or minibus-size taxi. But if they wish to do a proper full-on bus service from the airport to Parliament House, they have to be accredited as a bus operator, the same way Deane's has to be, the same way that everybody else has to be. That is the limit of our involvement.

Then they have to get the agreement of the pick-up and delivery points, as I say. It may very well be—I speculate only, because I cannot speak on behalf of the airport—that they are not all that satisfied with the service they are getting from the standard cabs out of the airport. It may very well be—and I speculate again—that what they are seeing is

Canberra Cabs possibly cherry picking the best parts of the year's passenger travel to the detriment of, say, the bus service which goes continually. Some routes are patronised well and some routes are not. I don't know, but if you wish to have a conversation with the Canberra airport, I would advise you to do so.

**MR PRATT:** So are you saying—

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is not my responsibility, Mr Pratt, to tell the airport how to manage its business, I suppose.

**MR PRATT:** No, but are you therefore saying that their application with you is merely about registration, not so much about the operational matters of routing and timings?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, it is about accreditation in terms of their standard as a bus service, and it is also about the route that they apply for. We can approve them as a bus service to go from the airport to Parliament House, but if they are not allowed to pick up at the airport there is not a thing we can do about it.

**MR PRATT:** Sure, but given that they have that arrangement, if they can make that arrangement, are you willing to assist them, particularly if they provide a supplementary service which supplements Deane's service and other services?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Pratt, we have an accreditation process. Anybody can apply for accreditation under that, and we encourage them to do so. I would love to see it work. I would love to see that happen, but other than provide an accreditation process to accredit the routes and accredit the actual bus service, there is not much else I can do.

**MR PRATT:** Except encourage everybody to come to the party, perhaps—for the good of Canberrans.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, Mr Pratt, I think—

**MR PRATT:** I know it is a tall order, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** we are doing enough as it is.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Smyth, have you got a question?

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, thanks. Minister, just going back to the fares, is it possible to get a reconciliation of the fares, as to how much is collected by pre-sales, how much is collected through the fare box in the various categories and the way in which you have approved the increases?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, we will take it on notice and get it for you. Do you want all types of ticketing arrangements?

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, just so that we know you have stayed within the 2.6 per cent.

**Mr Wallace:** It was confirmed by the ICRC.

**MR SMYTH:** I'm sorry?

**Mr Hargreaves:** What Mr Smyth is attempting to get clarified, and I am quite happy to do this—I just want to clarify it for the officers—relates to where the ICRC says six per cent and the cash fare says 20 per cent, for example. He wants to satisfy himself in a formulaic way that we are actually certifying the six per cent.

**Mr Wallace:** As part of the process, after the determination was made by the ICRC, we give our fare proposal to them for verification and, once they approve the verification, then the proposal goes to the minister for approval.

**MR SMYTH:** If you have already done that, it will be very easy.

**THE CHAIR:** So you don't need to come back with that information?

**MR SMYTH:** No, I would still like the information.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, we will get it for him.

**THE CHAIR:** You still want it?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will get it for you; it is not difficult.

**MR SMYTH:** Previously you took a question on notice relating to maintenance and maintenance trends over the last couple of years. Could you include the number of employees involved in maintenance over the last five years, including labour costs, material costs, service costs and any other overheads that are part of that?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will attempt to get that to you, otherwise we will let you know why we cannot.

**MR SMYTH:** Thank you.

**Mr Wallace:** When you say "service costs", do you mean the cost of servicing?

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, anything involved in the all-up maintenance.

**Mr Wallace:** The cost of running the service?

**MR SMYTH:** Anything that is apportioned to the all-up running of the fleet.

**Mr Hargreaves:** What we will do, Mr Smyth, is consult the chart of accounts and get you the split according to the chart of accounts as best we can.

**MR SMYTH:** All right, thank you.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you very much. I think we will go to afternoon tea now and be back at 10 to 4. We will then go on to the environment.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thank you very much, madam chair. You have clarified the position.

**THE CHAIR:** We have finished with that and we will be going onto environment issues. Thank you very much, Mr Wallace and all those ACTION people who have come this afternoon. Thank you for your attendance.

**The committee adjourned from 3.28 to 3.47 pm.**

**Mr Hargreaves:** At the reconvening this meeting, I note that earlier on I undertook to advise the committee on the arboretum running costs for three years. The numbers are for 2005-06, approximately \$100,000; 2006-07, \$400,000; and 2007-08, \$800,000.

**MRS DUNNE:** That is what it actually is in the outyears?

**Mr Hargreaves:** That is what is in the outyears.

**MRS DUNNE:** The budget.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, that is my understanding.

**MRS DUNNE:** What is it being spent on?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Shrubbery.

**MRS DUNNE:** But shrubbery is not capital.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, it's not; it's plant!

**THE CHAIR:** Very good, minister, you certainly are on top of it this afternoon, aren't you?

**MRS DUNNE:** I walked into that one.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** At least you were not brushed aside.

**THE CHAIR:** Can we stop this, please?

**MRS DUNNE:** While people are collecting their thoughts—

**MR SMYTH:** I am ready to go.

**MRS DUNNE:** my reference is actually to the presentation made by the conservation council and the National Parks Association to the estimates committee last Friday. Minister, have you had a chance to read the comments made by them?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I haven't.

**MRS DUNNE:** It is a shame that you have not, but I will give you a summation.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I was a bit occupied last week, Mrs Dunne.

**MRS DUNNE:** Yes. I will give a summation. It ran something along the lines that the environment community in general is very unhappy with the budget. They tended to say many of the things that I had already said. It gave me some comfort that they could not find out where the money was going to or coming from, and how it was going to be spent. They were also concerned about the level of accountability in the new structure. Could you give an exposition on how the environment areas like land management and the old parks section and all of those things stack up? Particularly, I would like to know: where is the conservator and who is the conservator?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Absolutely, I will get Mr Zissler to give you that detail. Let me assure all people in this sector about accountability. The accountability will be transparent. We will be having conversations. As I said in an address to the MPA not too long ago, looking after the environment in all of its widest possible connotations is all about having conversations. It is about having conversations at the dinner table, between community and government and the community within itself, and I intend that to be the case.

I am keen to see us exploit the synergies about putting together the people from environment and from parks and places. I think they are very real synergies and will have real-time deliverables on the ground. You ask about the structure and how it will work—who will sit with whom and how that will be—

**MRS DUNNE:** And how much money they get to do it with.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will get Mr Zissler to go back to that expose earlier on and drill down to that bit.

**Mr Zissler:** As I alluded to earlier, there are a number of projects being put together which look at specific parts of a new Department of Territory and Municipal Services. One of the major projects, indeed, is looking at the synergies and opportunities by bringing together Environment ACT, the Office of Sustainability, parks and places, and, indeed, NOWaste. The common goal of all those areas is really about how we manage the land, how we make the use of that land sustainable, how we recreate on that land and how we sometimes stand back and look at that land.

That work has only just commenced. It has commenced. We are using an external consultant who has strong credentials and an environment background to assist us. They commenced their work last week. That consultancy, pre-guessing the question, is for about \$35,000 and will occur over the next eight to 10 weeks.

**MRS DUNNE:** And who is the consultancy?

**Mr Zissler:** There are two consultants on board. One is Darrow Stinson, who is known to us. He was previously in the EPA in the ACT. That was his correct title. The other guy is called Phil Liddicoat, who works for a company called Maximus. He is not an environmentalist; he is an organisational developmentist.

**MRS DUNNE:** Where will the conservator sit in this?

**Mr Zissler:** It is yet to be decided. There clearly will be a conservator. Where it sits is

yet to be decided.

**MRS DUNNE:** There had better be.

**Mr Zissler:** Of course there will be.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will conserve the conservator, Mrs Dunne.

**Mr Zissler:** But we have to look at all those structures. The early work is centred on how you bring together the policy and regulatory frameworks and how then you apply those to the actual on-the-ground land management. As I sort of reported last year, and I am happy to report again now, it is really important that we get a single land manager, so when we get some of those difficult questions about who is responsible for this piece of land and that piece of land, who cares for those trees, for instance, this will bring together a single land manager of territory-owned land. We will still have some problems with the federal-owned lands and defence lands. But at least there will be no duckshoving anymore. There will be a single land manager focused on a whole range of issues with that land, but in one place.

**MRS DUNNE:** It sounds good in theory.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is going to be good in practice.

**MRS DUNNE:** The execution is going to be exceedingly difficult.

**Mr Zissler:** Indeed.

**MRS DUNNE:** Can you talk to me about the resources you have, because quite literally I cannot work out where the money has come from and where it is going. I am not the only person in this position. Perhaps take it on notice and give me a rundown of the environmental bits that are coming into there, how much money they had last year, how much money they are bringing with them and how that money will be applied in the next financial year.

**Mr Zissler:** I think we can do that.

**MRS DUNNE:** And the staff.

**Mr Hargreaves:** On page 315, the second-last line, environment and heritage are going across to DUS to form a new department, along with ACTION and others. You will see a reference to \$23 million. The whole lot is coming across.

**MRS DUNNE:** There are other figures as well in various places. There is a \$41 million figure somewhere—I think it might be in the CMD part—and when you try to drill through all these figures they do not add up. Perhaps my arithmetic is bad.

**Mr Zissler:** You are referring to page 297, I believe, at the top of the page.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Your \$41 million figure is there. That has sustainability, heritage and forestry services in it. The other figure just has heritage and environment.

**MRS DUNNE:** The money you brought over.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MRS DUNNE:** That is one of the things. How much money is in forests? Effectively, we do not have ACT Forests anymore.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is on page 315, further up the chart. If you look at the reference in bold print to budget technical judgments halfway down, the very first one refers to an overspend of \$2 million. And then the \$400,000 is coming across.

**MRS DUNNE:** So all of the land management functions of what used to be ACT Forests are being done for \$400,000.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, but all of ACT Forests is coming across. We are getting \$400,000 with that. That is for people costs basically, as far as I am aware.

**MRS DUNNE:** Where is the program money, the money for land management and the money for CSOs? Perhaps, rather than having us all flicking from page to page, we could have a reconciliation of where all the bits of money are coming from.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Okay, we will get that for you.

**MRS DUNNE:** At the moment it is not transparent.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Sure. I have to say that since day one budget papers never have been transparent, but we will try to make them transparent for you.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Minister, something else that the conservation council raised last week had more to do with policy. Can you tell us if the government's revised greenhouse strategy will contain concrete measures towards meeting targets?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I think I can. One of the things that you might be interested in—I have only just signed off on it—is the way in which we measure our greenhouse gas reduction strategy. We actually follow the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of New South Wales. They have responsibility in New South Wales and we have adopted them as well, but the people who judge us in the context of that are the ICRC. According to legislation, when the ICRC reports to the minister on our achievements about greenhouse gas emission reductions, I am required to report to the Assembly within six months of receiving that document. I received that document yesterday, I believe, and signed it off. So we will now be preparing a report to the Assembly on that. I can tell you, without going into detail because I do not carry it around, that we have achieved quite well against all the criteria.

It is interesting to know how we go about it. There are 12 different energy suppliers in the system. We don't have anybody in town, for example, that is big enough to go outside that. If you are a consumer and you are big enough, you can actually go outside. I will be reporting to the Assembly on that. We made a commitment to develop a climate change strategy for the ACT during 2006. There has been and will continue to be

extensive consultation on development of a strategy. The government and the community will need to determine whether to set a target or targets for reducing ACT emissions and, if so, what is appropriate, achievable and affordable. I have never been a big fan of targets. I have said that publicly. Whilst we need to have milestones and things like that, setting targets is something that you generally get judged on instead of what progress has been made towards achieving a given result.

**MRS DUNNE:** Isn't it Labor Party policy to sign up to Kyoto?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. A discussion paper released in April 2006 proposes a 60 per cent reduction in ACT emissions by 2050 as an appropriate long-term target that is supported by science. That is important; it has got to be supported by science. We will use community feedback on the discussion paper to develop a draft climate change strategy that will address the issue of targets. The development of a strategy will include detailed analysis of a range of initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. In that process, detailed costings of proposals will then be undertaken, but we haven't got that information yet.

**MRS DUNNE:** I could be difficult and ask the minister to table the thing from which he read.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You could be difficult, but I know that you would never do anything like that.

**THE CHAIR:** Minister, on the subject of greenhouse gas emissions, et cetera, what is the government doing to increase the number of hybrid vehicles used? Is that something that I can ask you about or should I have asked you back in the transport area?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will answer the question because I have some information here, thanks very much to the people behind. It was going through my mind that our fleet is managed through Rhodium and I was just trying to work out whether it was my responsibility or the Treasurer's, but I can advise the committee that the government has a higher proportion of hybrid vehicles in its passenger fleet than any other Australian government and, as part of its 2004 election platform, the government committed to 10 per cent of its passenger fleet being fuel efficient, low emission vehicles by 2008. Details for achieving this target are being finalised at the moment.

Currently, more than 10 per cent of the fleet achieves a rating of four stars or better, using the commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services green vehicle guide. The green vehicle guide rates every new vehicle available for sale in Australia on a scale of one to five stars and only 26 of the 380 individual models available scored four stars or more. These models are generally categorised as having excellent fuel economy and achieving emission standards that will not be mandatory in Australia until 2008.

In the 2006-07 budget the government announced that all of its passenger fleet vehicles must have an engine size of no larger than four cylinders. As part of its 2004 election platform the government also committed to exploring whether to have lower registration fees for vehicles that are fuel efficient. We are currently investigating options as to how we can pursue that. I recall an article in that illustrious journal the *Canberra Times* only in the last day or so regarding the financial economy of hybrid cars. The Honda Civic

and the Prius were actually dearer to run in terms of the cost to your pocket because of the cost of the vehicle and that sort of thing, but in terms of a greenhouse gas strategy they are brilliant and we will be going down that track. My family car, by the way, is a Civic hybrid.

**MRS DUNNE:** I wish to touch on the policy that was announced about the introduction of a maximum of four cylinders. What models of policy were used to come up with that and what is the experience in other states?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have to take that one on notice because I am not really sure whether the work was actually done in departments for which I have responsibility. I suspect that it wasn't, so I will need to seek advice from somewhere else.

**MRS DUNNE:** When you are doing that, minister, could you check to see how the policy is being rolled out in Queensland and whether there is a large lot of four-cylinder, ex-government cars at Brisbane airport that can't be sold at auction because there is no demand for them?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I can't possibly comment on what is at Brisbane airport; sorry about that. I am advised that I cannot answer these questions as I do not have the information. It was a Treasury decision. Perhaps you could take it up with the Treasurer.

**MR PRATT:** Minister, I am not sure which of your officers, perhaps Mr Zissler, can answer my question. What required actions will you implement from the annual bushfire operational plan? What do the changes mean now that ACT Environment is with you?

**Mr Zissler:** I am happy to answer that. Clearly, one of the major advantages going forward is the fact that we will have a single bushfire operational plan for the land managers, rather than having a number. The current fire season is over, the bushfire operational plan for that season is over. We are currently reviewing the effectiveness or otherwise of last year's plan and, as we go forward in the new department, we will put a single bushfire operational plan together, and that will be, of course, credentialled and certified before the bushfire season starts. I think it is an enormous opportunity for us to get rid of some of those overlaps and grey areas.

**MR PRATT:** How much will it cost you to implement the bushfire operational plan for 2006-07?

**Mr Zissler:** How much will it cost to implement the plan or the actual delivery of the implementation of the plan? I will give you a number. I have got it here somewhere. There are a number of parts to it. We will have a fuel reduction program next year which will be part of the bushfire operational plan, of \$1.31 million. That basically implements the bushfire operational plan. Of course, that augments the online operation work in those land management areas. For example, you asked a question earlier about how much of a part of the budget goes to bushfire work on the fringes. Clearly, ACT Roads has responsibility on its fringes there and it cuts and mows. Part of that is recognised as part of the plan. Likewise, when we do certain mowing up and down Northbourne Avenue in the middle, that gets credited towards our bushfire operation plan as well. To give you a total number, I will have to get all those things together, but it is a considerable amount of work and considerable money.

**MR PRATT:** How long would it take you to be able to get that figure?

**Mr Hargreaves:** About six months!

**Mr Zissler:** No.

**MR PRATT:** I hope it would not take you six months to be able to answer that.

**Mr Zissler:** No, it won't. I think it would be unlikely we could produce it in three days because we are currently working up on the bushfire operational plan and then we will set the budgets for the various parts as we go forward. I will get some advice on that.

**MR SMYTH:** Isn't that arse about? You are going to have a final figure and then you will work out the components. Shouldn't you work out what you actually have to do and move forward?

**Mr Zissler:** No, we will work out what we have to do first and then we will look at our budget. We may need to adjust the budget up or down, as we do every season, because of a whole number of factors which include things like weather patterns, known risks and unknown risks before we set the dollars.

**MR PRATT:** When is the plan completed for the next fire season?

**Mr Hargreaves:** In accordance with the Emergency Services Act.

**MR PRATT:** Is the old DUS fire maintenance unit, the FMU, back under your direct control and handling all of the planning and bushfire fighting for all of TAMS' agencies?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The elements of Environment ACT. All of the elements of Environment ACT have rejoined the department.

**MR PRATT:** Who does the FMU report to? Which director does it report to now?

**Mr Zissler:** The FMU does not exist, as you know. We had three officers in there. Urban services retained one individual, one individual went into the environment and the forests merger and one went to ESA. As we go forward, two of those three parties will come back together again and they will produce one bushfire operational plan for territory and municipal services.

**MR PRATT:** So the total FMU for TAMS will be a couple of planners.

**Mr Zissler:** Correct.

**MR PRATT:** But you won't necessarily have a firefighting capability, as you once did.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, we have got a bigger one.

**Mr Zissler:** No, the FMU was never a capability. It was always a policy planning unit.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Don't forget, Mr Pratt, that firefighting training is delivered to all of the rangers, so we maintained exactly the same firefighting capability when Environment ACT joined the department.

**Mr Zissler:** Indeed, during this season we formed a single brigade which is a combination of environment and urban services' parks and places. This just confirms that synergy. Hopefully, we will get better efficiencies as we go forward.

**MR PRATT:** And you haven't considered having a number of BOPs covering land management responsibilities versus the one.

**Mr Hargreaves:** As Mr Zissler said, one of the issues is the synergies and we need to have one bushfire operation. We have to comply with the provisions of the Emergency Services Act in the context of land management and we do comply with it. That sets the template for the provisions of that act, but also, of course, with a single land manager we can have a single approach to it.

**Mr Zissler:** The answer is simple: we treat each parcel of land as a unique parcel of land. You could have a singular bushfire operational plan for our organisation. However, we treat broadacre differently to reserve, as we do to the centre of Northbourne Avenue. They all get treated uniquely. You could argue that you want a bushfire approach plan for each strip. We don't do it that way. We treat each portion of land as being a unique portion of land.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The aggregation of our approach to those particular portions finds its manifestation in the bushfire operational plan which is approved by ES.

**MR PRATT:** I would debate that. I reckon BOP per geographical area is much better, but that is a debate for another day.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is indeed, but let me say that we satisfy the provisions of the act.

**Mr Zissler:** That may be an outcome. I am not saying that it will not be an outcome.

**DR FOSKEY:** Following on from that, I am interested in why fire management, for which the bulk of the money is for the building of new fire trails, is being included under environment—in fact, it is the bulk of the money put to environment, by the look of it—especially when some of the trails that are proposed under that funding actually have been opposed by people with environmental expertise. I just want to make a comment here. I think Mrs Dunne has asked for all the environment budget to be brought together because there is a huge problem with finding it in here. So I will appreciate that document.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Thanks for that comment, Dr Foskey. It was not a question; it was a statement. Madam chair, next question, please.

**DR FOSKEY:** Sorry, I did ask why fire management, which gets the bulk of the money, has been put under the heading of environment for the first time. It needs justifying.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Where would you expect to see it, Dr Foskey?

**DR FOSKEY:** I would expect to see it under emergency services, where it has been in the past.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Emergency services are not the land managers and Environment ACT currently are the land managers.

**DR FOSKEY:** It still needs justification, but I am not going to get it from you.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The justification is that they are the land managers. In fact, I have to say to you that that particular organisation actually formulated the budget bid. ES have responsibility for enforcing the Emergency Services Act and approving bushfire operational plans. They do not have the responsibility for land management. Parks and places and Environment ACT have responsibility for land management. In the new regime it will be only the one.

**DR FOSKEY:** Will there be senior environmental expertise involved in the transition planning and will they retain senior level in the new departmental arrangements?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Absolutely. We have people with environmental expertise within the department of environment now. We have one of them in front of you.

**DR FOSKEY:** Will Environment ACT be losing some of its staff?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have answered that question previously in relation to fishing trips about how many staff we might lose or might not lose. When the change process is concluded we will know the numbers. There is no doubt there will be staff reductions across the whole of the ACT public service. When we have gone through the change process we will know exactly which part of the public service will encounter those reductions.

**DR FOSKEY:** Is it true that a number of people in ranger positions have been trained in management in regard to bushfire prevention in recent years? Will some of them be losing their jobs and will they be compensated for by using consultants over the fire danger period?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have answered the question around reductions in staff already and I don't propose to elaborate on it.

**DR FOSKEY:** Is it true that some park rangers have been trained in bushfire management?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We would hope so because they are in the brigade. Part of their job is to protect the environment. We train them in bushfire management and we take them into bushfire response. Yes, it is part of their job. It has been like that since Pontius was a trainee Pilate.

**DR FOSKEY:** Will some of those be losing their jobs?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have answered that question already, Dr Foskey. I don't propose to go

down that track any further.

**DR FOSKEY:** Does that mean yes?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I does not mean yes and it does not mean no. You can put as many words into my mouth as you like and, as usual, you will get it wrong.

**DR FOSKEY:** Could you please outline how initiatives such as the Mulligan's Flat sanctuary and the corroboree frog and brush-tailed rock wallaby projects could continue without ongoing funding?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have already answered that in my overview, madam chair.

**DR FOSKEY:** Could you please point out where the funding for the implementation of the Namadgi management plan and the lower Cotter management plan lies in this budget?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is in the base budget, Dr Foskey. It has been there since Pontius was on his training course.

**DR FOSKEY:** Now that ACT Forests is being absorbed into TAMS, could you please outline your plans for the management or the future of our remaining pine forests, how they will be managed, whether there will be continued funding for their management and what kinds of returns are expected from them?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**DR FOSKEY:** I refer there to output 1.5 on page 297. It doesn't say much. In fact, it says nothing.

**Mr Hargreaves:** The responsibility for forests has been folded into the Department of Territory and Municipal Services and will be part of the change process that Mr Zissler has already indicated to the committee.

**DR FOSKEY:** Can I ask some questions about the Office of Sustainability?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Certainly.

**DR FOSKEY:** Could you please explain how sustainability will remain a priority for the department now that it has been split from the Chief Minister's Department?

**Mr Hargreaves:** One of the beautiful things about this coming together and the introduction of the Office of Sustainability is that we will have sustainability concepts as part of our everyday life. We will not have to have somebody coming in from outside saying that you should do this and you should do that. We will be able to have the concepts of sustainability folded into our decision-making process in the contemplative stage. We welcome that expertise in that decision-making process.

**DR FOSKEY:** Could you please indicate to me the progress on the sustainability legislation which was supposed to have been completed by now, according to last year's

budget indicators?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is carried by the Chief Minister's Department.

**DR FOSKEY:** Climate change: I will not ask about that because I think it has been covered. Environment grants: I am pleased to see the government's continued commitment to seeking community and expert advice on environmental matters—quoting from page 210 in budget paper No 3. I expect this will be reflected in the grants for environmental projects this year.

On page 218 budget paper No 3 I note that grants will be continued for research and advocacy as well as animal management and welfare services. Could you please outline how these grants will be administered under the new arrangements?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is part of the new grants process. I think that is the Chief Minister's Department.

**DR FOSKEY:** No, I don't think so. I think that is your other department.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Page 316. Are you talking about the heritage trust now? Which funds are you talking about?

**DR FOSKEY:** Page 218 of BP3. Obviously there's not the detail, or I would not need to ask questions.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You want to know how these grants are going to be managed?

**DR FOSKEY:** Yes. At the moment they are discrete from the rest of the grants projects, there assumedly being peer assessment of the applications. I am just checking whether that will continue.

**Mr Hargreaves:** My understanding is that, instead of having a whole disparate range of grants across the whole of the ACT—whether they are multicultural grants, environmental grants, heritage grants or sports grants—they will be actually put into two different streams. This is no different from any other grants process in that perspective. The environment people will have input into it. Can I advise you to have a look at BP3, page 22, where you will see the information about streamlining community sector purchasing and grants. That should answer your question.

**DR FOSKEY:** Could you explain how the grants money will be divided between those four different categories on page 218?

**Mr Hargreaves:** They are based on the types of funding applications we get. It depends on the project.

**DR FOSKEY:** I apologise that I was not here if you explained this earlier, but I am interested in how the Office of Sustainability will work between two departments, when part of it is in the Chief Minister's Department and part of it is in TAMS.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is all coming into TAMS, isn't it?

**DR FOSKEY:** No, it is not. Will it remain as a discrete unit within TAMS?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No. The Office of Sustainability is coming across to be folded in, to make sure, as I said, that we take sustainability as part of our culture. Some officers will remain in the Chief Minister's Department to take carriage of what we call the first minister's responsibilities. "First minister" is a term that is used across the country about responsibilities, particularly things like water and energy. There will be a couple of people kept in there because, in fact, it is a COAG-driven issue.

**DR FOSKEY:** Is it, in fact, a downgrading of the area of sustainability which in the Chief Minister's Department implied a whole-of-government commitment to its being placed in one department? You keep telling me that this will inform all the work in your department, but I believe it was initially set up to inform the work across government.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I don't. I reject the notion that it is a downgrading of its importance. It is particularly important, in fact, that we stop having the Office of Sustainability regarded as an auditor and start involving them in the decision-making process so that it becomes culture in this town, whether we are talking about the sustainability of energy, whether we are talking about the sustainability of waste recycling, or whether we are talking about the sustainability aspects of the transport plan. All aspects of community life in this town have to be the whole concept of sustainability; it has to be a cultural change. I believe this is a positive way forward.

**MR SMYTH:** Part of the fire management unit is going off to the Chief Minister's Department.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Do you have something there that I don't have?

**MR SMYTH:** On page 315 it says, "Transfer Fire Management Unit to CMD."

**Mr Zissler:** It is a reconciliation for last year.

**MR SMYTH:** It is just a reconciliation of last year?

**Mr Zissler:** Correct.

**MR SMYTH:** So there are no officers left in CMD from the FMU?

**Mr Zissler:** No, none at all.

**MR SMYTH:** The other area would be the action plans. Page 308 states: "Implement identified activities arising from Action Plans for Threatened species". It just has the target as June 2006 and June 2007. How many activities are arising out of the action plans for the coming years, and what funding is allocated to ensure that this happens?

**Dr Cooper:** As you know, there are three key action plans that we have had—the riparian, the woodlands and the grasslands. There are some actions in there, yes, that require some dedicated funding, and the government actually has progressed that dedicated funding. For instance, you have your threatened species recovery funding that

you see in the initiative, and we have ongoing funding in that category, as well as the new moneys that are coming in.

A lot of those plans are actually about informing ACTPLA when they undertake their actions, informing also some of the community, how they can go about their actions when they work with us in park care, river care and all those activities. It is not just money dedicated from one basket, it is actually, as the minister said, about sustainability; it is about creating the culture of thinking about that issue and integrating it as you undertake things. For instance, the Hall cemetery is a good example. The people there have worked with the environmental people to get a good outcome for the environment and it actually does not involve additional funding.

**MR SMYTH:** How many action plans are there now?

**Dr Cooper:** I would have to go and look. There are many, but you will recall that what we were trying to do in the last three major ones was bring together individual species. Instead of having an action plan for one species, we have actually brought it together to look at the whole ecosystem. The last three are the ones that I think will really drive the strategic direction.

**MR SMYTH:** But having three overall plans does not diminish the importance of the previous plans.

**Dr Cooper:** No, but what we have tended to do with a lot of those is drag them in, and they are linked.

**MR SMYTH:** Can you give us a breakdown on how that works—which plans fit into the three overarching plans and which plans do not? I am happy if it is taken on notice.

**Dr Cooper:** Certainly, yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Are any plans left out as orphans, as it were?

**Dr Cooper:** I will take that on board. I think there are a couple for some very good reasons, in terms of their species, that are affected.

**MR SMYTH:** Under the act, all of the action plans have to be reviewed on a regular basis. What is that time frame?

**Dr Cooper:** I will take that on notice too, if I may.

**MR SMYTH:** All right. Therefore, are all the plans currently being reviewed to meet that requirement of the act?

**Dr Cooper:** The flora and fauna committee have a rolling program. Sorry, the flora and fauna committee, as you know, is a statutory entity under the Nature Conservation Act. They have a rolling program, and I am sure Dr Shorthouse can provide that.

**MR SMYTH:** Perhaps this is for Mr Ottesen. In terms of the sustainability indicators, where are they? Whose responsibility are they now? Do they stay with the first minister

or do they come to the environment minister? How is their application being conducted throughout the ACT public service?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The responsibility flows to me. I will kick that off basically on 1 July, when the folding actually occurs.

**MR SMYTH:** Could we have an update from Mr Ottesen on where the indicators project is and what their application is likely to be?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, sure.

**MR SMYTH:** Is there a cost involved in the application of the indicators? How will we review them and in what time frame will that review take place?

**Mr Ottesen:** The government has produced the “towards sustainability” report. That was the first report which came out in 2004. The government at the time said it gave a commitment to doing another one, or doing reports at essentially every electoral cycle. We are into the newest electoral cycle and we have yet to commit resources and plans to look at what the next one should be.

**MR SMYTH:** How much did the plan from the previous electoral cycle cost?

**Mr Ottesen:** I could not tell you, off the top of my head.

**MR SMYTH:** Could you take that on notice?

**Mr Ottesen:** I can, yes.

**MR SMYTH:** How long did the previous one take to put together, and how many staff were involved?

**Mr Ottesen:** Again, I can give you an idea, but I cannot give you an accurate estimate. I could say that it took us 12 months or thereabouts. It might have been less. I think it took about three staff working on it, perhaps even fewer. For example, we had staff seconded to us from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, so that was a significant saving. When I am talking about three staff, it is probably in that. I am sure it cost us much less than \$100,000—much less. As I said, this was two years ago, so I am doing it off the top of my head.

**MR SMYTH:** Could you take it on notice and give us a definite answer? Minister, in that regard, is it the intention of the government to do another report on the sustainability indicators, their application and their effectiveness?

**Mr Hargreaves:** If the government has undertaken to do one in an election cycle then the government, as always, keeps its election promises.

**MR SMYTH:** We will see, on election promises. Mr Ottesen, what has been the uptake of commitment to the sustainability indicators across the ACT public service? Does it add a difficulty to your being stationed now in TAMS rather than in chief minister’s—in pushing that barrow, as it were?

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is inappropriate to ask Mr Ottesen the second half of your question. If you want to direct that question to me, I am happy to take it, but Mr Ottesen will answer the first half of your question only.

**MR SMYTH:** It is quite appropriate under the guidelines to ask public servants about application of policy.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is also my prerogative to direct it.

**MR SMYTH:** There you go.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have exercised my prerogative.

**MR SMYTH:** Whether we accept your prerogative is a different story.

**MR PRATT:** Noted.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You can do what you like. Knock yourself out, but I have just instructed Mr Ottesen which part of your question he can answer.

**MR PRATT:** I think, chair, we have noted—

**MR SMYTH:** What are you afraid Mr Ottesen will say?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will answer the question.

**THE CHAIR:** We have noted that. Mr Ottesen, do you understand the first part of the question?

**Mr Ottesen:** Yes, I do. Just for background, there were essentially two parts to the report. One was a report looking at indicators, which is a very traditional way of measuring sustainability and other things; the second part was an ecological footprint, and together they comprised the report. We distributed it throughout government to agencies and through shopfronts. The response has been really interesting, particularly on the ecological footprint. There has been a lot of interest in that. Yes, it is out there and people know about it.

**MR SMYTH:** When you say there has been a lot of interest, the interest has come from where?

**Mr Ottesen:** I think a wide variety of sources—from within government and from community, industry, academia and research sectors.

**MR SMYTH:** Minister?

**Mr Hargreaves:** All staff joining the family of territory and municipal services are going to have the most wonderful time and they are going to be very happy public servants.

**MR SMYTH:** That is the point exactly—territory and municipal services. How will you guarantee that all public servants in all departments have that same attitude and that education? That is the failing of moving what should be a central agency—sustainability—applicable to all agencies out of chief minister’s and into a line agency.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, you might like to say that. I don’t agree with you.

**MR SMYTH:** You have just given the answer that you are responsible for making sure everybody in TAMS—

**Mr Hargreaves:** My response in terms of other government agencies is that, just because a function is located in one department, that should not necessarily mean that the rest of government doesn’t get the benefit of the synergies which flow from that department.

**MR SMYTH:** That is inconsistent with the answer you gave where you said “all the staff in TAMS”. How will you ensure that all ACT public service staff have the same indoctrination that you have just said you will give to TAMS staff and, indeed, how will we get sustainability as a core value across all of the ACT public service?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We provide a range of whole-of-government services at the moment—property group is one, for example. When we start talking to other parts of other government agencies, disconnected from or not connected with territory and municipal services, we will be able to give them, in the context of sustainability, the benefit of the synergies that will flow. Your presumption is that for people to embrace sustainability, it would have to be directed by some person with a great white beard sitting on a flaming cloud. It does not work that way.

**MR SMYTH:** No, those are your words. I have never said that.

**Mr Hargreaves:** What we are talking about here is having a cultural change, having an attitudinal change, and the embracing of sustainability in the contemplative stage of decision making. That is what we apply our minds to inside the new department and outside it.

**MR SMYTH:** There has been a lot of contemplation inside the government but there has not been a whole lot of action. You are condemned by your own words. You said you would ensure that all TAMS staff had this indoctrination and adhered to the sustainability program that you will set.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Indeed.

**MR SMYTH:** My question is: how will you ensure that it happens across the ACT government?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, I did not say anything in my responses about TAMS staff to the exclusion of all others. I did not say that at all. Those are your words, particularly in the context of civil unions and stuff like that.

**MR SMYTH:** No. You said, “I will indoctrinate all TAMS staff.”

**THE CHAIR:** Minister, I think we will move on now.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I just don't think that question has any point to it, I am sorry. I don't understand it.

**MR SMYTH:** How will sustainability report—through which officers? How will they get to you and to the Chief Minister?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, we have conversations with the Chief Minister on a minister-to-minister basis. We also have—believe this or not—a cabinet process. That is an interesting one, is it not? We have cabinet memoranda and cabinet submissions that go there. That is one of the ways in which we do it.

Mr Zissler has also, on at least two or three occasions today, outlined the way the structure is going to work. The sustainability thrust of cultural change is an integral part of our departmental cultural change. It was, in fact, on a personal level, a regret of mine that when we changed the Department of Urban Services culture and structure we could not do it then. But we can do it now and it will get to bed.

**MR SMYTH:** Why couldn't you do it then?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Of course the wider department, the wider public service and the wider Canberra community will see and reap the benefits of this synergy.

**MR SMYTH:** You said, “When we changed the department's structure, we could not do it then.” Why couldn't you do it then?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Because at that stage of the game it was part of the Chief Minister's Department and his responsibility. He has now given it to me and I can now do it.

**MR SMYTH:** Again, by your own words, you can only change your department culture when you have the sustainability unit within your department.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I didn't say that.

**MR SMYTH:** Yes, you did. You just said it.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, I did not.

**MR SMYTH:** You said, “I could not change it then because it belonged to the Chief Minister.”

**Mr Hargreaves:** If you are going to quote me, at least get it right.

**MR SMYTH:** If you are going to backflip, you should do it with more grace.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Get it right. I said the “departmental structure” not the “departmental culture”.

**THE CHAIR:** We are going to stop the discussion about this now.

**MR SMYTH:** No commitment to sustainability at all.

**MR PRATT:** Mr Hargreaves, yesterday Actew expressed concern about the governance of the Cotter catchment in terms of the number of agencies involved. Which agency ultimately calls the shots on all forms of maintenance in the catchment area?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I was not here yesterday.

**MR SMYTH:** Dr Cooper was.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Maybe she was. Let me tell you, though, I answered the question earlier on today when I talked about the advice the government received from Professor Gary Jones. I don't propose to answer it again.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** My next question sits between environmental services and the office of the environment ranger services. If you go to page 298, output 1.7 is ranger services. It talks in the note there about the inclusion of city rangers and Domestic Animal Services being previously under Canberra Urban Parks and Places. But we have a group of rangers who were environmental rangers. I would imagine from this that they are going into ranger services. If that is the case, will their qualifications and employment structure stay the same?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Will they be the same as city rangers?

**Mr Hargreaves:** This is what we are hoping to achieve by the ranger services: putting it like this is bringing together a whole disparate group of people so that we can get greater than the sum of the past. Just attacking this 1.7 in the paper here, we have city rangers, Domestic Animal Services, we have the traffic camera office, Canberra Urban Parks and Places, and parking inspectors.

It seems to me that if we have all of these ranger services with specialties we are not getting the best value of out of them. For example, why should a parking inspector not be able to deliver an on-the-spot fine for littering? It does not make any sense to have a person who is a parking inspector walk past someone who is littering and not be able to do anything, apart from abuse them as an ordinary citizen.

Those are the sorts of synergies we are hoping to get when we bring these people together. What I am hoping to see, in fact, is their qualifications and their experiences enhanced by the additional things they can do as they go about their daily life. It is not that they will be expected to do them all the time, but it seems to me that this actually opens up more opportunities for people.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** I can understand that, but my understanding is that the qualifications currently for environmental rangers are a lot higher than they may be for city rangers.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. This one here is not environmental rangers.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** No; that is why I am putting the question in the middle.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We are not feeding them in.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** So they are going to stay?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes. The people out at Namadgi National Park, for example, are going to stay at the park.

**DR FOSKEY:** What is the relationship of the work the RSPCA does to the domestic animal welfare work that the government does?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Essentially we have a number of issues. We have the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, which oversees all the things that we and people like the RSPCA do. There are Domestic Animal Services people out at the pound. You will notice that it does not have cats out there. We actually have an arrangement and a relationship with the RSPCA to deal with injured birds, mammals, marsupials, macropods and other things like cats. The relationship is particularly strong between the two groups.

**DR FOSKEY:** I assume, then, that the RSPCA receives some money from the government to perform those services.

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

**DR FOSKEY:** How much this year?

**Dr Cooper:** This year it is about \$190,000, from memory.

**DR FOSKEY:** Would that be an increase or a decrease from last year?

**Dr Cooper:** No, they have a constant one. The government has entered into a three-year contract arrangement with them. They are in their middle year. It is around \$190K and it includes GST, the way it is funded.

**Mr Hargreaves:** You will not see it in the budget papers because it is built into the base.

**DR FOSKEY:** I have just noticed that Domestic Animal Services are having an open day on 1 July and will be showing off the RSPCA's animal ambulance. How much did the government contribute towards that ambulance?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will have to take that on notice. I don't think we contributed anything to it.

**DR FOSKEY:** No, I don't think so either.

**Mr Hargreaves:** If you already knew that, why did you ask me the question?

**DR FOSKEY:** I just wondered why you were showing it off at the open day. Will you

be trying it out, Mr Hargreaves?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Was that a trick question? It certainly was a good one. That is very clever, Dr Foskey. I am never going to underestimate you ever again.

**DR FOSKEY:** No. I believe the RSPCA is not funded adequately to do all the work it does. It no doubt saves the government quite a lot of money. I am just interested in that relationship. Clearly it is quite good.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is.

**DR FOSKEY:** But there are concerns about funding.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Such is life. This budget is all about bringing things back to national benchmarks.

**DR FOSKEY:** The work does not change.

**Mr Hargreaves:** And it is all about getting value for money and improved services. There is—and I think the Chief Minister said this—no part of government services or government expenditure that has escaped scrutiny.

**MR SMYTH:** Minister, did you read the RSPCA's submission to the government seeking funding for an increased range of services?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Can you explain why the RSPCA received no extra funding?

**Mr Hargreaves:** No.

**MR SMYTH:** You cannot or you will not?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will not.

**MR SMYTH:** Why will you not?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am not going to go to individual cases and individual grant applications. There are thousands of them of import to government and I am not going to go through them one at a time.

**MR SMYTH:** Is the government still anxious to move the RSPCA from its current site on the Cotter Road?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have not given that a moment's consideration. I have not received a submission on that possibility. So those two comments are my answer to you. I have not given it a second's thought.

**MR SMYTH:** My question was whether the government wanted them to move.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have not given it a second's thought.

**MR SMYTH:** When will you give it a second's thought?

**Mr Hargreaves:** When I see some writings on it in the fullness of time.

**MR SMYTH:** When is that likely to be?

**Mr Hargreaves:** In the fullness of time. I will not give you the Ted Quinlan response—soon—which means Friday. No—in the fullness of time.

**MR PRATT:** Minister, Mr Zissler, what is the likelihood of numbers of rangers now, 2006-07, versus the numbers we had on strength in 2005-06? I am talking about both municipality and ACT environment components.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I have missed the bottom end of the question?

**MR PRATT:** The numbers of rangers? What is the strength? What will be the figure this year versus the 2005-06 strength?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I think we have answered that sort of question in responses in the past. The whole of the department's service, every single bit of it, is going to be considered in this change process. Then we will answer your questions. We have not started the process yet. I do not know how many times I have to say that. Every time we open a page here I have to say the same thing. I think I will bring a tape recorder in next time.

**MR PRATT:** That is a bit disingenuous.

**Mr Hargreaves:** It is not disingenuous. I have answered the same question five times.

**MR SMYTH:** But your answers are unsatisfactory. You are about to appropriate all this money to us and you cannot tell us how it will be spent.

**MR PRATT:** Chair, this minister is the most blockading minister we have in this series of inquiries.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, I thank you, sir.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt, do you have another question?

**MR PRATT:** I do.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, go ahead.

**MR PRATT:** Do you intend to increase or will there be a net loss of ranger staff, given that ranger services in the city are pretty much on the shy side, in any case?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Ditto.

**THE CHAIR:** Do you have another question, Mr Smyth?

**MR PRATT:** You have no idea, have you?

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Smyth?

**MR PRATT:** He does not know anything.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Smyth?

**MR SMYTH:** What is the training budget for the cross-training of all the rangers, and what are the current ranger services that you intend all the rangers to be able to carry out?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We have a training budget within the context of the department. We apply those training funds to the imperatives determined from year to year. You would know that from the time you were a minister. We do not have a specific figure devoted to that, because the change process has not been finished yet. We will work out how much it will cost to effect those changes when we do the reviews. It depends on the individual person as well. We will see how we go.

**MR SMYTH:** But if you do not know what the individual needs—

**Mr Hargreaves:** We are going to do it within existing resources, Mr Smyth.

**MR SMYTH:** Minister, you are getting quite antsy.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No, not at all. I am just telling you because I have been struggling with ways to answer your questions the best I can and I am having terrible trouble. I do not know what you mean by the questions often. I just do not understand.

**MR SMYTH:** What is the base funding for training inside the new department of TAMS?

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will have to get back to you on that one. Remember that we have to take into account those instrumentalities that are coming forward and they are in separate spots.

**MR SMYTH:** But you have already taken them into account in formulating the budget.

**Mr Hargreaves:** No. For example, part of ACTION is even in a different segment of these budget papers; 1 July will come forward, so we will just take the question on notice, do the arithmetic and bring them together.

**MR SMYTH:** I am happy to take the answer now on TAMS and for ACTION. They are the only two divisions. That is the only division in your department.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Like I said, we will get back to you.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, we will take that question on notice.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We will get back to you within the time frame the committee requires.

**THE CHAIR:** That is fine. We will take it on notice. Now, we have finished with 1.7, is that right?

**MR PRATT:** Waste of bloody time anyway.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, see you.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt, please do not swear in the committee.

**MR PRATT:** I do apologise, Chair.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I accept your apology, Mr Pratt.

**MR PRATT:** I am not apologising to you, minister.

**THE CHAIR:** No, he is apologising to me.

**MR PRATT:** I am apologising to the Chair.

**THE CHAIR:** Thank you. The next output class is obviously the Office of the Commissioner for Environment. We do not have that officer with us.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Unfortunately for us, madam chair, the commissioner is in Mongolia somewhere.

**THE CHAIR:** Yes, I had heard that she was overseas.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Searching for some way of dealing sensibly with Mr Pratt. Unfortunately, I think she has gone a long way to try to find out how to do that, I have to tell you.

**THE CHAIR:** That was not necessary, minister.

**MR SMYTH:** Perhaps she went to Ulan Bator to escape sitting with you, minister.

**THE CHAIR:** I know we are all tired but I do not think that statement is necessary. Do members have questions on that office?

**MR SMYTH:** When does the commissioner return? Will she be back in time for recall?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I would not think so, no.

**MR SMYTH:** Well, could you confirm it?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I can confirm it for you now. I do not have a date, but I know it will not be in time for recall.

**THE CHAIR:** That is unfortunate, minister.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** I will put the questions on notice.

**THE CHAIR:** We will put the questions on notice.

**Mr Hargreaves:** We are quite happy for you to put those questions on notice and we will get the office to address them for you.

**THE CHAIR:** Okay, fine. The next one is ACT Public Cemeteries Authority, and I believe you have questions. Mr Smyth?

**MR SMYTH:** I do indeed. Minister, when a site is purchased in the public cemetery is it the responsibility of the owner of the site to maintain the headstone?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes, I think so.

**MR SMYTH:** When the person who owns the site, I guess you would call it—owns the plot—is himself deceased, who is responsible for the care and maintenance of headstones?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I thank you very much for that question because this is something a lot of the people in the community are not aware of. What we have at the cemetery trust is a thing called perpetual care trust. This is where there are no living people about—either locally or they have all croaked—to be able to maintain a particular gravesite. The cost of maintaining that is borne by the territory. Whilst I regret not being able to give you details on this, I have in progress at the moment a proposal to go to cabinet for a way of dealing with this. It is a liability of a number of millions of dollars.

**MR SMYTH:** Given that the authority collects money for this, how much money does it currently hold for these services when owners of plots are deceased?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not think there is any money for it. It is an unfunded liability, Mr Smyth. Therein lies the problem. If you buy one now, you are supposed to put money aside for that.

**MR SMYTH:** If I purchased a plot today for you, in expectation of your longevity, how much of that amount that I have paid for your plot, Mr Hargreaves, is put aside?

**Mr Hargreaves:** You are a generous man. I will have a mausoleum thanks.

**MR SMYTH:** All right, we will go the mausoleum. How much is put aside for the maintenance of that mausoleum when you are buried and I am long gone?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I will get you the information but can I also indicate to the committee that there are, shall we say, occupied plots out there where the payment to the trust was not made. In other words, it is too old. So now we as a territory have a responsibility. It

is the unfunded perpetual care liability. That is a significant figure. At the moment, if you buy a new plot we have that covered. If you buy one today for me, because you are a generous bloke, an amount of money will go into that. We will get you that information but you need to understand that that does not cover every single plot in the cemeteries at the moment. We have a lot of unfunded stuff there.

**MR SMYTH:** The perpetual care trust came into being in 2003 when we probably changed the Act?

**Mr Hargreaves:** That is dead right, yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Can I be told, just to be clear, exactly what the expected outstanding liability is?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** And how the government intends to deal with it?

**Mr Hargreaves:** I cannot tell you that at this stage because that is the subject of cabinet submission that I am taking to cabinet over the next few weeks.

**MR SMYTH:** I have been approached by a number of people who tend the graves of loved ones, particularly at the Woden Cemetery and particularly in the ex-servicemen's section, and who do the right thing and tend the graves and keep the headstones as best they can. Unfortunately, on a large number—and given World War II veterans' ages now average about 85 and there are no World War I veterans—of gravesites in the servicemen's section no lettering is left. The headstones are decaying and shabby, some are just stumps where they have been destroyed and removed, and there are missing headstones all over the place. Given the importance of honouring those who have died in the service of their country, what is it you intend to do to fix this problem?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Firstly, thanks very much for telling me about that. I was not aware of it before now, and we will take the matter up with the trust. I am very happy to do that. That sort of thing should not occur. It may very well be, and I speculate here, that the unfunded maintenance liability that we have there has contributed to that. I do not know. As I say, that is the sort of thing that is the subject of some options I am taking to cabinet in the next few weeks. People who, as I say, buy the plots now have a certain amount of money and put the maintenance into it. But from my position, and I am sure that of the community, it should not matter. The territory should bear the cost of maintaining those gravesites through the sale of the plots and investment of those funds, and all that sort of stuff. We should accept that and then find a way to pay for that liability. I accept that responsibility. I was not aware of what you said. I am now and we will do something about it.

**MR SMYTH:** I have a series of photos here that I will give to the Chair.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am very happy to take it on board.

**MR SMYTH:** In the photos of some of these headstones you can barely make out the carved emblem, the regimental insignia. Some of them are just decayed and the stone

itself is eroding. There is a row here that you can see in the picture where five or six of the stones have just totally disappeared. The individuals who have approached me have said that the grass is kept beautifully, so the groundsmen are doing a great job. The shrubs are tended and kept nicely, which is to their credit. There is also a flagpole, as there normally is in most military cemeteries, where the Australian flag would fly each day. The comment has been passed to me that many of these people have been to the cemetery and have never seen an Australian flag flying over her soldiers.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, I am not aware of that process.

**MR SMYTH:** Again, I bring it to your attention.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I am not aware of that as an accepted practice, but I am grateful for you pointing it out. We will take it on board and talk to the trust about that.

**MR SMYTH:** You will get back to us with an answer? At least if there is a flag in a nicely manicured shrub.

**Mr Hargreaves:** If the practice is that that is so, we will be talking to the trust about its reinstatement with all possible speed. If it is not normal practice some way, or that is our advice, we will be talking to them about whether it should be.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** Minister, I know we are just about out of time, but on the back of Mr Smyth's comment there on groundsmen, if you just go quickly to the statement of intent in section 4.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR GENTLEMAN:** It says there that there is a horticultural position for a first-year apprentice. I think that is a great concept. I want to know when a final decision will be made whether or not to put on that apprentice position.

**Mr Hargreaves:** I do not have an exact time on it for you. At this stage of the game all the things are in the mill—remembering too that the trust looks after its staffing process as an independent trust. It is not something that the department gets involved in. It is just when that process is finished, it is not a case of its being folded into our process. That is what you probably may have thought, but it is not so.

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt has the last question.

**MR PRATT:** The Tuggeranong cemetery plan, how much will it cost to establish?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The report in the newspaper was inaccurate, Mr Pratt. The true story is the following. The Land Development Agency has set aside that block for a period of five years and cabinet has given me 12 months to come forward with a proposal on how that would be effected. In that 12 months we will do the community consultation. We will do the investigations about cost effectiveness and all that sort of stuff. Then we will produce the submission to cabinet. Cabinet will make up its mind on that. I am looking at this with some confidence. The truth is we have the plot of land set aside for five years and I have 12 months to come up with a proposal.

**MR PRATT:** So at this point, because you do not have that proposal, you are unable to go public on determining that that will be the site?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Well, I cannot. The proposal will develop over the next 12 months. We have to talk to everybody. We have to talk to the cemeteries trust, for example, on its detailed thinking about that. We have to talk to the community at large. We have to talk to the community council. We have to talk to people in the neighbourhood. We have to talk to the general public around the town.

**MR PRATT:** Given Mr Corbell's predilection to move on with the busway, will it be ready in time to take your body?

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Pratt, that is not a serious question.

**Mr Hargreaves:** Mr Pratt, we intend to explore all options with cemetery including dual occupancy. I will be there with you, old son!

**THE CHAIR:** Mr Smyth, it is now 5 o'clock.

**MR SMYTH:** I have a quick question. I am happy for the minister to take it on notice. Can you outline the government's policy on the use of cardboard coffins in the ACT?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Yes.

**MR SMYTH:** Permission can be given by the chief medical officer. I understand it has and, in some cases, it has been denied.

**Mr Hargreaves:** That is right, and it is under review.

**MR SMYTH:** Will you let it happen? If you will let it happen where, when and how? If you will not let it happen, why not?

**Mr Hargreaves:** The issue about cardboard coffins is they have to get accredited. The information has not been fully provided. On top of that, these are for cremations, and crematorium permission has to be obtained before that. At the moment, the government intends to proceed no further. If the operator who wants to provide cardboard coffins wants to have those tests conducted it can do so. I cannot speak for the Norwood Park people, but I understand they are not all that keen at the moment. The test for these sorts of things has to be as close to real conditions as they can get. I am not convinced, from where I sit, that the furnace at Norwood Park can be built up to the degree Celsius that is required for the test.

**MR SMYTH:** A final point, and you might like to take this on notice. There was an article in this morning's or yesterday's *Canberra Times* about a technique in Sweden where they freeze-dry bodies. They allow the body to deteriorate into a dust. Apparently it is far more environmentally friendly than cremation. Are we considering allowing that in the ACT and, if so, when?

**Mr Hargreaves:** Only in winter time, Mr Smyth, definitely not in the summer time. Not in the summer time in a million month of Sundays. With regard to something Mr Gentleman was going to ask me, I have looked at the effectiveness indicators for client satisfaction of the cemetery, and from the residents' perspective I have had no negative comments from that quarter at all.

**The committee adjourned at 5.01 pm.**