



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT
AND CITY SERVICES**

(Reference: [Annual and financial reports 2015-2016](#))

Members:

MS S ORR (Chair)
MR S DOSZPOT (Deputy Chair)
MS T CHEYNE
MR M PARTON

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2017

Secretary to the committee:
Ms A Jongsma (Ph: 620 50435)

By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents, including requests for clarification of the transcript of evidence, relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly website.

APPEARANCES

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Privilege statement

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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 9.04 am.

Appearances:

Fitzharris, Ms Meegan, Minister for Health, Minister for Transport and City Services and Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research

Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

Ponton, Mr Ben, Acting Director-General

Corrigan, Mr Jim, Deputy Director-General, City Services

Edghill, Mr Duncan, Deputy Director-General, Transport Canberra

Hughes, Ms Cherie, Chief Operating Officer

Flanery Ms Fleur, Acting Executive Director, Infrastructure, Planning and Operations, City Services

Marshall, Mr Ken, Director, Roads ACT, City Services

McHugh, Mr Ben, Director, Capital Works, City Services

Trushell, Mr Michael, Director, ACT NOWaste, City Services

Ware, Mr Chris, General Manager, Yarralumla Nursery, City Services

Horne, Mr Hamish, Chief Executive Officer, Canberra Cemeteries, City Services

Elliott, Mr Gordon, Chief Financial Officer

McGlenn, Mr Ian, Director, Public Transport Operations, Transport Canberra

Sancbergs, Mr Steven, Director, Engineering, Light Rail, Transport Canberra

ACT Public Cemeteries Authority

Bartos, Mr Stephen, Deputy Chair

THE CHAIR: Good morning, everyone, and welcome to this public hearing of the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services inquiry into annual and financial reports 2015-16. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you, Minister Fitzharris, and your officials for attending today.

Today the committee will be examining the annual report of the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate, now known as Transport Canberra and City Services, for the 2015-16 reporting period. We will begin with Roads ACT, followed by ACTION. We will then move on to matters relating to information services, waste and recycling, regulatory services, Capital Linen and sustainable transport. Following that, we will look at land management matters concerning urban land management, design and development, and Yarralumla Nursery, before finishing with matters relating to the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority, the Animal Welfare Authority and the ACT Veterinary Surgeons Board. After lunch we will examine the annual report of the Capital Metro Agency.

Can I also draw everyone's attention to the privilege statement that is before you on the table, on the pink card. Could you and your officials confirm for the record that you understand the privilege implications of the statement?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, we do.

THE CHAIR: Can I also remind witnesses that the proceedings are being recorded

by Hansard for transcription purposes and are being webstreamed and broadcast live. Before we go to questions, minister, do you have an opening statement?

Ms Fitzharris: I do, thank you. Good morning, chair, committee members and visiting members. Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear before you today. As you know, the 2015-16 annual and financial report for the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate is the final report for the directorate under that name. I look forward to reporting back to you next on the achievements of the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate from 1 July 2016.

This morning I appear before you as the minister responsible for Transport and City Services, noting that I will reappear this afternoon as the minister responsible for light rail, reporting on the Capital Metro Agency to 30 June 2016. I would like to acknowledge that during the reporting period there were three previous ministers—Minister Rattenbury as the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister Gentleman as the Minister for Roads and Parking and Minister Corbell as the minister responsible for Capital Metro. I acknowledge their stewardship of the portfolios over the reporting period.

Last year I outlined the key priorities of the new directorate, but today we will report on how the directorate performed in the 2015-16 financial year. In that year TAMS, as it was then known—and some of us are still coming to terms with Transport Canberra and City Services, but TCCS is now well embedded in many conversations that we have—delivered a massive and diverse range of services to our community and across the city to contribute to Canberra's title of the world's most livable city. The list goes from road construction and maintenance to the management of our beautiful open spaces, the vast information provided by our library services, our public transport and active travel network, Capital Linen, cemeteries, and Yarralumla Nursery. And the list goes on. No other directorate impacts so many people across Canberra, no matter who you are, no matter where you live, on a daily basis.

The directorate delivered on its three strategic objectives which underpin the directorate's planning and service delivery functions, with four indicators to measure how well we performed against those objectives. The delivery of high-quality services was measured by how satisfied our customers were in the areas of libraries, roads, community paths, traffic lights and street signage, waste collection, parks and reserves and the ACTION bus network.

A great improvement was reported in the area of community engagement. TAMS demonstrated its commitment to meaningful community consultation through a range of engagement activities with the community, including forums, surveys, discussion groups, workshops and social media on relatively small and very large projects. We will look to extend this further in information provision and community engagement in this year as well.

The directorate continued to deliver and improve its world-class road networks and its public transport system. The planning, building and maintenance of many of Canberra's infrastructure assets, such as roads, bridges, cycling and community paths and the streetlight network, are testament to the work that TAMS has delivered.

As stated in the annual report, public transport initiatives play an important role in achieving the government's transport for Canberra and sustainability objectives. ACTION considers factors related to reliability, frequency of services, accessibility and comfort. With these in mind ACTION saw a patronage increase of more than 200,000 patrons in the 2014-15 year. That increase was largely as a result of the very popular red rapid and Xpresso services, as well as some welcome changes to weekend services.

Transport Canberra is continuing to innovate in its public transport service delivery, and the forthcoming integration of light rail will see this take even greater shape. The delivery of 20 new buses as part of the ongoing fleet replacement program will further enhance our public transport service delivery.

Improvements to the look and feel of our city were undertaken through regular mowing of over 4,500 hectares of urban land, nearly 10 tonnes of litter removal from our lakes and ponds in an effort to improve our waterways, weed spraying and removal, maintenance of our urban forest of about 760,000 trees and watering of around 20,000 young trees using water from urban lakes and ponds. Around 500 playgrounds, 21 skate parks, 41 basketball courts and nearly 160 pieces of fitness equipment were maintained with regular safety assessments to ensure our play spaces and equipment are fit for use and, most importantly, safe to play on.

There are challenges in providing these city services. As our city grows and as our climate changes, we focused very much in this year on addressing these. With responsibility for maintenance of over 23 million square metres of surfaced roads within the ACT, preventive maintenance is important in keeping our road networks connected and safe. In the reporting period TAMS delivered the largest resurfacing program to date, with one million square metres of resurfacing undertaken in the year.

In continuing this, TCCS is developing an approach to preventive maintenance of all its asset base, especially roads, community paths, stormwater, waste facilities and the urban forest, to ensure the future sustainability of Canberra's essential city infrastructure and minimise the future burden on the ACT budget. Importantly, this will also support community safety and improve the customer and community experience.

Lake cleaning and graffiti prevention, as well as the cleaning of shopping centres, roadsides and public toilets, are all part of the services the directorate manages and continues to manage in the city services stream of the new directorate. The collection of rubbish from over 6.8 million households was undertaken, with an additional 3.4 million household recycling collections. Nearly 110,000 tonnes of material was collected, with more than 35,000 tonnes of that being recovered and recycled.

During 2015-16 the Mr Fluffy loose-fill asbestos eradication program contributed significantly to the increased amount of non-recoverable waste, but new initiatives aimed at much broader waste reduction saw the implementation of free e-waste recycling services, a mattress recycling service, bulky waste collections for our seniors and pensioners and free green waste disposal about to get underway. With the support of some fantastic local and social enterprises, these initiatives will evolve and expand over the coming years.

I would like to quickly touch on some of the achievements and highlights of the Capital Metro Agency, so that I do not need to make another opening statement, noting that this will be addressed this afternoon.

Having released its full business case on 31 October 2014, the agency was in full flight in 2015-16. Reference groups were established, providing opportunities for the community and business sectors to have their say on the delivery of the light rail project. Two respondents were short listed, with several workshops held. Environmental impacts of the project were explored and documented through the lodgement of an environmental impact statement. By October 2015 the development applications were lodged, detailing demolition and construction management, landscape management, the specifics of the light rail vehicles, utilities, roads and traffic arrangements, and site plans.

Business opportunities resulting from the light rail are already being maximised through the Canberra Business Chamber's business link program. This has seen great collaboration between government and industry, showing real benefits in job creation, high-profile development and the ACT economy more broadly.

On 1 February 2016 the preferred respondent to deliver stage 1 of light rail was announced, with the world-class Canberra Metro consortium committing to build stage 1 sooner and with a lower capital cost than estimated by the ACT government. May last year saw the contract and financial close, showing this government's commitment to the delivery of a light rail network befitting the world's most livable city.

Implementation is well underway. Just last night we presented to the Gungahlin Community Council about upcoming road and bus changes with the construction of light rail over the course of this year. It will be a very big year for the construction of light rail, particularly for those people living and travelling through the corridor.

Late last year I outlined the key strategic outcomes for the Transport Canberra and City Services portfolio: increased active travel and public transport patronage; improved delivery of essential city services; and the sustainability and livability of our public realm. I look forward to reporting on those initiatives, election commitments and parliamentary agreement items to achieve these strategic outcomes.

Finally, I want to pass on, certainly on my behalf and on behalf of the ACT government, an enormous thank you to the staff of TCCS, who I know have been part of significant change and reform over the last year. Their enthusiasm in the face of this change has been really welcome. I think there are enormous opportunities for them to contribute some of their great ideas as to how we deliver these essential services to the city and also to increase our investment and have some really innovative approaches, which the directorate is already doing really well.

I thank all the staff here today, particularly those preparing for annual reports, but all the staff in the directorate, who talk to Canberrans every day about a lot of services that I know the committee well understands are really important to the community. With that, I look forward to your questions.

THE CHAIR: I would like to start by asking you some questions on the Barton Highway roundabout.

Ms Fitzharris: The new intersection?

THE CHAIR: The new intersection, yes. It is obviously quite a big project in my electorate. Can you clarify for me why the traffic lights were chosen as the option to go forward with?

Ms Fitzharris: We have a number of people who can talk about this and we have spent a lot of time talking about this. This project was first designed some years ago. At the time I was a very active member of the Gungahlin Community Council, for example, and it was an idea about addressing congestion and particularly safety on what was then the Barton Highway roundabout.

There were significant consultations with the community council at the time, because it was identified as the most dangerous roundabout in the territory. There are a high number of crashes on there, including a high number of serious crashes, as well as increasing traffic travelling east-west from Gungahlin to Belconnen and coming into the city from New South Wales—noting, of course, that there is still no action on either the New South Wales government or the federal government's part to fix the Barton Highway where it sits in New South Wales, which I think locals in that area are very concerned about.

Certainly, with the increased traffic and the decreasing safety, it was important to find a solution for the roundabout. It was identified three or four years ago and detailed designed work was undertaken to decide the best, most cost-effective approach. On a number of occasions Roads ACT discussed with the community council the types of investment that the government could make in any given year. For example, there might be an investment in a new school in north Gungahlin which would cost \$30 million and the signalisation at that intersection would be at \$10 million, or in the shorter term there could have been a flyover, which I know has been discussed, either going east-west or north-south.

Some of our officials can talk to some of the constraints on that site. Certainly, the signalisation of the intersection was identified as one that would improve safety, improve traffic flow quite considerably and have a reasonable life span in terms of being able to cope with the capacity. That work was funded to be constructed, I believe, in the 2014-15 budget.

There were some difficulties getting the contract out the door and work underway. For example, I recently went to a meeting of all transport ministers across the country. One of the issues that were discussed about improving road safety and traffic flow was looking at signalising roundabouts. It has been very successful in the UK and also across Australia. Despite some early difficulties with people, as it was a significant change, there have been a lot of reports of people now finding that intersection flowing very well, increasing the ability of people to get out of Crace in the morning, because that was a big issue, and there have been significant improvements in the crash history. From what we can gather, there has been a 35 per cent reduction in

crashes just in the first two months, compared with averages over previous years.

Just last night, at the Gungahlin Community Council, a couple of people noted that they thought it was working extremely well, now that people understood how a signalised intersection works. There is a little bit of work to do on the William Slim Drive approach to the intersection, but that work should be completed in the next week or so, and there is also some landscaping work which we still need to do. Officials might be able to add a little bit more, or answer any specific questions.

THE CHAIR: Could you elaborate on some of the constraints of the site and why other options might not be as possible or feasible?

Mr McHugh: If we go back probably about five years, to 2011-12, when we started the feasibility study for this intersection upgrade, we looked at a range of upgrade opportunities. Everyone refers to a flyover as being the preferred outcome from the community's perspective. There are probably four or five different versions of a flyover, and we have many of those in Canberra already.

Each different version of a flyover requires different land space and land area to be designed and constructed. When you look at that particular location, the proximity of Ginninderra Creek, which runs to the west of the intersection, and the existing bridges on the Barton Highway across that provide a particular challenge in designing a flyover solution. With respect to a single point urban interchange, an example of one of those would be at Belconnen Way and Gungahlin Drive, where you have a big signalised intersection on the ground and then traffic travelling separated over the top of that. That is one example of a flyover but there are many others.

Free-flowing ramps, the old cloverleaf design of a highway flyover, require a much larger footprint as well. Each of those came with its own challenges. There is also a nature reserve on the north-western corner of the site, and if you wanted to provide free-flowing ramps you would encroach on that space. There is an existing hill on the Giralang corner, which again provides a physical constraint to any free-flowing ramp situations that really suit flyover conditions and give you the benefits of a flyover. When all of those things are brought together, there is a high level of infrastructure required to achieve the flyover benefits, and there are costs associated with those.

THE CHAIR: You mentioned that the final work should be done within the next week. Does that mean all works will be completed or is there some landscaping too? How long before everything is finalised and the building is done?

Mr McHugh: The work I am completing, the roadworks, line marking and signage, is due to be completed by the end of the coming weekend. Following that, there are a couple of weeks of grassing and landscaping. Obviously they need to wait until the civil works are complete before they can complete those works. So there are another couple of weeks of work off the road. It will not have any impact on traffic movements following this weekend.

THE CHAIR: Is there any other information you can give us on the duplication of the feeder roads, or other works that you might be doing to those feeder roads?

Ms Fitzharris: Certainly, we made commitments. Gundaroo Drive is currently being duplicated from Mirrabai to Gungahlin Drive. With a lot of the infrastructure work necessary for the next stage of that duplication from Gungahlin to Barton Highway, Labor made a commitment to that in the election, as well as to duplicate William Slim Drive for its full length—to get all those works underway in this term, particularly Gundaroo Drive, as soon as possible.

One important thing to note in this area is, of course, what happens with the CSIRO Ginninderra site development. That will have an enormous impact, unexpected until 18 months ago by the ACT government. There will be significant discussions with CSIRO and the commonwealth on their future plans and timing for the development of that site. That will have massive public infrastructure and public services provided by the ACT government.

That will have an enormous impact on the ACT government. I do not think we want to see a commonwealth enclave of residents living there. There is a lot of work to do with the CSIRO, who moved very quickly, in much quicker time frames than our planning processes would usually provide for, to have that zoned. I cannot recall the specific technical term for the zoning of that. We are keeping a close eye on that in terms of its impact on William Slim, Barton Highway and Kuringa Drive as well.

MR PARTON: I am assuming that the duplication of Gundaroo Drive is going to further aid those getting out of Crace; is that correct? Obviously the work that has gone on has made it a hell of a lot easier to get out of Crace, but there is still a bit of work to be done there; is that right?

Ms Fitzharris: There is future work also around Nudurr Drive, which has been in the planning documentation for some time and remains there. We did a piece of work in the last couple of years on a former asbestos site that had been used many years ago in the open space adjacent to that and identified no major future impact on constructing that Nudurr Drive extension. So, in terms of access and exit from Crace, that is a future road.

A number of Crace residents have asked about a road coming out at the top, on the Barton Highway. There are very mixed views in the Crace community, from my understanding, about having an access road up the top, because it was never planned and it might have a significant impact on the flow of Barton Highway. That is not in our thinking. Certainly the duplication of Gundaroo Drive to its full length, from Mirrabai all the way to Barton Highway, would significantly improve the flow of cars and, really importantly, of buses along that route, particularly with bus priority lanes at the major intersections.

MR PARTON: You spoke of a 35 per cent reduction in collisions in the first two months. What actual numbers are we talking about? How many collisions a month under the old and under the new?

Mr McHugh: It should be noted that the intersection has been operating for only two months. We would not generally compare crash stats over such a short period because you can have anomalies. Twelve months is probably our minimum reporting period. So these numbers should be considered in that context. There were nine reported

crashes in January and February at that intersection. On average, there were 14 crashes over the same period in the last five years. The number is nine in the last two months. The majority of those were in the queuing traffic on the approach to the intersection, which is reflected in the previous crashes as well. There have been only two crashes within the intersection itself.

MR COE: Has the commonwealth been in touch with the ACT government in any form, suggesting that a flyover is required on the Barton Highway?

Ms Fitzharris: Not at all to my knowledge, no—unless you know something that I do not.

MS CHEYNE: What was the total cost again and how would that have compared to a flyover?

Ms Fitzharris: The total cost was \$10 million. I should note it was actually funded by the Australian government as well. This project was funded by the Australian government. There were no detailed costings done of a flyover. Understandably, it is a significantly more expensive undertaking—up to three to five times as much. On my understanding, those were the early discussions, which were quite extensive, with the Gungahlin Community Council about their preferred option at the time.

As I think Ben was noting, there are going to be a lot of traffic lights in any flyover. I know that there was a lot of criticism about the number of traffic lights. If you think about the Belconnen Way-Gungahlin Drive flyover, yes, it does flow freely one way, but there are still a significant number of traffic lights to enable safety and flow onto the Belconnen Way intersection. So a flyover is not—

MS CHEYNE: It is similar with Kings Avenue.

Ms Fitzharris: Kings Avenue, yes, and Barton Highway and Gungahlin Drive.

MS CHEYNE: I have some questions about road maintenance. Minister, in your opening statement you mentioned that Roads ACT approaches it from the perspective of preventative maintenance. Can you explain what preventative maintenance is and how it works in some detail?

Ms Fitzharris: I will invite Ken Marshall to speak to this. He will give you a very good explanation. I recall asking the same question, sitting on your side of the table, a couple of years ago, and it is fascinating.

Mr Marshall: In relation to pavements, the maintenance regime is predominantly preventative. Our most significant intervention in that is resealing. Essentially, the process is that on a three-year cycle all roads in the territory are closely examined. In the case of the arterial road network, that is done by truck-mounted mechanised testing instruments. They test for indicator condition attributes: cracking, rutting, surface texture and skid resistance. In the case of municipal roads, the same data is collected visually by our own in-house engineering staff.

That data goes into computer-based engineering modelling that projects forward in

time to predict the rate of deterioration of the road surface. That work is done by the Australian Road Research Board on our behalf. On that basis, the modelling software generates an optimum program of intervention, the idea being that we want to apply a treatment before the deterioration of the surface is such that the structure underneath starts to be compromised. Essentially, it is analogous to painting your house. The idea is to keep the weather out.

The bitumen in binders on road surfaces is degraded mostly by UV light. The idea is to get to those roads just before that deterioration starts to expose the structure underneath to damage and to protect the surface with a new coating. That is optimised across the whole network to give the best possible outcome in terms of extension of life of the network as a whole. It does not necessarily target the worst roads first. Very often people's reaction to resealing is to say, "Why did you do this? There was nothing wrong with the road." That is largely the point—that we want to get there before there is structural damage.

MS CHEYNE: Sometimes the question is raised with me: why we are using chip seal in some places and asphalt in others? Are you able to explain why that is and what the benefits are in different areas, if there are any?

Mr Marshall: Yes. The intent of the two treatments is quite different. Spray sealing is, as I described, a preventative treatment. That is essentially repainting to protect from damage from UV light. Asphalt is used predominantly as a corrective treatment. Predominantly that is used where there has been structural damage, so the road is losing its shape or you have significant rutting or shoving. That is typically at major intersections.

MS CHEYNE: What did you just say? What are those two words?

Mr Marshall: Rutting or shoving.

MS CHEYNE: What are they?

Mr Marshall: Essentially, that is just defacement of the surface by wheel loads, by heavy vehicles. Heavy vehicles, when they are braking, will actually push the surface and cause defacements in the surface. So you get an uneven surface, which is potentially dangerous at intersections because it obviously impacts on the efficiency of braking of vehicles. Predominantly, asphalt is used at those major intersections where there are heavy traffic loadings and safety implications. It is typically used as a treatment that corrects damage rather than as a preventative treatment. There are some applications where we use a thin coat of asphalt as a resurfacing treatment, where there are particular reasons to do that, often around noise. In particularly noise sensitive environments we might use thin asphalt surfacing as a treatment that produces a low texture surface and low traffic noise generation.

MS CHEYNE: You mentioned that UV light is one of the major contributors to road deterioration; is that right? Is it the main one? We get quite a lot of reports after storms or a prolonged rainy period. What affects the quality of the roads?

Mr Marshall: The mechanism, typically, is that the bitumen in the road surfacing

gradually becomes harder and more brittle as it ages, and that is predominantly the action of UV light. As the surface becomes harder and more brittle, it will begin to crack and therefore does not serve its intended purpose to the same degree in that it lets water infiltrate the structural pavement underneath. The spray seal is essentially a protective coating on the surface, but underneath there is a constructed pavement, which provides the structural strength, the weight-bearing strength. If water penetrates through the surfacing as a result of, usually, cracking, that structural pavement underneath can be softened by the ingress of water. The pavement is then softer and you will begin to get distortion of the surface.

MS CHEYNE: Just recently, I think, Gungahlin Drive was resealed, or parts of it—at least where I travel on it—and it seemed that the road was resealed but not necessarily the cycle lanes. Is that because the road is deteriorating but the cycle lanes are actually good quality?

Mr Marshall: Potentially, there is a combination of reasons for that. Again, the resurfacing will be based on the condition assessment. Once cracking starts, it is obviously accelerated by wheel loading, so it will accelerate much more quickly in the traffic lanes than it will on the shoulder or an on-road cycling lane. It may well be the case—in fact, you would expect it to be—that the mechanisms by which deterioration happens will be accelerated in the traffic lanes and that it would technically require resurfacing earlier than the adjacent on-road cycling.

Other considerations are also taken into account in terms of useability. If, for example, the resurfacing that has been put on the traffic lanes has a relatively large aggregate, relatively large stone, that will produce quite a lot of surface texture, which is not desirable for cyclists. In some circumstances that factor of useability will also be taken into account.

MS CHEYNE: My final question is about printer cartridges. It is not necessarily in relation to 2015-16. I think I saw something about a trial. How does it work?

Mr Marshall: There are a range of innovations that we are continually working on in partnership with our contractors. Typically, there are two objectives. One is to intervene even earlier than the resurfacing treatments. There are a range of new and emerging treatments that give us the opportunity to intervene even earlier. So it is about earlier prevention and at lower cost. The second objective is to become more sustainable by reusing waste products and toner cartridges.

MS CHEYNE: How does a printer cartridge become a road re-sealant?

Mr Marshall: They have similar chemical characteristics. The products are of similar origin. The toner can be recycled into the binder, effectively. It is chemically compatible with the production of the binder. It can be incorporated into the binder and that just replaces crude oil, basically. It does the same role. The bitumen binders are essentially an oil derivative. The chemical content in the toner cartridge can do the same job, basically, in the manufacture of the binder. We also use recycled rubber. It has a slightly different function. It is reusing otherwise waste material, but it also enhances the characteristics of the binder by making it more flexible.

MS CHEYNE: Where are you sourcing the cartridges and the rubber from?

Mr Marshall: From the waste stream.

MS CHEYNE: Within the ACT? So you are diverting it?

Mr Marshall: Yes.

Ms Fitzharris: It is really very innovative. The Roads ACT team are always looking for opportunities to try something new. This is a really good example and it is great to see. People are curious about exactly how it works. It is quite remarkable what we can do with our waste streams.

THE CHAIR: You mentioned UV light and cracks and water penetration. Those usually lead to potholes. Once you become aware of a pothole, how long is it before you are able to fix it?

Mr Marshall: Typically in the first day or two.

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, my question to you is in relation to pages 20 to 22, regarding roads. What is the status of the backlog of resurfacing works throughout the territory, as referenced on page 21?

Ms Fitzharris: You will see in this report that we reached our five per cent target for resurfacing this year. That was because of some commonwealth funds made available through a one-off grant. There is always a list of jobs to do, but that priority list is modelled on some very sophisticated information and use of that information. I will let Ken talk to that.

Mr Marshall: You may not have been in the room a moment ago when I described a three-year cycle of condition assessment, which forms the basis of the generation each year of a resurfacing program. Roads ACT does not maintain a backlog, a list of outstanding sites, that is maintained over time and worked on progressively; rather, we continually reassess the condition of the road and we generate the best program each year, based on the current condition of the whole network. Essentially, every segment of road is considered for resealing every year and we select from the whole network the program that gives us optimised impact in terms of prolonging the life of the network as a whole.

MR DOSZPOT: The minister mentioned the prioritisation of a number of activities that you have. Could you name the top five priorities for road maintenance in areas?

Mr Marshall: In very broad terms, the three priorities are safety, serviceability and sustainability. Those three principles drive our decision-making about everything that we do in the program across the whole portfolio of infrastructure.

MR DOSZPOT: Did you mention safety in that?

Mr Marshall: I did.

MR DOSZPOT: In priorities, I was also referring to the geographical priorities, as to where you look at the various types of work that you have talked about.

Ms Fitzharris: There is, on the TCCS website, our program of road resurfacing, currently up for October 2016 to April this year. That is listed by region as well, for the resealing that will be undertaken. I think there is also on the website a monthly update of where it is going to be rolled out. So there is a daily road resealing schedule as well.

One of the challenges that we have in general is that works take place and there is a lot of information, because TCCS does a lot of work around the city. Suggestions on how to improve that are really welcome. That is something I am very interested in. We increasingly use the variable messaging signs on the side of the road to let people know where major works are coming up; we try to use media releases, social media and the website. I often remind myself that I could look at the website, as a lot of this information is provided. We can talk a little bit later about the mowing map that we have just put up. Not only do we provide information but we are looking at how we can provide it in a more user-friendly sense. Geospatial mapping of it is quite useful, which is what the mowing schedule now shows. That information is on the website for the current financial year, particularly up to next month.

MR COE: Does that mean there is no scheduled maintenance program for roads?

Ms Fitzharris: There is a scheduled maintenance program for roads. Resealing?

MR COE: No, I am not talking about publishing what the next three months is; I am talking about scheduled maintenance. What is the scheduled maintenance strategy for the road asset in the territory?

Mr Marshall: In terms of the resealing program, the resurfacing program, it is scheduled each year based on—

MR COE: I understand that, but with any other asset you will have a schedule of maintenance for a number of years, so that you will address, in effect, underlying maintenance issues, perhaps whether they are obvious or not. Roads, depending on the road surface type, do have a lifespan. Is there a structural problem with either the budget or with the target at five per cent, in that a road cannot be guaranteed to be maintained on a specific schedule and you simply have to go to the highest priority or the urgent rather than working off a schedule?

Ms Fitzharris: The three-year cycle that was just discussed, looking at that year by year, is exactly what you are asking about. In terms of the road asset as a whole, Labor announced during the campaign that we would undertake a road resealing blitz to make sure that we can do more. I know it has been a topic of discussion in this committee for some time, but the five per cent target has sat at around four per cent, I believe, for a little while, and we managed to achieve the five per cent in the last financial year. We are certainly looking at increasing our investment in that so that we can do more.

The age of the asset base across the city is different in different parts of the city. That

is very much taken into account; that is exactly why there is the three-year program that Ken spoke about. The prioritisation each year, which is available online, is exactly what you are asking about, I think, so I am not quite sure if there is anything else.

MR COE: If there is structured routine maintenance, you would not need a blitz, would you? If there is structured routine maintenance, it means there is an ongoing schedule—

Ms Fitzharris: We are adding to the overall—

MR COE: that in effect spells out when each road is going to be surfaced. You would have scheduled maintenance for air-conditioning units; you would have scheduled maintenance for all sorts of assets. I am just curious as to why you would have to do an assessment of all roads and respond to a situation rather than having a proactive campaign that says, “This road in 10 years time or in eight years time or in 12 years time,” whatever the actual period is, “will get done according to a particular asset maintenance program.”

Ms Fitzharris: I think that is exactly what we have just been explaining.

Mr Ponton: In terms of the scheduled maintenance that you are talking about, Mr Coe, it is important that we do review that on an annual basis, because, as Mr Marshall was commenting earlier—and he might want to expand on this—it is often about the way the road is used or the particular conditions for the year. It may be that if you undertake maintenance of a particular road every three years, for example, and we did not go back, if there was a lot of rain in a particular region, for example, could start to deteriorate.

We need to make sure that we just do not blindly say, “It’s three years, so we will do this,” but that we are actually monitoring what is happening to each individual road in the territory, to ensure that there has not been an unexpected rapid decline of a particular road. That is why we look at that on an annual basis.

MR COE: Is this the same approach that departments of main roads or councils would use?

Mr Marshall: The approach is consistent with our peer road authorities. The scheduling based on a continuous monitoring of conditions is about optimising the net effect of the intervention. It is about getting the intervention at exactly the right time for each segment of road. In very broad terms, the targets are set on expected life of the surfacing. Four per cent in terms of municipal roads relates to a 25-year expected cycle of resurfacing for those roads. Similarly, in relation to the arterial roads, five per cent represents a 20-year expected life. That difference in life expectancy is around the different loadings that are on those road classes. Those are very broad indicative schedules for resurfacing. The actual timing is determined on condition, by very closely watching the deterioration of the road over its life to ensure that we do it at exactly the right time.

MR COE: Is there a tentative schedule beyond three years?

Mr Marshall: There is not, because the program is generated every year based on all of the data across the whole road network. The data is refreshed continually. We monitor a third of the road network each year for those indicators of deterioration and the whole road network is modelled each year to generate the best program at that moment in time.

MR PARTON: Were the works listed under the black spot program in 2015-16 completed? I know the TCCS website indicates these works include Tuggeranong Parkway from Hindmarsh Drive to Sulwood Drive, Tuggeranong Parkway from Hindmarsh Drive to Cotter Road, Pialligo Avenue, Oaks Estate Road, Coulter Drive and Ginninderra Drive. Were they completed?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MR PARTON: What was the total cost of those works?

Ms Fitzharris: We might take that on notice and get that for you.

MR PARTON: Is that program operating in 2016-17? If it is, is it possible to list the sites where work is being undertaken in this financial year?

Ms Fitzharris: It is a commonwealth program.

Mr Marshall: Yes, the program continues. I do not have this year's sites at hand.

Ms Fitzharris: Are you asking about 2016-17 sites, the ones that are being funded through roads to recovery?

MR PARTON: Yes.

Ms Fitzharris: They have been identified and we will be able to get that for you.

MR COE: I have a question about a governance issue. I may be better off asking it later in one of the other areas, but I am curious about what is being done to recover the missing radios out of TAMS and what threat or risk to the community those missing radios pose?

Mr Ponton: I can start. Thank you for the question. I might ask Mr Corrigan to also comment. In relation to the small and attractive items, in the last 12 months we have been doing considerable work in our governance area to ensure that we have better systems in place. I am pleased to say that in relation to potential fraud within the directorate, with the internal auditing program, more than 50 per cent of that program now relates to potential fraud or governance-related matters. In relation to the particular question about recovery of lost items, I might ask Mr Corrigan or Ms Flanery to comment.

Mr Corrigan: Those missing radios from last year were the property of the parks and conservation service, so they have been following that through. I cannot comment any more as to where they are at. In terms of risk to the community, I might ask Fleur

Flanery to elaborate, but they were the property of another directorate.

Ms Flanery: It is my understanding, through a conversation with the director of parks and cons, that the majority of the radios have been found. It related to issues at parks and cons depots. As I understand it, they were audited one time and then there was a process of recovery and re-auditing, in which case they found the majority of the radios. I think the specific answer will have to be directed to them.

MR COE: With regard to issues of fraud or theft and the small and attractive items register and associated issues, Mr Ponton, you mentioned some internal audit practices.

Mr Ponton: Yes.

MR COE: What has been the catalyst or the motivator for focusing on this particular area?

Mr Ponton: Following the line of questioning for the estimates hearing last year, as the acting director-general at that time that caused me to go back to my governance team and ask that we have a greater focus on fraud and corruption. In relation to overall fraud and corruption, we have had seven reported cases of suspected fraudulent activities, so I would not say that this is an issue that is rife. But given that there was a line of questioning on the particular issue, regardless of that total number, it is always a concern to me that there are suggestions that there might be potential fraud and corruption within the organisation. And given that we did not have very clear answers on the day this time last year, it was important for me to make sure that we did have the audit program satisfactory in relation to those particular issues.

MR COE: Beyond that, it was dismissed, in effect, by the agency last June, and I—

Ms Fitzharris: I do not believe it was dismissed.

MR COE: In effect, there was a dismissive tone throughout that discussion, and the transcript is pretty indicative of that. And then again in the *Canberra Times* and—

Ms Fitzharris: There was a fairly accusatory tone as well.

MR COE: And it turned out to be correct, didn't it, minister?

Ms Fitzharris: No.

Mr Ponton: No.

MR COE: No? You said that—

Mr Ponton: No. In relation to those—

MR COE: So do we have seven instances of fraud or not?

Mr Ponton: No.

Ms Fitzharris: Again, I think I would say, if you—

MR COE: No, we do not?

Mr Ponton: No.

Ms Fitzharris: Mr Coe, once again, if you have allegations of fraudulent or criminal behaviour—

MR COE: I made the link last year about the radios.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, and we responded to those, and there was a further follow-up, as you are aware. I would encourage you, if you do have it, not to wait for an opportunity to grandstand in a committee hearing: report it to the authorities; report it to me as the responsible minister. Once again, you take the opportunity to grandstand in a committee hearing.

MR COE: It was obviously very productive. As a result of the questions, an internal audit schedule was developed.

Ms Fitzharris: And that is entirely what the committee's purpose is, to ask questions which—

MR COE: So we are kicking goals, which is good news.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, but since then, since June last year, if you have had further concerns, I would encourage you to deal with—

MR COE: They are the same concerns.

Ms Fitzharris: It has been since June last year. You subsequently had a number of inquiries through the questions on notice process, I believe. Again, if there are—

MR COE: This is the first committee hearing since then, I might add.

Ms Fitzharris: That is right, but I do think that if you have allegations of fraudulent or criminal activity there are other avenues for you to pursue in reporting those, for example, to the Australian Federal Police. But you choose not to.

MR COE: What is the purpose of this process if it is not for asking questions about governance arrangements in the directorate?

Ms Fitzharris: It certainly is that as well, but, again, if there are allegations of criminal activity, which is what you are alleging, there are other avenues for you to follow in the interim.

MR COE: Sure.

Mr Ponton: What I can say in relation to those seven reported cases of suspected

fraudulent activity is that two cases were determined to be the responsibility of another directorate. That left five for this directorate to investigate.

We have a senior executive responsible for business integrity and risk, the SERBIR, and matters such as this are referred to the SERBIR for essentially an independent review and investigation if that is determined to be warranted. Of those five cases that were reviewed by the SERBIR, it was found that two cases had insufficient evidence to proceed to a formal investigation. One case is currently being reviewed and two cases saw one employee resign and another receive a sanction. But, given the number of employees that the organisation has or had during the reporting period, overall I would not say that that would be a suggestion that we have a problem within the organisation. It shows that our systems, I would argue, are working.

In relation to your particular point, Mr Coe, as the acting-director general it would have been remiss of me, given the line of questioning, not to go back to my organisation and review what we had in place. I am confident, first of all, that the audit program is comprehensive and has been over a number of years. But it has been further enhanced in response to that line of questioning. So the committee has been of assistance in that regard. It is not saying that we have a problem. I think what I have just argued or the evidence that I have just provided would suggest that we do not have a problem. But it is prudent for the director-general to ensure that we continue and not become complacent and that we have good processes in place.

MR COE: What particular area of investigation or inquiry has the internal audit committee focused on?

Mr Ponton: I might ask Ms Hughes to come to the table. She is our executive responsible for the audit program.

Ms Hughes: The audit program going forward, Mr Coe, for the next 12 to 18 months, which is what we have just finalised, has included in it a review of procurement across 80 per cent, I would say, of our organisation. We have recently completed one looking at our roads area and our trees, with regard to procurement, particularly in emergency procurement situations. Going forward, we are doing a broader review of more of city services, in my area as well, under the chief operating officer, and of Transport Canberra as well.

MR COE: And with regard to the small and attractive items Mr Ponton mentioned? What has been the specific area, or has that been a feature of each of the inquiries?

Ms Hughes: It will be captured. Each of the inquiries is picking up basic procurements, everything that is under \$25,000, but also simple procurement from \$25,000 up to \$200,000. Each of the portable and attractive items is on a register that is maintained by each of the business units, so that will form part of the review.

MR COE: Has the review of the particular inquiries been related to the procurement exclusively or also to the maintenance, retention and practices involved with holding those assets?

Ms Hughes: Currently the program is looking only at the procurement and whether

they are put onto the register and where they are held. We are not going through to the maintenance of them. The process through which we dispose of them is not identified in the procurement process either. It is literally looking at the procurement and where they are held.

MR COE: What investigations or what improvements have been made with regard to how you retain, how you manage and how you keep track of small and attractive items, other than just putting them on a register?

Ms Hughes: With the audit that you are talking about, which was conducted 18 months ago, some of the significant challenges were found within our parks and conservation area, which was part of TCCS at the time. That part and those recommendations that came out of that audit were handed over to EPSD when that was transferred on 1 July last year. They are working, as Ms Flanery said, on making sure those recommendations are being incorporated. On the transport side of the business, and certainly the city services part of the business, there was not a finding or a recommendation put in place or an issue identified for our part of the business.

MS CHEYNE: A lot of this discussion has focused on what happened after the problem was identified. Mr Ponton or Ms Hughes, what is done within the directorate on prevention measures or raising awareness, fraud awareness or security awareness?

Mr Ponton: I might comment prior to Ms Hughes, who might want to add something. In 2015-16, 143 staff received instruction on identifying and reporting suspected fraud and corruption. That program continues into the current financial year and will continue into the outyears. We have a very strong focus on ensuring that our staff are well trained in identifying what could potentially be fraud and corruption and the processes involved in reporting that. We certainly encourage our staff to watch for this sort of activity.

I would just comment also that I have been advised, Mr Coe, in relation to the portable radios issue, that that matter was investigated and it was deemed not to be fraud but, rather, poor procedures in auditing and accounting for the radios. I understand that work has been done by our colleagues in the parks and conservation service to respond to that particular finding.

Ms Fitzharris: Could I just add something briefly before Ms Hughes speaks. Audit programs have a number of purposes, but some of them are a bit of a check on some of the processes and procedures, so to the extent that there are audits undertaken, that is routine good governance. There are both internal audits done by each directorate—and the audit committee has an external chair—and audits done by the ACT Auditor-General that will find ways to improve processes as well as identifying any more serious behaviours or processes which are not robust enough. There is a whole range of different opportunities that come to us to improve our processes through the audit process.

Ms Hughes: In addition, in response to your initial question about training, we have a very thorough induction process for people coming into our directorate. It is over a whole day when they come in, and they are spoken to by a number of different executives. A large component of that is talking about fraud and also our respect,

equity and diversity whole-of-government framework. They are given details of who the right people are to go to. There are a number of contacts within our organisation if they have something that they are concerned about in either of those parts of the business, and we follow up on those pretty quickly, I have to say.

MS CHEYNE: Do you do refresher programs as well as induction?

Ms Hughes: We do, yes. We also have a program of going out with all the staff, messages, and also promoting people such as the SERBIR and explaining what their roles and responsibilities are.

MR DOSZPOT: One of you—sorry, I cannot recall who—gave an answer to one of Mr Coe’s questions regarding what has happened to staff who were involved in the alleged activities. I think the answer was that one staff member is no longer with the department. Is that correct?

Mr Ponton: That is right. Yes, that is correct.

MR DOSZPOT: On what basis is that staff member no longer there?

Mr Ponton: That would be as a result of the findings of the particular investigation.

MR DOSZPOT: Is there any further activity to be pursued with that former member of staff?

Mr Ponton: I might have to take that on notice.

MR DOSZPOT: Sorry?

Mr Ponton: I will take that on notice and get the detail on that.

MR DOSZPOT: Okay. Were any other members of staff reprimanded?

Mr Ponton: As I understand, in relation to that particular instance, no. Sorry, there was one employee who resigned and one employee received a sanction, so two employees in relation to the one matter.

MR DOSZPOT: Is a sanction part of a warning or is that—

Mr Ponton: It can be a warning, Mr Doszpot. It can be a range of things. It can include reduced pay for a period of time or permanently. A range of sanctions are available to us under the Public Sector Management Act.

MR DOSZPOT: Going back to my original question that you are taking on notice, has there been any referral to police?

Mr Ponton: I would need to take that on notice. It was prior to my time. I just need to check the record.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you.

MR PARTON: Mr Ponton, you suggested that a total of 143 employees were involved in a fraud and ethics awareness program. I just want clarification here. I am assuming what you mean is that 132 of the new employees received fraud and ethics awareness as a part of their induction training, but just 11 of the ongoing workforce participated in the fraud and ethics awareness program. Is that how the numbers break down?

Mr Ponton: My understanding is that 143 existing staff undertook training in relation to fraud and corruption awareness, but I can clarify that and come back to you, unless Ms Hughes has the answer.

Mr Hughes: No, I do not.

MR PARTON: Thank you.

MS LE COUTEUR: I go to page 20 of the report. It relates specifically to budget commitments for expenditure in Woden town centre, which will probably not surprise you. In 2015 there was funding for the design of active travel upgrades in the town centre and now there is funding for construction. What work has been done and what is still to come?

Ms Fitzharris: Mr McHugh will be able to answer that, but there are a number of projects. I do not have the names of the streets at the forefront of my mind, but certainly the connection between—

MS LE COUTEUR: Yes, sure. I have seen a few signs, but I am hoping there is more to come.

Ms Fitzharris: There is some more to come. There is the link between the Canberra Hospital, the Canberra Centre and Woden town centre. The government collectively is doing a lot of thinking about the town centres, including Woden town centre, given that there will be a significant renewal and further investment nearby through the Canberra Hospital campus, as well as stage two of light rail.

Mr McHugh: Active travel projects in and around the Woden town centre include recently completed upgrades to the connection between the hospital and the town centre. That included new paths, new lighting, some way-finding signage and a better amenity and connection between the two facilities. In this current financial year we are delivering a million dollars worth of upgrades on active travel facilities. The first stage of that—

MS LE COUTEUR: That is a million in Woden?

Mr McHugh: In Woden town centre. The first stage of that was completed last month on Easty Street.

MS LE COUTEUR: There is a new footpath.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, that is the one I was talking about.

Mr McHugh: The second stage, which is about to start construction, is a new dedicated cycle facility on Matilda Street and Callum Street. Those works are about to begin. That will conclude the works in the town centre for this financial year.

MS LE COUTEUR: Is there anything planned after this, for next financial year? My understanding was that quite a lot of work was done on identifying problems. There are a lot of problems in the town centre area. It is not an attractive place to walk around. Is there more work scheduled, planned?

Mr McHugh: Correct. In 2014-15 we completed a feasibility study looking at what the active travel network for the town centre might look like in the future. To date, we have secured \$1 million for the stage one priority works and there are plans for further works in future years.

Ms Fitzharris: There was also significant work done—and, forgive me, I forget through which directorate—around the bus interchange and the stairs up to the square.

Mr McHugh: Yes, and a new lift. That was undertaken by the Economic Development Directorate.

MS LE COUTEUR: My next question is about the bus interchange. That is not your portfolio?

Ms Fitzharris: No, that is not us.

MS LE COUTEUR: I need to ask. Economic Development have already been questioned.

Ms Fitzharris: We can take it on notice and it will be redirected to Economic Development.

MS LE COUTEUR: Maybe I should go straight to Economic Development.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MS LE COUTEUR: Are there any other active transport works planned in the Woden area, apart from what we have been talking about?

Mr McHugh: The feasibility study did identify a range of works over time. They are looking at dedicated cycle facilities to link the key active areas around the centre, not too dissimilar to the Civic cycle loop, I guess. The first stage of that is being delivered this year on Matilda Street, and future stages will be considered in future years.

MS LE COUTEUR: Is anything being done on the Hindmarsh Drive and Melrose Drive intersection, which is, as you would be aware, six lanes? There are three on each side, so it is six lanes in total. It is a huge intersection.

Mr McHugh: From a pedestrian perspective?

MS LE COUTEUR: From a pedestrian or cycling perspective, but particularly pedestrian, because it is a fairly—

Ms Fitzharris: Long walk, yes.

MS LE COUTEUR: It is a major obstacle. You look at it and you think, “No.” You cannot cross each side in one go with the lights; you have to stop in the middle. It is very pedestrian unfriendly.

Mr McHugh: Some work was completed there about three years ago to adjust the pedestrian facilities on each of those long legs. The work was intended to reduce the waiting times for pedestrians on the crossings and it did stage the crossing. You have the dogleg now in the median, and that is to help with the sequencing and phasing of the signals, to reduce the waiting times for pedestrians.

MS LE COUTEUR: No more thoughts, I imagine, of making it—

Mr McHugh: No other plans at this stage.

MS LE COUTEUR: What should members of the public do if they would like to see a pedestrian crossing in a new location? I have had a few comments about pedestrian crossings. Should they write to you?

Ms Fitzharris: You are welcome to write to me. Requests for pedestrian crossings are assessed very frequently. They look at a range of different factors: assessing whether it is safe, in particular, but also whether the installation of a pedestrian crossing at a particular point is warranted or whether it should be at another point. Sometimes it is not the most obvious point that the member of the public might consider it to be, so Roads ACT or the TCCS will undertake a number of different studies to look at that location to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety.

THE CHAIR: Okay. I have a supplementary on active transport. I am interested to know how many kilometres of the cycle network were upgraded in 2015, particularly taking into consideration on-road and off-road upgrades.

Ms Fitzharris: How many?

THE CHAIR: How many kilometres.

Ms Fitzharris: Kilometres, yes. There is a specific number in here.

Mr McHugh: There is a KPI, yes. I do not have the number at hand, but there is a KPI that reports that.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes. A range of different parts of the network were updated. Certainly in the construction of new roads, cycling, walking and active travel facilities are really important, but we also have that program through roads building. We have major off-road paths. Most notably, the first one that comes to mind is Sullivans Creek. There has been a significant upgrade to that. It is a fantastic piece of new infrastructure heading down the western side of Northbourne Avenue, a very wide

path that is nearly completed. We also have the active streets for schools program that has been installed already at four schools in the Belconnen region and is rolling out to another 20, with the commitment to roll it out even further over the course of this term. As well, there are footpath and improvements across the territory in a number of different locations. Mr Marshall might be able to talk in more detail.

Mr Marshall: The figures reported for increased length of community paths and on-road cycle lanes were: 61 kilometres for community paths and 55 kilometres for on-road cycling.

MS LE COUTEUR: Could you give me the page reference? It would be easier. You said it was in here.

Ms Fitzharris: The other program—and I am not sure if it is picked up within that—is the age-friendly suburbs program. Although it may not be considered an active travel program for some members of the community, it is very much considered to be a program that is really successful. COTA, the Council on the Ageing, were very involved in working with the directorate to consult with local communities on the sorts of upgrades they would like to see. I know, having attending a few of the community consultations, both the one in Kaleen and part of one in Ainslie, there was a very active group of older people looking at maps and identifying where they found it really difficult to walk safely or with ease around their local suburb.

What we found in that piece of work was that, if it was going to work well for an older member of our community it was going to work really well for small children and that meant it was going to work really well for everyone walking and cycling around. My understanding from COTA's report was that the only difference that older members of the community would like to have seen in suburb improvements was a few more benches, and they quite self-deprecatingly said a few more toilets too.

MS LE COUTEUR: Can I ask a supplementary on footpath repair. We have talked a lot about road repair.

Ms Fitzharris: It is a very important part of the program.

MS LE COUTEUR: There are quite a few footpaths which are dodgy, to be polite about them. What program do you have for them? I am aware of some which have been a huge problem for five, six or seven years.

Ms Fitzharris: Also, different suburbs indicate different thinking about planning at the time. There may not have even been a footpath there in the first place.

MS LE COUTEUR: Absolutely, but those that are fortunate enough to have footpaths are not always the older suburbs and they are often in pretty poor repair.

Mr Marshall: The program for footpath repairs is in some ways similar to the approach that we have for road pavements, in that it is based on condition inspections. It is largely reactive, unlike pavements, so what we are looking for is existing defects rather than trying to predict deterioration. The mechanisms for defects to appear on paths are a little less predictable. There are tree roots, vehicle damage and a whole

range of mechanisms that are very difficult to predict, so largely the process is reactive.

There are a number of suburbs that are identified as higher risk because of the condition of their footpaths. The frequency of inspection regimes is based on that level of risk. There is a higher frequency of inspection where we know there is a higher risk of defects occurring, or where there are older paths and higher traffic precincts. The other source of information and intelligence on the condition of the path is the community. We receive a very large number of requests from the community for path maintenance, and each and every one of those is inspected, assessed and prioritised.

Where there is a safety risk, the response is based on the priority that is attached to that safety risk. Where the request does not involve a very significant safety concern, requests are retained in our asset management system and packaged into larger contracts of work that increase the efficiency with which the repairs can be delivered. In those circumstances, there can be quite a long waiting period until we are able to schedule a program of work out of that database in a geographical location that can be done efficiently by a single contractor.

Ms Fitzharris: Sorry, it is page 72 in the annual report.

MS LE COUTEUR: Thank you.

Ms Fitzharris: The increase in length of on-road cycle lanes was 55 kilometres in 2015-16 and it was 61 kilometres in community paths.

THE CHAIR: Mr Doszpot, you have a supplementary?

MR DOSZPOT: Yes, I have a supplementary regarding cyclepaths in general. This question may not be part of your concern, but I would like your reaction to it. I have heard concerns from constituents who have either been riding bicycles on cyclepaths and—

Ms Fitzharris: Conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

MR DOSZPOT: Partly, but the other issue is that there have been a couple of major accidents where dogs were not on the leash and serious physical injuries were sustained by cyclists. Would that be under a different area or would you be party to the discussions on how to fix those issues?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, certainly. I know Minister Rattenbury has a strong interest in road safety and vulnerable road users on off-road paths. Next week we have the first Canberra Walk and Ride Week. I hope I have not got the name of it wrong. There is an opportunity in that week to talk about everyone using our roads and our footpaths and our cyclepaths responsibly. That does include dog ownership as well. A separate conversation that we are very keen to have with the community is about responsible pet ownership. I have experienced it myself on a cyclepath, with dogs off leash running out in front of me. There was the incident at Lake Tuggeranong, where, sadly, a woman lost her dog because a cyclist ran over it.

At a fundamental level, I think everyone wants to live in a community. We have to all encourage people to be responsible members of the community. The government can encourage that and then look at regulation, investment and legislation if we have to, to help with that. If everyone is considerate about sharing our public spaces—which are of very high quality, and people love to use them—then the government can play a small role in that, but so can leaders in our community, schools and workplaces.

MR DOSZPOT: My question is specifically about a serious injury that incapacitated someone on a permanent basis. A dog jumped at a cyclist, and that person is now disabled for the rest of his life. What efforts can be made to prevent that? You have already touched on the fact that responsible ownership is part of the problem as well. I will probably bring this up in another part of the hearings, but just for the record could you think about that and let us know if there are any other collaborative measures that you are working on at the moment. That is my interest.

Ms Fitzharris: We can certainly talk about some of the work that was undertaken relating to on- and off-lead areas for dogs. Are you aware of whether the directorate knows about this incident? Did it happen to be reported to the directorate, through DAS?

MR DOSZPOT: I should imagine the department would know about it, but I am not in a position to say, unless I talk to the constituent about it.

Ms Fitzharris: Do you know the location?

MR DOSZPOT: I believe it was near Yarralumla.

Ms Fitzharris: Mr Corrigan might be able to add a little more.

Mr Corrigan: Unfortunately, I am not familiar with that case, Mr Doszpot. When reports come in, we take them very seriously. We can get on to how we manage the welfare and dogs later on. I will go back to the issue that was raised about where we see conflict. From a physical asset management point of view, following the feedback on that unfortunate incident in Tuggeranong, with our active travel colleagues we are looking at a few key measures. Because of the physical design of some of the bike paths, we are looking at what we can do. We are aware that there is a higher potential for accidents to occur—even cyclists hitting cyclists and things like that. We are aware of those issues and we are looking at what we can do through our maintenance programs. It could be that there needs to be signage or that we need to do some physical intervention in addition to the education that the minister mentioned earlier.

MR DOSZPOT: I have to confess to riding a bit myself, without lycra, and I have concerns about safety issues, given the speed of cyclists. Anyway, that is a topic for another area.

Ms Fitzharris: We are looking into signage and the use of bells to address that, as has been mentioned. Next week is an opportunity to have that conversation. We want to encourage a lot of people to either ride or walk. We have also made a commitment to deliver a segregated bike path in and around the Belconnen town centre. I think there

is a real opportunity there to showcase what a fantastic town centre it is, with a growing number of people living there as well as working there and visiting the lake. We want to integrate it with the learn-to-ride centre that is going to be constructed at Lake Ginninderra. There is a real opportunity for us to encourage more people to cycle. I know Ms Cheyne is aware of a lot of older people who live in Belconnen town centre and want to be able to walk safely, but when someone wearing lycra whizzes past on a bike really fast they can find it really intimidating and feel unsafe.

MS CHEYNE: My question is not about the segregated bike paths. In the second last paragraph on page 20 the annual report talks about minor works being prepared to improve way-finding and connectivity between the town centre and the University of Canberra. I wanted to first clarify whether that is the same thing that is mentioned on page 273 as a physically complete project: the urban renewal program, Belconnen town centre improved cycling connections. I just wanted some information about that. I wonder if they are the same thing, whether they are complete, whether they are studies and where they are.

Ms Fitzharris: Given the amount of \$100,000 listed under the improved cycling connections, it will just be for design. We will get back to you on that. Maybe Mr McHugh can add something.

Mr McHugh: I can confirm that that was a feasibility study to look at the Belconnen town centre active travel network and it was completed last financial year. This is feeding into our thinking about what a network of active travel facilities would look like in the town centre and we are looking at preparing some business cases for consideration for government in future about how we might deliver those priorities.

MS CHEYNE: I suspect it might be the same answer for the west Belconnen to city cycling connections. That was also in the feasibility study?

Mr McHugh: Yes, it was included in that study; correct.

MS CHEYNE: Which route were you looking at for that? Would that be along Belconnen Way?

Mr McHugh: It would be along Kingsford Smith Drive. I will have to remind myself of the route. Yes, it was a direct connection between the Kippax group centre and the Belconnen town centre utilising some existing assets but also filling in some missing links in the shared path network. It was aligned with some previous work looking at public transport connectivity along the same corridor as well.

MS CHEYNE: That is great. Belconnen Way has quite a good path system that stops once you get to Page. Is that connectivity from Page to Kippax?

Mr McHugh: Yes. We can make the feasibility study findings available for you to have a look at.

MS CHEYNE: That would be fantastic, thank you.

Ms Fitzharris: Mr Parton, could I get back to you on your previous question about

the black spot sites for this current financial year?

MR PARTON: Yes.

Ms Fitzharris: Sternberg Crescent and Langdon Avenue; Belconnen Way and Benjamin Way; Kingsford Smith and Southern Cross Drive; and Sternberg Crescent and Ashley Drive.

MR PARTON: Excellent.

Ms Fitzharris: Two for you.

MR PARTON: Thank you for that. Can I get back to you now on something that you mentioned just a few moments ago?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MR PARTON: You suggested that you have concerns with the speeds that some cyclists are using on shared paths. I want to know what on earth you can do about policing that. I have a crazy idea for you.

Ms Fitzharris: Do you? Terrific. I did say that I have spoken to people who have concerns and who feel that the person coming past them is going too fast. I do not know whether or not they actually are. Let us know about your crazy idea.

MR PARTON: Every hardcore cyclist—

Ms Fitzharris: Of which you are one.

MR PARTON: is on Strava, and they have a digital record that is public showing how fast they have travelled and specifically where they have done it.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, I know. It is highly competitive, is it not?

MR PARTON: Yes, it is. Say, for argument's sake, on Commonwealth Avenue bridge there was a 10-kilometre per hour suggested speed. I do not understand how you could possibly police that unless there was someone standing there with a speed gun who was quick enough to catch them.

Ms Fitzharris: Do you go faster than that?

MR PARTON: On Commonwealth Avenue bridge? Of course not. I always comply with all the rules and regulations, but I note that some do not. I just do not understand how you could possibly police that.

Ms Fitzharris: I do not think we can.

MR PARTON: No.

Ms Fitzharris: But that does not mean we should not have guidance about people

sharing the road responsibly. For next week's Walk and Ride Week we will be launching a new app which will collect data about walking and cycling in particular. I do not think it connects with Strava. It might.

Mr McHugh: The data will be made available to other platforms.

MS CHEYNE: Including speed?

Mr McHugh: It will include the ability to track cyclists' speed. It is similar to Strava. Each second it records your GPS location and your route. That is highly useful to us from a network management perspective and a network planning perspective but also to other people for a whole range of different purposes.

Ms Fitzharris: So what is your idea?

MR PARTON: If you are getting to the point where you are trying to crack down on cyclists who you believe are riding at excessive speeds in those areas it is like when people get prosecuted for posting something on YouTube. The data is available for most cyclists on exactly how fast they have gone and where they have done it.

MS CHEYNE: But is it broken down into—

MR PARTON: It is pretty intensive in terms of the way that you can get on and—

MS CHEYNE: This is a follow-up on Commonwealth Avenue bridge. I was travelling at 25 kilometres an hour, but for the rest of it I was doing 40.

Ms Fitzharris: The specific discussion was on Belconnen town centre. You would expect that most people would think that, if you are in a high use area where there are lots of pedestrians, cyclists are going to slow down. Some pedestrians think that that is not happening, so it is really a conversation about sharing these paths and, where we can, making investments to have segregation. Equally there are some cyclists who are more leisurely. They talk to us about their feeling that hardcore cyclists—probably like you—go pretty fast around them too. It is about sharing the road responsibly I think.

MR DOSZPOT: Alexandrina Drive has an excellent cyclepath going all the way through to the bridges. I have received several complaints from my constituents who are driving along Alexandrina Drive that it is not really wide enough for a car to pass a cyclist if there is an oncoming car. So at times cyclists who could be using Alexandrina Drive cyclepath are actually on Alexandrina Drive and it is an accident waiting to happen. I have seen a couple of instances where people get so fed up because there is a bank of cars lined up behind one or two cyclists who could be riding two metres in without causing any issue. Is there any way to legislate that where cyclepaths are available cyclists should use them? A lot of money has been spent on those cyclepaths.

Ms Fitzharris: I think it is difficult. Legislation on that would probably be fairly heavy-handed, but there is a good road path the whole way. Did you have anything in particular you wanted to add?

Mr McHugh: That particular road does not have a sealed shoulder. Therefore, cyclists choose to use the road, and they have a legal right as a vehicle to ride on the road carriageway.

MR DOSZPOT: They have a legal right to cause accidents? I mean, that is what I am talking about.

Ms Fitzharris: Anyone on the road can. Is there signage there to encourage them? Yes. They will know there is an off-road path, a rough road path. They want to go faster, I assume.

MR DOSZPOT: There is no way that a driver can give a cyclist a two-metre or even a metre leeway.

Ms Fitzharris: Which is the law now.

MR DOSZPOT: Correct, and it is a problem that something is going to happen.

Ms Fitzharris: We could look at signage.

Mr McHugh: Yes, but it comes back to the previous question about forcing high-speed cyclists onto a shared path with lower speed users as well. That needs to be considered: how we would discourage the use of the road by high-speed cyclists. It is a very complex issue, but we can look at the location and see if there are any opportunities to improve that.

MR DOSZPOT: The government is there to solve complex issues.

Ms Fitzharris: And simple ones sometimes, too.

THE CHAIR: I would like to go in a slightly different direction and talk about buses, if that is okay. I wanted to ask a pretty broad question. What is the process in place for selecting routes for the buses and the timetabling of those?

Ms Fitzharris: Mr Edghill will talk to that.

THE CHAIR: I think we have got a few new people coming to the table as well, so can I just get you to refer to that privilege statement on the pink card? I do not think you were in the room when we first started. Would you confirm for the record that you understand the privilege implications of that statement?

Mr Edghill: I do.

Mr Edghill: Just for the benefit of my colleague, may I ask, please, that the question be repeated?

THE CHAIR: Absolutely. I just wanted to get some background on how you select routes for the ACTION bus network and the timetabling of it.

Mr Edghill: Certainly. As a starting point we would look at the data that the MyWay ticketing system generates. The ticketing system, as well as capturing fare revenue for the ACT government, provides valuable patronage data in totality but also shows where people are getting on and off and using the system. So we can analyse that data to determine which routes are experiencing patronage. We can see other routes that maybe are of lesser patronage and that helps us to make decisions on the location of the routes. It also allows us to make decisions about the frequency that we might run buses on a particular route.

But as well as analysing the MyWay data we would take into account the development of the city itself. For example, as Molonglo or other areas of new development grow, we will plan the introduction of new services to address those areas. That is part of the decision-making process. The other part of the decision-making process when we make annual or other changes to the timetable is that we would take into account, for example, activities that are occurring around the city that may need to be reflected in the timetable. Also, there is a community consultation process when we put out new timetables. So there is no one single answer as to what will determine where a new route goes. It is a factor of many inputs that help guide our decision-making.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. I just wanted a general understanding.

MR COE: Regarding the performance and the presentation of your data, where is that currently being published?

Mr McGlinn: Mr Coe, we currently have a dashboard that is available to the public through our website.

MR COE: Sure. When was that last updated?

Mr McGlinn: I will check for you. It should be updated monthly, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Yes. It seems that a lot of that information is as of June 2016. I was just wondering whether it has been updated since then.

Ms Fitzharris: That is a surprise. We will follow up on that.

MR COE: Yes, if you could take that on notice or get back to me later today that would be good.

Ms Fitzharris: Sure.

MR COE: Thank you.

MR DOSZPOT: My substantive question is on the ACTION bus network, which is dealt with on page 23. How many buses does ACTION currently have in service?

Mr Edghill: 426.

MR DOSZPOT: How many of those 426 buses are wheelchair accessible?

Mr Edghill: The precise figure is 325.

MR DOSZPOT: How many of those buses are fitted with bike racks?

Mr Edghill: I can tell you that too.

Ms Fitzharris: It is 85 per cent.

Mr Edghill: Eighty-five per cent. As at 17 February this year we had 362 buses fitted with bike racks.

MR DOSZPOT: In percentage terms, that is a higher percentage than wheelchair accessible buses. Do you find that the disability related issues are covered adequately with the number of buses that are wheelchair accessible at the moment?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, and certainly with all our new buses. Obviously we need to improve it to get the whole fleet up to being disability compliant, being accessible for people with a disability and also being accessible for mums with prams. Certainly every new bus that we have will have bike racks and be accessible for people with a disability. Our community transport fleet is entirely disability accessible as well. That plays a small but important role for a number of people in our community who are not able to use ACTION buses on a daily basis and mainly need to use the community bus network for a short time. That is both through the fleet that we manage and through the fleet that is managed by community sector organisations.

MR DOSZPOT: Obviously the number of buses you need on the service means that most buses are both wheelchair accessible and have bicycle racks fitted. What impact does that have on the frequency of service, with the additional things that the drivers have to look after?

Mr Edghill: As we develop our networks we take into account the speed of the existing network. That contemplates that there is a percentage of the population who will need to use the bike racks at the front or who take advantage of the wheelchair accessibility. The impact on the network is factored into the timetable.

MR DOSZPOT: There is no major issue from, your point of view, on that?

Mr Edghill: On an individual basis, if there are multiple people using those facilities at one bus stop, then in that particular instance it may be a little slower than if those facilities were not being used, but from a network perspective we hold no concerns in that regard.

Ms Fitzharris: I would add, too, that light rail will be fully accessible for people with a disability because it will have a flat entry into the vehicle as well as having bike racks on it, providing the ability for people using a bike to walk on and off it very simply. Also, there will be much wider doors to enter the carriage. There is a lot of excitement around the accessibility aspects of light rail, including a whole range of other factors regarding light rail.

MR DOSZPOT: I am sure we will respond to some of those when the relevant section comes up. One of the other questions I had related to the ACTION bus fleet replacement program. How is that going?

Mr Edghill: It is going well and according to schedule.

MR DOSZPOT: In last year's annual report you were indicating that it is due for completion in the first half of 2016-17. We are halfway through the first half. How are we going with the completion of the replacement program? You say that it is going okay. I would like to know how many still need to be replaced.

Mr Edghill: Of course. We will complete that program, purchasing all the buses that were contemplated at the outset of the program. So in the 2015-16 financial year that amounted to 29 new buses and there were 20 buses in the 2016-17 year. All of those buses will be here this financial year.

MR DOSZPOT: My final question is: how many buses in the fleet are not climate controlled?

Mr Edghill: If you can bear with us for one second, we can give you those numbers. I am just doing some quick maths.

MR DOSZPOT: In the interest of time—

Mr Edghill: It will be approximately 92.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you very much.

MR PARTON: In relation to the bus fleet, I sat in on some of the community meetings for the Foy inquiry in Tuggeranong. The suggestion was made in the community meeting on Tuesday afternoon that Foy are claiming the diesel they produce from this proposed site will be used by Transport Canberra in some of the older vehicles of their fleet. Has there been any communication between Foy and the ACT government regarding the use of the product that they make going into some ACTION or Transport Canberra buses?

Mr McGlenn: Yes, we had preliminary talks with the Foy Group when they were looking to move to the ACT. They have come down to talk to us about the product that they will be able to offer us. They were set some challenges in regards to giving us indications of what the fuel levels would be like so that we could then supply them to our engine suppliers to ensure that they would have no negative effects for the newer fleet. Certainly we can put them in the older fleet, but apart from some preliminary discussions nothing has been formally organised.

MR PARTON: As part of that discussion at the community meeting on Tuesday afternoon there were some who knew more about diesel than I did who suggested that the diesel proposed to be produced at this Foy site is grade 4 diesel and that grade 6 diesel is required for buses here.

Mr Edghill: Mr Parton, I am not from the engineering section; so I will take that on

notice, I am sorry.

MR PARTON: I look forward to hearing back on it. Minister, you—

Ms Fitzharris: I was not aware of that. That proposal is a private provider looking to build their site here. The directorate has been not involved to any great extent in the discussions regarding their seeking planning approval and the subsequent community engagement work which is underway on whether or not it is an appropriate facility to have in the ACT or, indeed, at that location.

MR PARTON: Is there no-one here who is able to talk to me about it? I did not even know that there were various grades of diesel. I had no idea. Is there no-one here who is able to tell me about the grade of diesel that is used in the older ACTION or Transport Canberra fleet?

Ms Fitzharris: Not to that extent. We can take that on notice.

MR PARTON: Excellent.

Mr Edghill: There is a difference between what the fleet is capable of using and what we do use. We have one grade of diesel that we use at our depots. We do not have separate tanks for refuelling different bus types.

MR PARTON: Excellent.

MR COE: Will ACTION or the government be compliant with the DDA 80 per cent target of 31 December?

Mr Edghill: Yes.

MR COE: How many previously decommissioned vehicles have been brought back online in the last year or two?

Ms Fitzharris: We will take that on notice.

MR COE: Could you also take on notice the reliability or, in effect, the number of breakdowns and non-starts for each of the Dennis Dart vehicles? You can take that on notice, if you like.

Mr Edghill: No, I can answer that. We understand that, of the 11,952 scheduled services to 23 February, there have been 42 incidents that we would put into the breakdown category.

MR COE: For the Dennis Darts?

Mr Edghill: For the Dennis Darts on the city loop, yes.

MR COE: Are you talking about the city loop or the Dennis Darts?

Mr Edghill: The Dennis Darts are only used on the city loop.

MR COE: So no other vehicle has been used to replace the Dennis Darts on those routes?

Mr Edghill: We have sufficient Dennis Darts so that if there is—

MR COE: There are seven or eight, aren't there?

Mr Edghill: an incident, we can swap out one Dennis Dart with another Dennis Dart.

MR COE: I am not asking you to compile more information, but if you have any further information about the reliability of them and the cost of maintaining the Dennis Darts as opposed to the rest of the fleet, that would be useful. I am not asking you to go and compile it—only if you have it in a report format.

Mr Edghill: Thank you.

MS CHEYNE: This is a supplementary question based on routes and accessibility that we have been talking about. Something that is raised with me quite a lot is buses to and from the airport and improving that. Does the government have any plans to do that in the short or longer term?

Mr Edghill: Do you mean to the terminal?

MS CHEYNE: Yes, to the terminal.

Ms Fitzharris: Certainly, we do. We had a longer term commitment for a rapid route to the airport, and just recently it was reported in the *Canberra Times* that TCCS were in discussions with the airport. I am very pleased today to let you know that that route will commence on 20 March. So a seven-day-a-week service to the terminal will commence in 11 days time.

MS LE COUTEUR: What sort of frequency will it be?

Ms Fitzharris: Half-hour.

Mr Edghill: Approximately half-hour during the day but during peak periods, particularly the morning peak, there are services which are running more frequently than half-hourly.

MS LE COUTEUR: Will there be signage? That has been one of the other problems, that you could never find a bus.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes. At the airport there will be signage. The airport have been terrific, and I really congratulate Transport Canberra and the airport on working on this and being able to come to this arrangement so quickly. The airport staff will also be working very closely with Transport Canberra staff on informing people within the terminal, having signage within the terminal, to let them know they can catch a bus at a standard fare. If they happen to have a MyWay card it will be even cheaper. Also there will be staff helping people to find their way there, and really good signage

outside the terminal. So it is a really terrific achievement.

MS CHEYNE: Where will it go from, in the city?

Ms Fitzharris: It will be like an express route.

Mr Edghill: During weekdays the service is being offered through an adjustment and supplementation to the existing route 11 service, which travels near the airport. Route 11 is city via Russell to the airport, but there are adjustments to the route. If you drive to the airport in your car, you will notice the arrivals hall, the downstairs part, which ordinary traffic cannot go into—that loop there. The bus will go into that area, taking you close to the door of the arrivals area, and picking up. The destination boards on the buses have been changed now, so it is clear that it is city via Russell to the airport.

The 11 services that continue through to Fairbairn will have their destination board changed so that it is clear where that bus is going to. When it gets back to the airport, the destination board will be changed so that, for somebody getting off, it looks like it is the airport to the city service. Also we will be supplementing that service initially, effectively with another bus that runs between the city and the airport and then back to the city again. That is how we are achieving the approximately half-hour or better during peak frequency in the network.

MS CHEYNE: If I got on the bus with cash, would it cost the \$4.80 one-way fare that it currently costs?

Mr Edghill: Correct.

Ms Fitzharris: Standard fare, yes.

MS CHEYNE: That is quite good value.

Ms Fitzharris: It is very good value.

MR COE: Will a payment need to be made to Canberra Airport?

Mr Edghill: No, we are not making any payment.

MS LE COUTEUR: What is the start date?

Ms Fitzharris: It is 20 March.

MS LE COUTEUR: I had better tweet the good news. That is great.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, it is very good news.

MS LE COUTEUR: I am really excited about this. I thought I knew the answer to your question, that it was the rapid that will be coming in by 2020. My question is about bus networks. You talked about bringing in buses to new areas. I am mindful of the 182, which we had all expected to be a lot earlier—that, when the people came, the bus would come. What are your criteria for working out when the bus will actually

come, given that Molonglo was well and truly personed and that Weston has been well and truly personed?

Ms Fitzharris: “Personed”: that is a new word.

MS LE COUTEUR: Inhabited.

Ms Fitzharris: I know what you mean.

Mr Edghill: Again it is a balancing act of a few different factors. It is when infrastructure is available to put a bus route through and when the bus stops are there. That is a function of how many people are living in that area at that point in time. Partly it is a function, too, of the availability of fleet to put onto a particular network and what that means for the broader network. Also there is a process that we need to go through to ultimately integrate those new routes into the scheduling for the entirety of the network. So it is effectively a judgement call which is made, balancing each of those factors at the time.

MS LE COUTEUR: Do you look at the likelihood that if someone moves into a new area where there is no bus service, they will get used to driving to wherever they drive and that if you bring a bus service in later you will not get the take-up that you would if it was there from the beginning?

Ms Fitzharris: You have to find the right balance, and that is certainly a risk. We continually try to seek a balance in improving patronage. Where people get into habits, it can be difficult to break them. There is massive investment being made in the public transport network right across the city, in multiple modes, and with a lot of active travel investment. How people move around the city is changing now. It will change enormously over the next 10 years. The advancements we see on autonomous vehicles, ride sharing, car sharing, new ways of people thinking about moving around the city mean that we are being stretched quite a lot at the moment to think about what is coming and how soon it is coming.

The reality of autonomous vehicles probably is not as far away as some people thought it was just a couple of years ago. A lot of people are giving more thought to how they move around, and we are making a lot of investment and working really hard to provide people with information about what is already there and how great it is to use, improving the services and the customer experience—all those things that we were talking about, including bus shelters and good connections. All of those are part of the picture.

MS LE COUTEUR: Could I go back to the airport bus? Will that be accessible for the disabled? Are there any commitments on that?

Mr Edghill: When the service commences we will be doing our best to ensure that we have wheelchair accessible buses available for that service.

MS LE COUTEUR: That has been a real gap.

Mr Edghill: It has. As we mentioned before, the entirety of the fleet is not wheelchair

accessible. In the initial stages that may not always be possible but we will attempt, as best we can, to ensure that there is low-level entry into those buses servicing the airport.

THE CHAIR: If there are no more supplementaries on that line of questioning, we will take the opportunity to have a tea break.

Ms Fitzharris: Would you like to continue with ACTION and roads after the break?

THE CHAIR: Yes. Before we break, can I remind members that any supplementary questions should be lodged with the committee support office within five business days of the uncorrected proof transcript becoming available. Responses to questions taken on notice should be submitted to the committee office within five business days of the uncorrected proof transcript becoming available. Responses to supplementary questions should be submitted to the committee office within five business days after the questions are received.

Hearing suspended from 11.00 11.18 am.

THE CHAIR: Welcome back, minister. We will be continuing with the ACTION buses topic. I believe that Mr Edghill has some further points that go to some of the questions we had before. I will give you an opportunity to do that in a second. For the record, I want to note that we have quite a few new people joining us who were not here this morning when we dealt with the implications of the privilege statement. As a matter of housekeeping, I again ask whether you have all seen the privilege statement. Can you confirm for the record that you understand the implications of the statement?

Mr Edghill: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Mr Edghill, would you like to deal with your issues?

Mr Edghill: Yes, I would like to clarify a couple of the answers this morning. I said that there were 92 buses that were not climate controlled but the number is 101. I apologise for having that number incorrect. There was a question about how many decommissioned buses had been brought back online. It is the 16 Dennis Darts for the city loop service. And to clarify, in one of my answers I said that we use one diesel type, which is true at any one point in time. But we switch between diesel types in the summer and winter seasons. There is an additive to the diesel that we use in winter to prevent the fuel freezing.

THE CHAIR: So that was 101?

Mr Edghill: Correct, 101.

THE CHAIR: Sorry, it was 101 buses that are not climate controlled?

Mr Edghill: That are not climate controlled.

MR COE: Is that additive AdBlue or is it another additive, do you know?

Mr Edghill: It is another additive.

MS CHEYNE: When will we no longer see the orange buses on the road?

Mr Edghill: The current program has the orange buses, the PR2s and PR3s, entirely retired from the fleet in 2022. Of course, if there are opportunities for us to retire those buses more quickly then we will pursue those opportunities.

MS CHEYNE: What is the average number of breakdowns per week?

Mr Edghill: Can you bear with us for one moment?

MS CHEYNE: Yes, sure; take your time.

Mr Edghill: I am not sure that we have that number to hand; we may need to take that on notice.

MS CHEYNE: Just more generally, are breakdowns more common with the orange buses or with the green buses?

THE CHAIR: I believe those are the technical terms for those bus types too.

MS CHEYNE: Probably; that is how I know them.

Ms Fitzharris: You can also see the model and type of buses on the website. It has a good breakdown.

MS CHEYNE: Yes. I will educate myself before the next hearing.

Mr McGlinn: Across the fleet, we are certainly happy to give you a snapshot of what the total breakdowns are, as we have indicated, and then indicate to you which fleet type has been involved.

MS CHEYNE: Are you able to talk me through what would happen in this circumstance: if I am riding a bus from Belconnen to the Assembly and it breaks down, what happens? What happens to the passengers; what happens to the bus? Where does it go? What is involved in repairing it? How long does it take to get it operational?

Mr McGlinn: What happens is that if a warning light comes up on the dash or the bus is failing to operate or do the correct thing, the driver will contact our communications centre. He will then advise that there is a breakdown. They will contact the workshops. If the bus is on Hayden Drive, Belconnen workshops would send down a breakdown truck. We would also send some transport officers in a small minivan. You may have seen those around. The transport officers will assess what is happening with the vehicle and then they will transfer the people onto the next bus coming through. They are there to help with traffic management arrangements to ensure that the area is properly secured for our employees to work around the vehicle. They will get the people to tag off and put them straight onto the next vehicle coming through.

MS CHEYNE: What happens then? Is the bus taken away to get it repaired?

Mr McGlinn: It may very well be repaired onsite. If it has dropped a belt, we may be able to change the belt onsite. The mechanic will either give the all clear for that bus to continue in service or move it so that it can be driven back to the depot. If it is the case that it cannot be moved, we have a tow truck that will dispatch from—

MS CHEYNE: I have never seen a bus on a tow truck. I will have to keep an eye out.

Mr McGlinn: It does not happen very often. When it does happen, we will dispatch a tow truck, hook the vehicle up and then transport it back to the applicable depot that it is from for repair.

MS CHEYNE: Does removing that bus from the day's operations have a flow-on effect? What is that flow-on effect?

Mr McGlinn: Certainly it would have a ripple effect across the performance of the network. During the peak we have 376 buses out on the road. If it happens in the off peak we can dispatch another bus from the depot to give to the driver so that they can continue running or pick up that run when we get the bus to them.

MS CHEYNE: In terms of efficiency, does more people using the MyWay card have some impact on making routes across the ACT faster? I imagine that when people get on a bus and they pay a cash fare, it takes a little time, particularly if they do not have the correct change. If lots of people are paying cash, does that have an impact on how long a bus route might take or is it—

Mr McGlinn: A cash transaction can slow the bus down. If they are paying \$4.80 and they have a \$5 note, that is quite a quick transaction. But if they are going through their wallet to get all their coins to give to the driver that will certainly slow it down. Using the MyWay card is beneficial. It obviously gives passengers the cheapest fare possible and it is the quickest way for people boarding. If you were to notice when people are boarding just out the front of the Assembly here, a person paying cash will line up and slow the driver down. But everyone who has the MyWay card will step to the right, go to the tag on and just go past them.

MS CHEYNE: That is cumulative. If a bus has 10 stops and everyone uses a MyWay card versus paying a cash fare, does the bus actually get faster or does the time between—

Mr McGlinn: It may reduce the amount of time that the bus is at the stop. When the fleet pulls up at the bus stop and the doors open, the brakes come on. So there is a component there. When you close the doors, you have to wait for the brakes to release to go. The majority of people are using the MyWay card, which is very good because it gives them the cheapest ride and it gives me some fantastic data to analyse when we are building networks et cetera.

MS CHEYNE: People always board the bus through the front door. But everyone departing the bus, no matter where they are in the bus, has to go through the front door unless it is at an interchange. But it seems that with some buses you can get off

at the back door as well sometimes. Does that improve efficiency? Is there a reason for this or is it at the driver's discretion?

Mr Edghill: At present on the 200 series we are in the middle of a trial program of opening the back doors on the buses. Subject to there being no insurmountable problems that arise, we anticipate that we would move that across the network to allow rear door disembarkation.

MS CHEYNE: When will the trial be complete?

Mr McGlenn: We have extended it for a further month. When buses pull up at stops, if people get off at the rear door there is the ability to tag off at the rear door. They can get off either at the front or at the back. We have 19 Iris vehicles which are fitted with only one door; that reduces the option.

MS CHEYNE: Thank you.

Ms Fitzharris: It is a reminder that there are a lot of benefits both to every individual passenger and to Transport Canberra to have a MyWay card.

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, what is the projected cost of the improvement to the MyWay system?

Ms Fitzharris: The new ticketing system that we are looking at?

Mr Edghill: We are in the very early stages of looking at what a new ticketing system may look like. There are two things happening in ticketing at the moment.

MR DOSZPOT: Is that a new software application that is being developed?

Ms Fitzharris: It is a whole new system.

Mr Edghill: Yes. There are two things happening in ticketing at the moment. There is some futureproofed hardware, which we will be acquiring for installation in association with the light rail service. Also, we can take the opportunity to have those ticket machines at certain other locations. But we are in a very early phase of looking at what ticketing technologies we may move to when the current MyWay system comes to an end.

I think that the current MyWay system has a shelf life until 2019-2020. But with any ticketing system we will make sure that it is doing the right job. We think we have found what it may look like now. There are a lot of very exciting ticketing technologies in place now in various jurisdictions around the world and on the horizon.

For example, if anybody is ever lucky enough to be in London and using the ticketing system there, you do not necessarily need to have a standalone equivalent of a MyWay card. In that jurisdiction you can wave your MasterCard or you can wave your phone and the ticket will cost as much as it does if you have a MyWay card.

There is a lot being done on that which will add to the convenience for users. We are

going through the process now of working out what are the ticketing options for us. That will inform future decisions of government as to what sort of investment it wants to make in the ticketing system.

MR DOSZPOT: I guess my question relates to the cost that will be involved.

Mr Edghill: Yes.

MR DOSZPOT: I understand that you may not have the exact cost, but are you working to a particular budget?

Ms Fitzharris: There was \$3 million in last year's budget for the work to get underway.

MR DOSZPOT: What was the cost for the implementation of the existing MyWay system? When was it implemented?

Ms Fitzharris: We will take the specifics on notice, on the cost.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you. Obviously, if you are working to a budget and you get any supplementary feedback on that in the meantime, I would love to know the cost.

Mr Edghill: Absolutely. Until we find a procurement process it is unlikely that we will have a firm idea.

MR DOSZPOT: I understand, thank you.

Ms Fitzharris: I do not recall specific feedback that came out of our transport survey last year, but certainly the functionality of MyWay could be improved. These ticketing systems are changing. As Mr Edghill said, there are some really exciting opportunities that we are actively looking at. But we do know it is one thing that could improve what is called the customer experience, to encourage more people, to make it as easy as possible to get your card or your account to be able to use the public transport system, which will include light rail and buses. I mean, at the moment you can use your MyWay card to unlock the secure bike sheds. So there are other functionalities that we could add on to an account. I have not got the nice new Transport Canberra MyWay card.

MS CHEYNE: I do.

Ms Fitzharris: I think Tara does. There you go. We are looking at this. It can be enabled to check your balance. Being able buy it at the outset can be a really important part of encouraging people to use public transport so that they have information and so that accessibility to the network is really easy.

MR DOSZPOT: A lot of the information you have available, I imagine, would be better for people who have phones, iPhones in particular.

Ms Fitzharris: Any type of device but, again, it could be stored. Rather than the value of the account effectively being stored on your card—I do not know if that is

right—I think about it in terms of having an account for your public transport usage. It could be a device; it could be your debit card or your credit card that you could use instead.

MR DOSZPOT: What I am leading to is that there is more and more reliance on upgrading technology. I come from a technology background. I think that is good, but we have a lot of people in the seniors category who do not have devices that they carry around. They may have a card but their usage of that card is probably pretty limited.

Ms Fitzharris: We have done a bit of work with COTA on the way older people in Canberra use technology and on their take-up of the MyWay card. I believe it is actually very good. They are reasonably informed customers because they rely on the network. Certainly, in respect of devices, their proliferation and the extent to which people have them, it is very widespread. But having a credit card or a debit card as well is another option. When we move to a new system we will provide as much opportunity as possible to reach as many members of our community and different groups as possible. We can use our existing networks to do that.

MR DOSZPOT: I would like to leave this statement on record: there are quite a few people in the community who do not have access to technology in the way that most of us are used to. Obviously, they are a limited number and they are possibly becoming fewer. Nevertheless, they are disadvantaged by not having the same access as others.

Ms Fitzharris: I think the new system might increase access for people.

Mr Edghill: Indeed, when you move away from a card-based system to an account-based system, the card becomes the mechanism for telling the computer in the background to debit your account. It would not be the case that we move to phone only or MasterCard only. What we would actually be doing is increasing the range of mechanisms by which somebody could pay. There could well still be the equivalent of a MyWay card. It is in addition to that. You would also have phone, credit card and potentially other access options.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you.

MR PARTON: Can I ask the minister or well-informed officials to inform me of the progress of the electric bus trial, please?

Ms Fitzharris: The electric bus trial was announced last year. Transport Canberra have been in negotiations with a company to supply that. That company did bring a model of a coach to Canberra last year, but unfortunately they have had difficulties in sourcing the bus. Although we have only just settled with them that they are not going to be able to deliver in the time frame that we had anticipated, which was about now, the directorate is doing a lot of work to source alternative buses because it is very clear to us we need alternative fuel buses as part of our future network.

It is a bit disappointing that those electric buses were not able to be delivered right now, but it is a new and emerging part of the bus industry. I can ask Mr Edghill to talk

in more detail about that. But we still look to have an electric bus trial as part of our fleet in this current calendar year.

Mr Edghill: I can certainly say that the arrangement we have, that we put in place with the party that was announced a little while ago, is such that the ACT government is not paying any money until the buses are actually delivered here. We understand from that party that they are having trouble manufacturing the buses by the date that they were meant to be here, which, as the minister mentioned, is around now and which they are attributing to supply issues in the automotive sector, given Ford's and Holden's withdrawal. Notwithstanding that the buses are not here, the trial has been very valuable to us to date in at least getting an understanding of the maturity of the electric bus market in Australia, the potential supplies of electric buses, the availability of buses and some of the challenges that exist at the moment in the electric bus market in Australia.

MR PARTON: It looks as though those challenges are quite significant, does it not, at this stage?

Mr Edghill: It is a young market in Australia—not necessarily globally. There was something I read recently that had the number of electric buses around the world in the tens of thousands. A lot of electric bus progress is being made in China at present. The Australian bus industry, for a variety of reasons, is smaller and the coach building part of it is very much a domestic industry at present. Notwithstanding some of the issues that exist with the present supplier, we have been doing other work which gives us confidence that we will have electric buses here in Canberra this year.

MR PARTON: And given the size of that market in this country I am assuming that there are not any other options.

Mr Edghill: There are a few and the options are wider if you go into electric buses that have diesel range extenders. There are a few in developing opportunities to source buses from other electric-only suppliers in the Australian market. It is just a smaller market than the diesel market.

MR COE: I think a request for a proposal has been sent to two manufacturers. What about the other manufacturer? Have you been in communication with them?

Mr Edghill: As part of our planning activities, in case the first one does not work out, yes, they are one of the parties that we have contacted.

MR COE: Six months ago when you put out the RFT it was between AVA or Avis and Oztech. So when it became apparent that you were not going to be able to take delivery of the electric vehicles from one operator did you go to the other manufacturer and say, "Well, can you still do it?"

Mr Edghill: I think the RFT was about 12 months ago. It was a while ago now. There was an evaluation process and a contract finalisation process. There are simply a limited number of electric buses in Australia at present, so as it became clearer that we might have to explore alternative options then, yes, the other respondent is one of the parties that we have reached out to.

MR COE: When it became apparent that you were not going to be able to take delivery, did you actually inspect any vehicles that had been delivered or did they not have any vehicle in the country?

Mr Edghill: The party that we contracted have been on TV, I think in Victoria. They are in various states of construction. It is not that they were importing the buses themselves. They were manufacturing the actual coach build in Melbourne. There are some imported battery components but the bus itself is being built in Melbourne. We have been receiving pictures and reports and so forth along the way, as part of our current activities in looking at alternative options that may be available. Yes, there is scope for us to look at electric buses in Australia before going down another path.

MR COE: But is there an opportunity to just buy off the shelf from China?

Mr Edghill: There are different opportunities for us to pursue both in manufacturing the coach part of it, the body of it, here in Australia or potentially importing buses.

MR COE: On that, ACTION recently moved away from Custom Coaches. Is that due to the well-publicised troubles of that interview?

Mr Edghill: Our current contract for the supply of buses is with Scania and the coach builder is a subcontractor to that head contract. So our bus contract, from our perspective, remains on foot. It is not unusual for any bus purchaser to, from time to time, move from one coach builder to another and, yes, through that contract arrangement we have moved from Custom to Bustech. We are very happy with the product that we have received from Bustech. The new buses that you will see on the road are Bustech builds.

MR COE: And they are assembled in Queensland; is that right?

Mr Edghill: Correct.

MR COE: I was wondering whether you could please let me know what issues you are experiencing with the back end of NXTBUS.

Ms Fitzharris: Is there a specific question?

MR COE: There were obviously problems with it, so I was wondering if you could shed some light on it.

MS LE COUTEUR: We can see problems for the front end; let us put it that way.

Ms Fitzharris: As far as I am aware, it is not down at the moment. I know there were some periods last year where it was unreliable, but I do not believe that that has been happening lately.

MR COE: Definitely in December you were putting out tweets saying it was down. Again, on 7 January you said: "Currently unavailable due to technical issues. We are working on this." Then again: "Unplanned maintenance is required," et cetera. What

is the cause of this?

MS LE COUTEUR: Can I add from my observation as a bus user—although not in the last few months—that you text it. It gives you a reply which does not relate to when the buses are actually coming. It does not appear to be in real time. The reply relates purely to the timetable.

MR COE: The schedule.

MS LE COUTEUR: The schedule, not the—

Ms Fitzharris: Rather than the real time.

MS LE COUTEUR: It is advertised as real time and it does not appear to be fulfilling that.

Mr McGlinn: Mr Coe, in reply to your question, the experiences that we had in and around December and then into early January was in relation to the different files that we were putting down. It was not picked up by the company that manages it. So because we had that reduced network over the three-week Christmas period the files were different and they had not picked that up. We cannot change their files. We supply the data. It is up to them to upload the data. When it was down we came out on the front foot to let people know that there was interpretive problem with the data and we were getting it fixed. It is a UK based system that manages it, so we had to relay that information to them and they had to do some checking and correct the files and then the data became correct. Then subsequently, unfortunately, it happened when we reverted to the normal school holiday network in January.

MR COE: But with regard to the system as a whole, is it performing well or performing according to what was contracted?

Mr McGlinn: I believe it is.

MS LE COUTEUR: So the contract did not include real time, or is that the part that I am more aware of being the problem? This is the NXTBUS system, which was advertised as providing real-time information, but you are talking very clearly about scheduled information. So is that real time not happening?

Mr McGlinn: That feeds into the system. When the buses go out onto the road there are different schedules. When you put a schedule down it has all the runs that that bus will be doing, so it actually picks it up out of the shift network.

MS LE COUTEUR: But I guess as a user what I thought you were saying is that if I put my stop number in it would tell me when the next bus was going to come.

Ms Fitzharris: Not when it is scheduled to.

MS LE COUTEUR: But not when it is scheduled. I mean, I have got the schedule. That is not my question. My question is: when is it going to come, not when it is scheduled? I understood that it was going to answer the “When is it going to come?”

question.

MR COE: This is via SMS, as opposed to the online site.

MS LE COUTEUR: Yes.

Mr Edghill: It is a real-time system and we use that NXTBUS system. It is not just a customer phase service.

Mr McGlinn: So the SMS system is the predictor of when those buses are scheduled to get there. The online system is actually telling you live where the vehicle is.

MS LE COUTEUR: So the SMS is the schedule and you have got to go online if you want to know live information. That was the distinction that I had not picked up on.

Mr McGlinn: I will seek some clarification for you.

Ms Fitzharris: If it is not clear on our—

MS LE COUTEUR: It is not clear. When you look at the sign at the bus stop it does not say, “This is the schedule. If you want to find where they actually are you need to go online.”

Ms Fitzharris: All right.

MS LE COUTEUR: Well, I did not get that—

Mr McGlinn: I will take that on notice

MS LE COUTEUR: —distinction until now.

Ms Fitzharris: We will take that feedback.

Mr McGlinn: We will take that feedback. I will take it on notice and provide you with the full details.

MS LE COUTEUR: Thank you. There are many people interested in this question. Ms Cheyne talked about the technical terms, the orange and the green buses, but there is another colour of bus, and that is an advertised bus. What is the policy on advertising on buses?

Mr Edghill: Advertising is managed under contract. I apologise; I do not have it to hand. In that contract we set out various forms of advertising which are prohibited. That relates to the obvious things—offensive material and so forth. The service provider that we utilise on top of what is in the contract is generally pretty good, in that if something is a little bit unclear to them they will be in contact with our fleet manager and deal with items on a case-by-case basis.

MS LE COUTEUR: Could you provide us with the policy: what is and is not allowed? I know political advertisements are not allowed, as well as matter which is

clearly offensive, but is there anything else?

Mr Edghill: There is. There is about a page or so. That contract is in the public domain. I do not have it to hand but we can provide that to you.

MR COE: Who determines what food, for instance, is deemed junk food and what food is deemed healthy food?

Ms Fitzharris: That particular aspect of policy has been informed by the agreed national Australian dietary guidelines, in which foods that are high in sugar, salt and fat are deemed to be unhealthy foods. For example, I know there is some contention around whether or not certain brands can advertise on a bus. The guidelines, which are available, are based on the sugar, fat and salt content of a particular food, not on who is providing or serves that food.

MR COE: So in effect a fast food chain selling a healthy salad or something like that—

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, they can advertise.

MR COE: can do that?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, but not anything high in sugar, salt or fat.

MR COE: If they, for instance, were not advertising any food, are they allowed to advertise then?

Ms Fitzharris: I believe so, yes. We would need to take that on notice. I know it is contentious—

MR COE: You are getting into some murky territory; does it mean that I can have a huge logo and then a tiny little picture of a salad?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MR COE: Or no salad at all?

Ms Fitzharris: With respect to the particular organisations that want to advertise and that fall into this category, we have discussions. I am involved in this through my responsibilities for our obesity policy, as the Minister for Health. There are some fine lines in this area, but the guidelines are very clear, and they are agreed guidelines at the national level about food. Certainly, there was a big discussion on what constitutes junk food. There are a number of foods that many people consider to be quite healthy but actually they are very high in sugar, fat and salt, and they will not be able to advertise on buses under the current policy either.

MR COE: Can you take on notice, firstly, some of those details; secondly, the number of times that the ad agency has come with a proposal and someone in ACTION or another agency has had to ping it?

Ms Fitzharris: It is within ACTION, the determination—

Mr Edghill: We can look at that, remembering that they would not come to the ACT government first. They would go to our service provider and we would not have visibility as to how—

MR COE: No, I am talking about the ad agency. It then has to book in to put the skin on the bus; therefore, how many times has the ad agency come along and you guys have had to—

Mr Edghill: That might be relatively minimal. We have shared the guidelines with the ad agency, so they are able to make decisions themselves under their contract. We would not be aware of every occasion that the ad agency has said to a prospective advertiser, “No, that doesn’t comply.”

MS LE COUTEUR: You are not able to give us any information about what the ad agency has refused?

Mr Edghill: We could ask them.

MS LE COUTEUR: That would be of interest.

Ms Fitzharris: We can clarify the previous discussion around NXTBUS and the SMS.

Mr McGlenn: Ms Le Couteur, I was incorrect; what I would like to tell you now is that the SMS is live.

MS LE COUTEUR: Do you mean in real time?

Mr McGill: Yes.

THE CHAIR: We will move on to information services, waste and recycling, regulatory services, Capital Linen and sustainable transport. Minister, could you please provide an update on the ACT waste feasibility study since passage of the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Bill in 2016?

Ms Fitzharris: I will invite Mr Corrigan and Mr Trushell to talk in more detail about the waste feasibility study. It was funded in the 2015-16 budget and it is a two-year program. We are looking to have recommendations discussed by the government later in this first half of the year. The study has a number of components to help us to achieve not only our recycling rate but also a number of other policy objectives on our emissions, on waste going to landfill, and on education in the community about reducing waste generation in the first place, as well as looking for opportunities, as was discussed earlier, to use printer toners extensively in road resurfacing.

There was legislation passed last year by the Assembly to enable the new framework for waste management within the territory. That has been passed but there is further work underway. Most notably, there has been a long period of very intensive engagement with both the community and a business reference group. Many people from the industry and interested community groups have been very engaged in the

process. Just recently, as part of the study itself—and it was also raised during the debate on the legislation—we put out a market sounding to encourage people to come to us with ideas about how we might minimise our waste and recycle our waste. It is a growing problem and one that the waste feasibility study aims to do considerable work on over this two-year period, to make sure that we reduce our waste and that we have sustainable waste practices in the longer term.

The market sounding is open now. It was also based on the fact that a number of groups and organisations around the country saw that we were doing this work and were providing new and innovative options to the government on how we could do things differently. One notable suggestion that we were able to launch last year was mattress recycling through the social enterprise Soft Landing. It was quite an incredible opportunity for us to take up and it has minimised many thousands of mattresses going to landfill, with recycling of up to 90 per cent of each mattress.

The technology is moving very quickly. A lot of organisations are saying they can do this, that and the next thing with re-using the waste stream. Some will bear fruit; others might not. That is why we have gone out very widely to see what sorts of ideas people have. I will ask both Mr Corrigan and Mr Trushell to talk more about it.

Mr Corrigan: The waste feasibility work is going well. We will be in a position to seek to brief government towards the middle of this year on the outcomes. Going back a couple of years, the origin of it was the amount of material going to landfill. Obviously, landfills are quite expensive for the facilities to manage. Every city needs one; we have one at Mugga. So there was a cost driver. Also there were stated targets in the waste strategy to recycle, so that up to 90 per cent of all the waste generated in the ACT would be recovered in some form.

The ACT is a leader in the country in how material is recovered, but it has plateaued at around 70 to 74 per cent for a number of years. Two years ago, the government said, “How can we address the ongoing capital cost of managing waste in the territory, plus how can we actually recover more?” Internationally and nationally, increasingly there are quite significant markets for all the resources recovered through the waste streams. We know that plastics is a topical one at the moment; also containers, metals, glass and all of those products.

That is what the study is about. It is about looking at five key areas, including regulatory instruments, and how we can incentivise through levies and the like. The minister mentioned the waste resource recovery act that was passed last year, to put those arrangements in place, and other delivery models. The outcome is to say to government, “Okay, government; to achieve those higher recycling targets, maybe 80 per cent or 85 per cent, those incremental jumps, what would be involved? What sorts of technologies and what sorts of policy responses would be necessary to do that?” That is what we are looking to do.

As part of the good work of the waste feasibility group, a number of companies have approached the government and said, “We’ve got these various technologies.” We have made suggestions to the minister. That is how the market sounding came about. We thought, “We’re getting these approaches. What we would like to do is be a bit more complete about it.” We called it a market sounding because we are not procuring

anything at the moment. We are saying, “In the ACT we have a stated policy objective of recovering as much as possible—80 to 85 per cent, or 90 per cent of the resources. Who in industry can assist with that and what ideas do you have?”

We have provided information about all of those materials in the waste stream. There are all the traditional things—timber, metals and things like that. It goes down even to what is collected in our gutters, litter in our gross pollutant traps and things like that. As the minister said, that is out now, and that is starting to attract some interesting propositions. All of that work will culminate in some advice to government to say, “Here’s a plan for how we could start to seek incremental increases in recycling; what sort of capital investment may or may not be involved in that?”

THE CHAIR: Do you have any indication of what ideas are being brought forward?

Mr Corrigan: There are the traditional recycling ones—hard plastics, all of the metals and things like that. There is recycling of timber—those traditional areas. With glass, it is not just about glass bottles; also there is glass from commercial glass. There are some innovative ideas there. In the commercial waste sector, there is what comes out of the demolition of buildings. Asbestos is different. It has to be treated differently. It is not really a recoverable resource.

In fuel recycling we have the Foy Group, with respect to plastics. They have not approached us directly; that is a private proposal to do those things. So there is innovation there. I mentioned material that can be composted, what comes out of our gutters and what we collect. There are companies in Australia that will take that and compost it, in order to enhance soil and things. They will transport it to rural areas and things like that.

THE CHAIR: Emission reductions from waste: is that something that has been looked at, and what opportunities do you see there?

Mr Corrigan: The waste strategy for the ACT has a carbon neutrality target as well. This could be quite interesting and innovative. The organic matter that goes to landfill creates the carbon. Part of the market sounding is: what is out there? How could we start to capture that organic matter as well?

The government is progressing a green bin pilot in Weston Creek and Kambah, for garden waste and things like that. Possibly, in time, the territory could look at capturing all food organics—kitchen waste and things like that. We could start to capture that, stop it from going to landfill and put it into streams so that it is recycled into organic soil improvements and the like. Not going to landfill means it is not producing the emissions, so we start to reduce the carbon impact as well.

MS CHEYNE: Chair, in the interests of time, is it okay if I ask two waste questions, on slightly different topics? Both are short, I promise.

THE CHAIR: Pose them, and if they are short questions, they can take them. If it turns out that they are long questions—

Ms Fitzharris: It might be a long answer.

MS CHEYNE: How is the solar bin trial going? Are there any areas in which it has been more of a success than in others? I think there are three locations.

Mr Trushell: I think the trial is only just commencing, so we do not have the information back yet—or not for some months.

Ms Fitzharris: There will be areas where it is not as successful as others. The one in Campbell will not be as successful as some of the others because in Campbell 5, where the bin is, it is only really used for recreation. There is nobody living there yet. There is one at Southquay. There is one at Kingston foreshore and one in Molonglo Valley. Ms Flanery can probably answer that when we move on to that section.

MS CHEYNE: Okay.

MR COE: Everything is a balancing act. How do you justify putting money into that sort of trial when the money could be spent on numerous other things in this area?

Ms Fitzharris: The trial is a way of seeing if these bins work. There are only four out of however many bins we have around the territory. It is a small trial. Different locations will tell us different things. Kingston foreshore is obviously very busy. They are quite different locations. We want to try it; we want to be able to try something new. Because they compact the rubbish we wanted to test whether or not it would reduce the number of times we needed to service the bin, which could have quite a big impact on the number of trucks that are going to service the bin and empty it every day. To trial four bins out of the—

MR COE: It is fairly expensive. How much—

Ms Fitzharris: I will take that one on notice. They were not funded through Transport Canberra and City Services.

MR COE: Yes. What are the success criteria? What will actually make it worthwhile going ahead with these, given the large capital cost?

Mr Corrigan: There are a couple of things there. That is why it is a pilot. The funding is provided by the LDA to supply them. The criteria are obviously how effective they are and how much waste is collected—so how often they have to be emptied, basically. They are compacted and they have a little sensor that reports back: “I’m full. Please come and empty me.” The key success for us will be how infrequently, or frequently, we need to empty the bins. As the minister touched on, there are hundreds of bins across Canberra. If we had a system that significantly reduced the number of times that trucks are collecting the rubbish—

MR COE: Could take on notice the cost of the trial, what the marginal cost of collecting a rubbish bin is at the moment, and what the increased capacity is of compacted waste using one of these bins?

Ms Fitzharris: We will certainly take those on notice. I think the cumulative effect across the city as a whole could be significant. Sometimes—and I do not know how

often this happens—you go to empty a bin and it does not need to be emptied. Because data is provided back, you know whether or not you need to go there in the first place, as well as not having to go there as frequently. In theory, that sounds like a really good thing to try.

MR COE: Sure. That is why that marginal cost of checking and/or emptying is vital to determining whether it is a success or not.

Ms Fitzharris: Sure.

MS CHEYNE: How successful was the “get psyched about recycling” campaign?

Mr Corrigan: The advertising finished in July last year. We are currently evaluating its success, so I have not got a complete answer. What we do with the evaluation—just a little information, which will not take too long—is look at how the message got through but, importantly, who it got through to, particularly age sectors. That is what we focus on.

MS CHEYNE: It is still on my fridge, so you can take that on board!

Ms Fitzharris: I became minister towards the end of this trial and everyone said, “Who knew about the previous education and awareness campaign on recycling?” A lot of people knew about this one, and it obviously got people talking. In terms of raising awareness and the number of representations I had about it and the number of times I was asked about it on radio, people were talking about it.

MR PARTON: I think people were talking about Donald Trump too.

Ms Fitzharris: That is a fair point, Mr Parton.

MR PARTON: What is the current estimate of the capacity of the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre? Can you update the committee on what is being done to resolve the problem of the bad smell affecting Tuggeranong residents, which some people believe undoubtedly comes from the Mugga Lane Resource Management Centre?

Ms Fitzharris: I will let our officials answer the question about the capacity in detail. We were certainly talking about it this time last year. I had a number of representations on the smell in Tuggeranong. I have not had any correspondence this year. I have not had any correspondence over the last few months about it, I believe, and I do not believe the directorate has either.

MR PARTON: So this time last year you got some representations about it. What was done about those?

Ms Fitzharris: We could talk in significant detail, as it was discussed last year, obviously recognising that you were not in the Assembly then. There was significant discussion in the Assembly and in committees as well.

MR PARTON: Are you suggesting, though, that because there have been no further

representations, the problem has been fixed?

Ms Fitzharris: That is certainly a strong indication, given—

Mr Corrigan: As to the capacity of Mugga, I will go first. We are currently developing the next cells, as they are called. We build cells. They are built in chunks and they are managed. It is how the landfill is managed—that is, the waste is collected and we do not get leachates and things like that. We are in the process of constructing the next cell. That takes us through to mid-2018. The next landfill is underway. That will be completed by June this year. That gives us additional capacity of 700,000 cubic metres. On top of that, we have briefed the government, for consideration for 2017-18, on the next cells to be established as well. The intention is that we will expand the capacity of Mugga to go out to the mid-2020s, and beyond that.

Coming back to the original question about waste feasibility, as I was saying before in relation to the origins of that program, it is about saying, “We have to expand Mugga, but the less that we can divert the resources somewhere else, the more it extends the life of those cells.”

On the smells issue, we have not had any complaints recently. That is great news. We are still investigating. With our colleagues in the EPA, a range of testing has been ongoing to establish what is occurring and the source of the smells. It has been a bit difficult to pinpoint exactly where the source was in 2014-15, but we are still working on that. Mr Trushell, is there anything we can add to that at this stage? The investigations are still ongoing.

Mr Trushell: Back in February 2016, the minister asked us to undertake a number of activities, which we have, and those have been ongoing. Bear in mind the management of odour for landfill and other waste management activities is not an issue per se; it is about an ongoing management function. You are always going to have odour occurring as a result of waste putrescent and decomposition. Therefore, it is something that has to be managed in a way that confines the odour to acceptable environmental standards on the site on which the activity is being undertaken.

MR PARTON: How do you do that? You cannot get aftershave for a tip, can you?

Mr Trushell: First of all, you identify sources of odour. You undertake ways of assessing the generation of that odour and also its potential for migration off site, which is not an exact science. We have done that exercise. We have had experts come in. They are still working with us on identifying those potential sources and gradually eliminating them.

In addition to identification and assessment, we have also undertaken a range of practical measures. The EPA asked us to change the way that we cover the operating landfill face to ensure that overnight there was less risk of odour escaping. We identified that we needed to accelerate our capping program around the sides of the landfill to address the risk of excess methane escaping. We looked at the electricity generation plant that captures the methane and generates electricity, to eliminate that as a source. Similarly, we assessed the materials recovery facility. We assessed the

transfer station and other activities, including the C&D recycling and the green waste recycling.

With the development application for three additional cells on the landfill, the EPA required us to undertake specific odour assessment modelling, which was undertaken by an independent expert who then provided advice on the likely impact of odour as a result of the additional landfill. The other area was the leachate pond. Essentially, the moisture that is generated by decomposing waste is piped out of the landfill into a dam and treated there. That was another potential source, and it looks like it is not. Once again, you have particular mitigation measures to ensure that the evaporation of that is not going to be a source of odour.

MR PARTON: Excellent; thank you.

Ms Fitzharris: I believe that a couple of complaints have been received this year, but we will check the number; we will take it on notice and confirm that for you.

MR PARTON: Thank you.

MR COE: I have a question regarding the green waste trial, policy or initiative. What consideration was given to a voucher system using existing operators, so that you do not have trucks going around and perhaps not collecting rubbish or green waste?

Mr Corrigan: You are referring to the green bins pilot in Weston Creek and Kambah. We have procured that service for the pilot period. We have gone to market to see who could assist with the collection and disposal of the green waste. A number of options were looked at. Did you refer to a voucher system?

MR COE: In effect using existing trash pack or wheelie bin operators rather than going to a system which has potential flaws. I accept that there are some benefits to it, but there are some potential flaws in terms of contamination. Also, is everyone in every suburb going to get a wheelie bin? If so, some suburbs are going to generate far more than others, and especially in June or July, you may well have trucks going around and not collecting any waste. If there is a commitment to collect every fortnight, every month or whatever, there will be a huge cost and potentially very little actually collected. I am curious to hear what processes you have gone through to assess all the options, and what made you go ahead with the city-wide wheelie bin option?

Mr Corrigan: The pilot of the service will inform how that operates. With the bin service and procuring that type of arrangement, and whether it is cost efficient, it is an opt-in arrangement at the moment. Over 5,000 have registered now. With respect to what we anticipated the interest would be, we have actually doubled it. The reaction has been quite positive from that point of view. It is probably the most efficient way of collecting it. That is one of the key drivers. I might ask Mr Trushell to explain some of the details of procurement.

Mr Trushell: We did consider a voucher system. As part of our research we consulted with a very large number of councils around the country. Voucher systems are very rare, for the reasons that Mr Corrigan mentioned. They are not particularly

efficient. I would argue that they are not a particularly easy way to manage contamination. A single-service provider, in the way that we have established the arrangement, is a better model. Managing the vouchers would have been difficult within the time frame to get this pilot ready. It probably was not feasible to put in place all the necessary systems and accountabilities associated with vouchers. As I say, they are generally not the most efficient model. That is demonstrated by the fact that very few councils—in fact, I am not aware of any of the ones that we spoke to—use a voucher system.

MR COE: There definitely are. Also, you are using a voucher system for hard waste collection, in effect, aren't you?

Ms Fitzharris: Only because it is limited to certain eligibility criteria in terms of age rather than location, and the expansion. Certainly, in considering bulky waste across the city as a whole, which is another commitment that we have made, we will explore alternative options, rather than the current system that is available to concession cardholders.

MR COE: It has been put to me that there is anonymity with a wheelie bin out the front, whereas when you have a trash pack, you have a service provider and you have a relationship with an entity, and somebody is physically using a mini-crane to collect your wheelie bin or your trash pack. They are seeing what is in the trash pack. Because of that I know that a lot of the green waste businesses are getting very little, if any, contamination. Also, CSG, Canberra Sand and Gravel, or Corkhills pretty much will bump you if you keep bringing contaminated material. Given the trial 15 years ago, which showed a relatively high level of contamination, how are you going to get around people, in a relatively anonymous way, putting contaminants in a wheelie bin that gets collected?

Mr Trushell: First of all, I probably would disagree with you about the trash packs. If you spoke to Mr Corkhill, one of the issues he has raised is the number of trash pack operators that are using his site for decontaminating waste. If we then applied that to a voucher system and had a lot more trash pack operators going there, we would probably have mayhem at that site. So having a single provider with scheduled deliveries, with very tight controls around contamination, and a service which is operating on an ongoing fortnightly basis is arguably a more efficient and easier way to control contamination. A council like Albury has a food organics, green organics bin. The last advice I was given was that they are about 99 per cent contamination free on food as well as garden organics.

MR COE: Where is this?

Mr Trushell: Albury council.

MR COE: It is a different story in Queanbeyan, though.

Mr Trushell: I understand there are some limitations with the Queanbeyan model. Part of the lesson learned, from talking to other councils, is aiming to avoid some of the mistakes or limitations on the part of other councils.

MS LE COUTEUR: You said there were going to be tight controls. What are they?

MR COE: And how are they enforced?

MS LE COUTEUR: What will they be? How will you enforce them?

Mr Trushell: There are a number of transporters around the country who undertake these sorts of services and who have a fair bit of success in engagement with the community. The idea that trash pack operators are the only ones who can do that is not the case. There are any number of services; I have seen examples and presentations on these at various waste conferences, on how they engage. Some of it is a compliance thing; you provide feedback to the household around when there are problems. Because the collector has an obligation to present to the composter material that meets the current standard, it is incumbent upon them to ensure that they are interacting with the community. We will also be having various education campaigns. We are providing material with the bin. We are providing information packs as the bins get rolled out.

MR COE: There is a fair chance that there will be contaminants, and then there is a fair chance that Corkhills or CSG will say, “We don’t want that whole load.” Therefore, we will have load after load going to landfill as opposed to going for green waste recycling.

Mr Corrigan: Quite deliberately, with what we have procured, the collector under the contract will be obliged to ensure that the material they supply to the receiver who is going to take the organic waste must be free of contaminants. So it is in their interests. They have to have their own systems in place. The business will drive that outcome. That is really what we are procuring. If for some reason they are getting massive contamination in the loads, they are responsible for addressing that, so they have to deal with—

MR COE: I understand that. But if you have a truck which has contaminants in it and it gets refused entrance into the facility, what is going to happen with that load?

Mr Trushell: Mr Coe, that cannot happen under the contract, because the contract is one where the composter and the transporter are actually one consortium delivering the services to the territory. There is a decontamination process within that, so you are not going to see whole loads being rejected. What you will see is decontamination of loads, with the residual going to landfill. The same thing happens with the trash pack operators at the moment. They take their loads up to Corkhills, they unload them and they decontaminate on the spot before Corkhills will accept it. This is a similar process, where there are levels of contamination. But the composter is part of the service delivery arm. They cannot simply refuse, because their KPIs are linked to the level of resource recovery that we get.

MR COE: In that situation, if the business has collected 20 trash packs that day and it has a contaminant in it, it knows it is one of those 20 households and can then deliver a message to that particular household—if it was an accident or if it was deliberate—as to how to manage that situation. Wheelie bins are, of course, anonymous.

Mr Trushell: They are not, because a wheelie bin is assigned to a house, and that household will be told if there are unacceptable loads. They will get a letter. There is a process of education and engagement around it, if you are consistently getting poor quality material.

MR COE: Sure. What about in, say, one of the newer suburbs, where the gardens are not as established or as big, and at some point wheelie bins are offered to all suburbs? If you have a new suburb and very few people have taken up the offer of the wheelie bin, how will it be economic to collect those? How is it going to be environmentally beneficial to collect those and to do a fortnightly run, checking to see if they are empty or not?

THE CHAIR: In the interests of time, can I get you to take that on notice and reply to Mr Coe?

Ms Fitzharris: Sure, but that is precisely why there is a phased rollout. In fact, for some of the newer suburbs Molonglo Valley would be from mid-2019 and Gungahlin from mid-2020. We will learn from this first phase to inform future phases as well. Certainly, the take-up of 5,000 people, which is around 70 per cent—we can confirm that number—suggests that there will be high take-up. Yes, there might be smaller gardens and higher density areas within some of those newer suburbs, but at that take-up rate we would expect widespread support across all regions in Canberra.

MS LE COUTEUR: Mr Coe was talking about the bin being anonymous, and you were not really agreeing with that. Am I correct in thinking you may be envisaging technology whereby the bin collector can see the contents?

Mr Trushell: Correct. They have GPS tracking. There is technology whereby you pick up the bin and you have cameras. As you lift, you can see what is in it. You can hit a button that will take a GPS reading and a photo. In fact, I have seen examples where that gets given to the council, the council can then write a letter to the resident and can agree to show them that video footage if they dispute the fact—

MR COE: Okay.

Mr Trushell: So there are smart technologies around that will enable that feedback loop to be put in place.

MR COE: Okay.

MS LE COUTEUR: It makes a lot more sense now, why you keep saying—

Mr Trushell: Yes, sorry.

THE CHAIR: Ms Le Couteur, you have a substantive question on waste. Then we will move to land management and Yarralumla Nursery.

MS LE COUTEUR: This question is about organic waste. Currently we have methane capture and we generate electricity. Has the directorate done work to examine the viability of other waste energy technologies, particularly given your

expression of interest?

Ms Fitzharris: Sorry, could you repeat your question?

MS LE COUTEUR: You are currently doing waste to energy from the methane that is coming out of the tip?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MS LE COUTEUR: Have you done work to look at the viability of other waste energy technologies, and does that include waste incineration for electricity generation?

Mr Trushell: I think as part of the waste feasibility study, the idea was to be technology neutral and, if you like, fairly agnostic around these things. As part of the work to date, we are aware there are far more options around waste to energy than just electricity generation. We have looked at things like diesels. You can create gas. You can create a refuse-derived fuel, which is essentially a replacement for coal at cement kilns, that sort of stuff.

Essentially what we are saying is that we have got this significant biomass, including food, as well as our green waste. There are a broader range of opportunities which do not necessarily involve incineration in order to create electricity. A lot of this comes down to the economics of it. There is plenty of viable technology. I guess at the end of the day for every community it is about its appetite for particular types of technology and the various environmental and other impacts of those technologies when compared to the alternative, which is essentially landfill.

MS LE COUTEUR: Talking about environmental impacts, would you class these sorts of technologies as renewable energy sources?

Mr Trushell: The standard approach internationally and in Australia is to do that. I understand there are a range of different attitudes towards that, but if you look at the various state policies on that, yes, subject to certain conditions. I think generally most of the states are not interested in mass-burn incineration and certainly it is not the sort of thing that we would be proposing for the ACT.

Ultimately there is going to be a residual that is uneconomical to recycle. The evidence indicates that throughout the world any jurisdiction—whether it is northern Europe or whatever—which is getting high levels of landfill diversion is doing it through a fairly significant percentage of waste to energy in its various formats.

MS LE COUTEUR: We can go off waste and go to something else. I have a lot more waste questions but I will put them on notice, given the time.

THE CHAIR: Yes, because we have still got quite a bit to get through. We might move to land management and Yarralumla Nursery. If we do by some miracle end up with time left at the end, we can resume on waste management. Otherwise I ask members to put questions on notice.

MS LE COUTEUR: I have half-an-hour's worth of questions on everything else anyway.

Ms Fitzharris: Chair, did you want to do information services, regulatory services, Capital Linen as well or did you want to jump straight to land management?

THE CHAIR: I think we need to move straight to land management. I have been told the other ones were grouped together.

MS LE COUTEUR: What about cemeteries?

Ms Fitzharris: That follows land and—

MS CHEYNE: Cemeteries, Veterinary Surgeons Board and Animal Welfare Authority follow land management, design, development and Yarralumla Nursery.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Fitzharris: We are in your hands. Everyone is here.

THE CHAIR: Can we move to land management, Yarralumla Nursery and then we will try to squeeze in questions on cemeteries, animal welfare and veterinary boards. Unfortunately, our questions on roads and buses took a long time. I will kick off. I have one question on land management that relates to the Evatt shops, and I would like to put this to the directorate: in regard to the recent upgrade that was completed late last year, during the consultation the community raised the issue that the path leading from the medical centre to the main shops is frequently obstructed by cars, and patients who have had appointments at the medical centre are often referred directly to the pharmacy to have new scripts filled. These patients include those with mobility restrictions. They have to come from the main centre to the pharmacy via the path that is obstructed.

The community was told that this issue would be addressed in the upgrade but it was not. My question, and I am happy for you to take this on notice, is: given the purpose of the upgrade was to improve accessibility to the shops, why has that footpath not been addressed?

Mr Corrigan: I think we will take that on notice.

Ms Fitzharris: We will take that on notice. Blocked by cars—not abandoned cars but cars parked in the area?

THE CHAIR: No, in the car space, going over the kerb.

MS CHEYNE: I have some questions on shopping trolleys. It is covered as litter under regulatory services and land management, I guess. The report talks about quite an enormous amount of litter removed from our waterways, including, regrettably, trolleys. Are there dedicated officers who remove rubbish from our waterways or is it general city rangers?

Ms Flanery: There are not dedicated people who remove shopping trolleys. They are part of horticultural maintenance crews and city rangers, depending on where the shopping trolleys are. If they are in lakes and they need special equipment to get in there, we might even get a contractor to lift them out.

I do not know if I was pleased, but I was looking at the Clean Up Australia Day statistics and they noted that shopping trolleys were removed from waterways as part of that clean-up last weekend. Retailers have also introduced a collection system. Woolworths and Coles have recently introduced a coin return system. There is a lot of work we have been doing to try to get retailers to manage their trolleys rather than government manage the trolleys.

MS CHEYNE: Do you have figures on how many shopping trolleys were removed from waterways across the ACT in 2015-16?

Ms Flanery: No, not specifically. We generally account for them as part of the collection process.

MS CHEYNE: And do you have figures on how many trolleys were impounded in 2015-16?

Ms Flanery: I could look. It is 177 in the annual report.

MS CHEYNE: How many were then retrieved by the businesses?

Ms Flanery: I would have to take that on notice.

MS CHEYNE: What happens if a business does not retrieve the trolley?

Ms Flanery: They get a fine.

MS CHEYNE: Do they go to a trolley cemetery?

Ms Flanery: They get a fine. We do have a disposal process but the retailer receives a fine.

MS CHEYNE: Can you tell me a bit more about that disposal process?

Ms Flanery: When we have held the items—trolleys, other things that we collect in urban open space—for a certain period of time, under legislation we can dispose of those assets. As opposed to having our depots cluttered with lots of trolleys and lots of, I hate to say it, election signage, we dispose of them.

MR PARTON: I am assuming I am free to ask questions regarding domestic animal services here. Page 30 of the report states that 360 dog attacks were investigated, 124 dogs were seized and six dangerous dog licences were issued. So 360 dog attacks is pretty much one a day. Is that too many?

Ms Fitzharris: To some extent, anyone being attacked by a dog is distressing for the person who is the victim and often for the owner. I will make a broader point on this,

because we have been doing quite a lot of work on this. There was some legislation last year amending some animal welfare legislation. There was a lot of concern in the community about cruelty to animals and neglect. But there are a range of other concerns that the community has presented to us.

So we have under development—it is very close to being finalised—a draft animal welfare strategy that has been developed in close consultation with some of our key stakeholders. It covers a wide range of things, but part of that is the discussion about responsible pet ownership, which in last year's context of specific legislative changes was largely about cruelty and neglect of animals but also, going to the earlier point, about dogs off leash running across bike paths. There is a really important conversation to have with the community about what it means to be a responsible pet owner.

That is something which is reflected in increasing dog ownership. I think there was an increase of 8.7 per cent in the number of dogs registered in the ACT in 2014-15. We see more people having animals and people living in different types of environments with animals. As we have some denser living environments, those sorts of issues might change. Certainly, I do not think anyone could answer categorically whether it is too many. Clearly, any attack is distressing.

MR PARTON: I think most people would say that it is too many. At 360—one attack a day—it is difficult not to come to the conclusion that this is a pretty serious public health issue.

THE CHAIR: Is that a statement?

MR PARTON: With a question mark on the end of it. Is this a serious public health issue?

Ms Fitzharris: I think there would be a range. Ms Flanery can talk more about the range of different attacks. There obviously have been a couple of serious ones. Like I say, yes, it is a concern. So is anyone dying in a car accident, for example. Yes, absolutely, it is a concern. We have a range of measures in place and we are doing more work on that. It is very much on my mind.

Ms Flanery: To add to that, and I should also note that I am the Registrar of Domestic Animal Services and also the animal welfare authority, which brings together two very important roles. For the first time in the last financial year those roles were brought together.

Going to your question about how many attacks are acceptable, any attack, as the minister has pointed out, is very frightening. The majority of the attacks have been dog on dog. This is extremely distressing for the people that own those dogs. As the minister noted, we have amended the Domestic Animals Act to differentiate between serious dog attacks—that is, when a person is injured and badly injured—and where it might be a harassment incident.

We have also looked very carefully at the processes around dog-on-dog attacks where they are occurring. We are revamping our domestic animal services database to really

try to point out where these attacks are happening, how we can target them, what education measures we can take.

MR PARTON: What actions cause dogs to be given dangerous dog licences? There were six of those. What happens then?

Ms Flanery: An incident occurs. A dog or dogs are then seized. They are taken to the domestic animal services facility. An investigation commences. Parties are interviewed. Where we can identify that that dog or dogs are involved in an attack, there is a declaration about their being dangerous dogs or otherwise. It is a very serious declaration. Following on from that, there are two parts to it. A licence may be issued to the owner of that dog if they are able to keep that dog.

MR PARTON: In those instances, what happened to the dog? Six dangerous dog licences were issued. Does that mean that the owners were able to keep those dogs under various conditions?

Ms Flanery: Yes. You cannot own a dangerous dog without a licence. Other dogs may be declared dangerous and euthanised.

MR COE: I have a question about tree management. I think I am in the right place now. In particular, with regard to the accelerated removal of trees on Northbourne Avenue, did TAMS make that call about removing trees or was that a capital metro or consortium issue?

Ms Fitzharris: Expert arborists provided advice both to Canberra Metro and through them to Transport Canberra. That included advice from the city services part of the directorate, but it was also a conversation that we had with the National Capital Authority.

MR COE: Sure, and that advice, from what I gather as reported, in fact revealed that the trees were in a worse state than the original assessment had shown up. Is that correct?

Ms Flanery: In this bit, answering your question specifically, I do not know if the trees were in a worse state. But I guess that the history of the management of those trees goes back a long time. They are the third cycle of trees in that area. As an urban tree manager, we monitor our trees across the city, 760,000 of them. Those trees we took particular care in monitoring because they present a high risk with the traffic and people going past. Regardless of light rail, we were of the view that those trees needed to be replaced within a certain period of time.

MR COE: Okay. Regarding the acceleration in the program, what new information came to light which led the government to move ahead with that?

Ms Flanery: The new information was that as part of the removal that we were doing of some of the trees that were declining through phellinus and other diseases, it was presenting wind throw problems. When the trees were planted, they were planted as a unit. As some were being taken out, wind throw problems were presented. Following on from that, we had a much more rigorous assessment undertaken of all the trees.

MR COE: In light of that, when a constituent contacts the government or contacts a member of the Assembly and complains about a tree that they think is problematic for one reason or another and the government regularly says, “No. That tree should remain,” who is to say that there is not a similar issue with those trees—that an initial assessment might have said could stay longer, when in reality they might be in a worse condition than the initial assessment suggested?

Ms Flanery: Mr Coe, we do get those calls all the time from people asking us to assess trees. That is one thing that we take very seriously. We have a very high standard of arborists in our teams. The first point is to go out and make an assessment about trees. Obviously, there are environmental conditions which may change that, but, given the relatively low number of incidents that we have compared to the number of trees, I am very confident in the way we are assessing trees.

MR COE: And a tree blocking solar panels, is that a legitimate reason to have the tree removed?

Ms Flanery: No, usually, if the tree is there before the solar panel. The former commissioner for the environment presented a report and made the recommendation, which the government accepted. It was that if the tree is there before the solar panel, then the tree remains.

MS LE COUTEUR: I have questions on cemeteries.

Ms Fitzharris: I have with me both the CEO of Canberra Cemeteries and the chair of the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority.

THE CHAIR: Because you are joining us for the first time, I draw your attention to the privilege statement that is on the table. Can you state for the record that you understand the privilege implications of the statement?

Mr Bartos: Yes, for the record, I understand the implications of the privilege statement.

THE CHAIR: Mr Horne, can you state for the record that you understand the implications of the privilege statement? It is on the pink card.

Mr Horne: Yes.

MS LE COUTEUR: I have two areas of questions. With the Woden Cemetery expansion; I understand stage 1 is just about to start. Give me an idea of timing on that, and then for stage 2.

Mr Horne: Stage 1 is in the planning phase at the moment. Once completed, we expect it to last between 10 and 15 years, approximately, at which time potentially stage 2 may go ahead.

MS LE COUTEUR: Would they be technical Territory Plan variations? Last time I looked, the existing cemetery had an overlay saying it can be used only as a

cemetery, but for the rest of it—Eddison Park, all the way around—there is no planning differentiation.

Mr Horne: Yes, there will be a variation to the Territory Plan.

MS LE COUTEUR: Do you know if it will be done as a technical or as a substantive change—or is that a question I should not be asking you?

Mr Horne: That is a question you need to ask them, I think.

MS LE COUTEUR: My next question is about southern memorial park. One of the Liberal members—I forget who—asked a question about this—

Ms Fitzharris: Ms Lawder.

MS LE COUTEUR: in the Assembly. In the course of the minister's answer it became reasonably clear that, whereas we all thought the southern memorial park was going to go ahead opposite the tip, it does not appear to be the case. I would like some clarification as to what is happening with that site. If that site is not going ahead, what is happening?

Ms Fitzharris: It is fair to say decisions have not yet been made about that. Certainly, the expansion of Woden provides a little bit of an extension of the life of the cemetery. Decisions have not yet been made, so nothing has been ruled out or in at this point.

MS LE COUTEUR: A decision was previously made. I can remember sitting here with Jon Stanhope, who was the relevant minister, when the decisions were clearly made in that time frame that the southern memorial park was going ahead, and I know that some landscaping has been planted. It appeared to be a clear government decision. Is the site no longer in play?

Ms Fitzharris: It is my understanding that the site was identified, and that was the decision—that there was a site identified. But no decision has been made yet on when and if that will become a cemetery. Mr Corrigan might be able to add something.

Mr Corrigan: The site that was identified for southern memorial park by that master planning work back in the 2009-11 period still exists. It is still there. Ownership has not been transferred but the site still exists. As the minister said, no decision has been made. Some planning was done and no decision has been made, in a capital framework sense, to proceed now with the southern memorial park. That does not mean a decision cannot be made. So the site is there, but the decision is yet to be made to proceed formally with developing it.

MS LE COUTEUR: Are other sites being looked at? That is the impression I got. With respect to the question in the Assembly, the answer was that sites are being looked at in south Canberra. I took that to mean that new sites were being explored.

Ms Fitzharris: No, that is not the case, I do not believe. It is certainly not the impression I had from Minister Gentleman's response.

Mr Bartos: Certainly, the authority board is not investigating any other sites. We are proceeding on the basis that the government is committed to a southern memorial park at some stage in the future, but when that will occur is indefinite. It depends on the ACT budget. So the current planning is for that identified site, but given that it is a long time in the future, and it is not necessarily that site, certainly all our planning is that it is, and all of the board thinking has been on that to date.

Ms Fitzharris: There is no active consideration of any alternative site in the south of Canberra.

MS LE COUTEUR: Thank you.

MS CHEYNE: Yarralumla Nursery is responsible for providing trees for stages of the light rail. How are the trees developing for light rail? Where do they come from?

Mr Ware: The trees that we are presently growing for the light rail project are progressing very well. We are on track to have them to the required height of four metres in time for operation of the light rail project. The trees purchased were brought up from Victoria, as you would have seen in the *Canberra Times* and other media outlets, in October and November last year. The trees are progressing and obviously extending their stems upwards and their roots outwards.

MS CHEYNE: What height are they currently?

Mr Ware: They range between 2½ and three metres. I have not measured them recently, but there is obviously a height variation between individual trees.

MS CHEYNE: How are they being paid for while they are in the nursery?

Mr Ware: We received a small deposit from the Canberra Metro people. That allowed us to purchase the trees and the materials to pot them on into larger container sizes, and they will be paid for in full at the time of delivery.

MS CHEYNE: One of the other programs I have recently heard about, run by the nursery, is the free plant issue scheme. Can you explain a bit more about that and how many people in the 2015-16 year took it up?

Mr Ware: Thank you for that question. In 2015-16 we issued 8,095 plants to eligible new home owners. The scheme was set up to help continue the greening of Canberra. Purchasers of new blocks of land in the ACT are given two years to take up that allocation of plants, which can be up to 20 plants, to a value of about \$220. I do not have the stats on the actual numbers, but, as I said, 8,095 plants were issued.

MS CHEYNE: Can people in apartments get those plants?

Mr Ware: No, they cannot.

MS CHEYNE: On page 271 of volume 1 of the annual report it mentions the refurbishment of the nursery. It looks like it cost about \$850,000. What was involved with that refurbishment? What needed to be refurbished?

Mr Ware: One of the joys of occupying a heritage-listed property is that the administration building that we occupy was constructed in 1914, so at the time it was 102 years old. The timber floor of the nursery was very wavy. There was a 90-millimetre drop in one section of the floor across about two metres. I used to refer to it as the drunken sailor walk as we went through that area. It was very much like that. Part of the refurbishment work was to remove the timber floor and replace it with a concrete floor. We got a new paint job, which you would expect, new carpet et cetera. So we upgraded many of the facilities; not quite to bring us into the 21st century but we came close, given the structure of the building and its heritage listing.

MS CHEYNE: Of the total cost, what cost the most?

Mr Ware: It was basically the concrete floor.

MR PARTON: Are the pots for the light rail trees ridged or flexible?

THE CHAIR: Do you mean rigid?

MR PARTON: Sorry, rigid or flexible.

Mr Ware: The pots that we have brought the trees in from the nursery in Victoria, where they were growing on our behalf, were rigid pots. They were subsequently transplanted into woven polyester bags; they were about half a metre wide, and some of them have a capacity of 200 litres. They went from hard, rigid pots to flexible woven bags.

THE CHAIR: If members have no further questions, we might leave it there. Thank you very much. I remind members that supplementary questions should be lodged with the committee support office within five business days of the uncorrected proof transcript becoming available. Responses to questions taken on notice should be submitted to the committee office within five business days of the uncorrected proof transcript becoming available, and responses to supplementary questions should be submitted to the committee office within five business days after the questions are received.

Ms Fitzharris: Could I add one thing, chair, before we finish?

THE CHAIR: Sure.

Ms Fitzharris: I know we did not get to libraries at all, and in the spirit of the—

THE CHAIR: I had a page and a half of questions for libraries.

Ms Fitzharris: In this role, there is something new that I find out every day. What I found out on the weekend was that, when you get your library books out, you can choose a multitude of different languages for the computer to talk to you in, but I did not know you could choose pirate language. So there you go!

THE CHAIR: We can all test that over the long weekend. We will break for lunch now. We will resume at 2 pm with Minister Fitzharris and the Capital Metro Agency.

Hearing suspended from 12.58 to at 2.01 pm.

THE CHAIR: Even though I have read this quite a few times today, because we are starting on a new topic, I am obliged to read it again. Can I please draw everyone's attention to the privilege statement before you on the table. It is the pink card that I am pretty sure we are all quite familiar with by now. Minister, could you and your officials please confirm for the record that you understand the privilege implications of the statement?

Mr Edghill: Yes, I do.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, I do.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. May I also remind witnesses that the proceedings are being recorded by Hansard for transcription purposes and webstreamed and broadcast live. Minister, you made an opening statement this morning.

Ms Fitzharris: I made my opening statement this morning, thank you.

THE CHAIR: We can jump straight into questions. Minister, I want to have a little chat about public-private partnership. Why was that chosen and not a design, construct, maintain and operate model?

Ms Fitzharris: Certainly the territory had been looking for some time at different ways of procuring major projects and the decision was made, long before my involvement and long before my election to the Assembly, that it would be delivered through a public-private partnership. It provides a number of advantages to the territory. One is the fact that this was a very new project, something that we had not delivered before in the ACT and did not have an existing strong skills base for.

Having said that, the public-private partnership for light rail is the second public-private partnership that the territory has entered into. The first was the law courts facility, which got under construction some time before the light rail contract was signed. But part of the decision-making—and Mr Edghill can talk in quite some detail about it—is about fairly balancing the cost of the build and the operation of the light rail, as well as the risk to the territory and where we could transfer risk at a good value for the territory to other more skilled partners to deliver the light rail project. Mr Edghill can talk in quite some detail about the decision-making at the time.

Mr Edghill: Certainly. As well as looking at various aspects of the project, part of what we looked at during that business case phase in 2014 was the most appropriate delivery model for the project. We ended up deciding on a PPP delivery model as being most appropriate, for a range of reasons. Certainly each of those has been mentioned by the minister.

One of the key areas of attraction to us of a PPP as opposed to a DCMO is that there is a very strong alignment between the territory's interests and the financier's interests

in a project such as this. The territory is of course keen to ensure that the system is built to a quality which allows it to achieve certification from an independent certifier and we are also keen to ensure that the project is open on time.

The role of the financiers within the consortium is very well aligned to the territory's interests in that under a PPP arrangement the ongoing regular availability payments do not actually commence being made by the ACT government until the system is up and operational. The financiers, both the equity participants and the debt participants, are of course keen to get their money back as soon as they can. They are the ones that are funding it during the construction phase. So they have a very strong interest in providing an extra level of oversight within the project's structure to make sure that the project is opened on time and with a quality which allows operations to commence.

Partly on that basis we were attracted to it as such a significant infrastructure project and a new type of infrastructure that we do not already have in the ACT. That alignment works well for us. As part of the business case phase, though, we also went through a market sounding process. This was around May 2014, where the ACT, in developing the business case, spoke to various participants in the light rail industry in Australia—not just designers and constructors but operators and financiers. One of the interesting outcomes of that market sounding process was that, when we spoke to the market about what delivery model they would be familiar with and comfortable bidding against, the PPP model was something that they and their consortium members and their financiers were familiar with because other light rail projects in Australia at that time had also gone down similar paths. The Gold Coast was a PPP; Sydney light rail is a PPP.

What was important in getting the consortium formed and wanting to bid on our project was that they had to grow familiarity with the delivery model, particularly when you think that some of the financiers and the equity participants were Australian based but some were international. There was a very strong international flavour in the project that we undertook. Having international investors who were already familiar with a particular model for delivering infrastructure was important to ensure that we ran the most competitive process that we could.

THE CHAIR: You also mentioned that independent certifier. Can you elaborate on what the certifier is doing and what they add to the project?

Mr Edghill: In short, the independent certifier is independent. It is a joint appointment between us and Canberra Metro. It is probably fair to think of them as the independent umpire sitting between the two of us as we develop the project. They perform a number of different roles under the contract structure. Ultimately, perhaps one of their more important functions at the end of the construction period, when Canberra Metro says, "We think we are done," is to issue the certificate for service that will allow services to commence. In doing that, what the independent certifier is doing is certifying that Canberra Metro have done everything that they need to do under the contract and that the system is safe and capable of taking passengers on board. Of course, they do not wait until the very end of the project to undertake that assessment; they are involved on a daily basis in the entirety of the process.

Typically in the project there are three stages of design. Through each stage of the

design, you move from concept to ever finer grained detail and something which gets closer and closer to the mark. The role of the independent certifier during that process is to gather comments from the territory. They will make their own comments and make their own assessment of the compliance of the design with the specifications that are listed in the contract. Then they will allow Canberra Metro to proceed through that design phase and ultimately in that design process the independent certifier, by the time you get to the end of it, is saying, “Okay. You, Canberra Metro, have done everything that you need to be doing under the contract.”

It provides us with an independent level of comfort that what we are asking for under the contract we are actually getting. It is in addition to our own assessments of what is going on. It also can help take the angst out of a large and complex project. If there are any areas of disagreement which cannot be resolved commercially then there is always the option of our taking a particular matter to the independent certifier. Both parties have an agreement under the contract that we will abide by the decision of the independent certifier.

MS CHEYNE: Community engagement, I expect, is a key priority and will contribute to the success of the project. What consultation model have you used or are you using for your community engagement? If it is not a model, can you talk me through what some of the facets are of it?

Ms Fitzharris: Do you mean until now or from now or a bit of both?

MS CHEYNE: Both. We are talking about the annual report, especially in the lead-up to the procurement stuff, but also, now that construction has started, how we are keeping people informed. I know you gave a presentation to the Gungahlin Community Council. Are there other things?

Ms Fitzharris: It is really extensive. Its community engagement activities have certainly been proportionate, if not more than proportionate, to the size of the project as well. There was extensive consultation both in the lead-up to Labor making the commitment to build light rail prior to the 2012 election, through the development of the transport for Canberra plan, the Gungahlin to civic corridor work that was underway throughout 2011 and 2012. It has been a conversation that has been going on for seven-odd years around transport planning and the future public transport network in the city. It has taken a number of different forms and certainly, now that the project is underway, Canberra Metro have a significant role in community engagement, as well as the government through TCCS and me as minister.

The engagement that happened in that early stage was around the design of the route, or the features of the route, and engagement with business. There was a community business group, a community reference group and a business reference group, as well as multiple presentations, pop-ups at any public event that was taking place—the Canberra Show, the bus depot markets, lots of community fairs—where capital metro at the time and subsequently TCCS had a presence to talk about light rail with the community and seek their views. There were a number of structured surveys and a number of structured research projects. But that was a different phase from where we are now.

You mentioned that the head of the project gave a presentation to the Gungahlin Community Council about the upcoming impact of some of the construction activities on the Gungahlin community, obviously noting of course there are also impacts on roadworks that are underway in the Gungahlin region, and the impact on the town centre and what that is going to look like.

At the moment there is extensive work underway on informing the community about when and how activity is going to be taking place. We have a weekly update that comes out via email and also weekly updates on the radio. I just spoke with 2CC and they are having an update this afternoon, their weekly update from the Transport Canberra team. ABC Radio also have a weekly update as well.

We will soon get into the phase of community engagement on stage 2 of light rail from Civic to Woden. That will be a different type of engagement, given we are in that really early stage again. It has been extensive across all different media channels, all sorts of face-to-face communication. We have learned a lot from it, as we continue to learn about community engagement as a whole, making sure that the community is part of the conversation. We learn a lot from that and it does help to inform our decision-making. Do you want to add anything to that?

Mr Edghill: I think that is comprehensive. There are letterbox drops, for example. Canberra Metro, in particular, have their own community engagement team and they will knock on the doors of shopfronts or residences to let them know what is happening. They have a 1300 number. Anybody who has any concerns can contact that 1300 number. It is very much a multifaceted approach, remembering ultimately that the project is being done not for the engineers working on the project but for the community. We are very mindful that we need to involve the community as we progress through the various construction phases.

MS CHEYNE: The report mentioned at page 19 there had been—and I am interested if there still is—a partnership with the Canberra Business Chamber.

Ms Fitzharris: Business link?

MS CHEYNE: The business link program?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: What did that do and does it still exist?

Ms Fitzharris: It does, and they have done an extensive amount of work with their membership as well to provide a conduit for the government and for the business sector to learn about the project, to understand how they can be a part of it. They have held a number of forums—I have presented at one; I think the team has been at all of them—for local firms about the nature of the project, how they can become involved, some of the key things that Canberra Metro will be looking at. That relationship has proven to be and is a good model for a large infrastructure project. It was important to the government that there be a significant local industry element to it because we know that it is going to create a lot of jobs, a lot of opportunities for apprentices and an opportunity to grow a skill space here which we do not currently have. You will be

able to talk more about the specifics of the program?

Mr Edghill: Yes, certainly. I can definitely talk to some of our recent activities. Because the chamber represents many members throughout the ACT and they are of different sizes, it is a very valuable channel for us and for Canberra Metro to reach into, for example, the local subcontractor community. The first quarterly forum we had in 2017 was fairly recently, on 21 February, and that was an opportunity for Canberra Metro to attend and provide not only a detailed construction update but also further colour on remaining work packages and so forth to be put forward. I think there were over 60 local businesses represented at that particular forum.

Indeed, when Canberra Metro began going to market with their 70-odd work packages an important element of that for them was to first get in front of local subcontractors, through the arrangements with the Business Chamber, to inform them of the number of packages, the approximate timing of packages coming through and the types of the packages. More importantly, Canberra is a market that does not necessarily have deep experience with tier 1 construction contractors. It is a big project. It was an important opportunity, through the chamber, for Canberra Metro to give a very up-front heads-up to the local subcontracting community as to what they were looking for, what it is like working with a big tier 1 construction firm and how they engage. It is something which on a number of different fronts has proven, from the feedback that we have been receiving, very, very useful for the local subcontracting community.

MR COE: What feedback did you receive at the meeting last Monday from the local business community with regard to the opportunities that they are receiving or not receiving?

Ms Fitzharris: I am not aware. I spoke to the manager of the business link program last night, who happened to be at the community council meeting, and nothing was raised with me. If you are aware of any particular issues—

MR COE: Is there anyone who was at that meeting? I was not at the meeting. I am curious to hear if any of your advisers or members of the directorate were at the meeting and would be able to relay some—

Ms Fitzharris: We can certainly take that on notice.

Ms Hughes: I attended on Monday. There were probably about 50 people present at Thoroughbred Park for the business link program last week. Actually, the discussion was primarily about activation of the corridor, urban renewal, the benefits and considerations that need to be put into putting a light rail down such a significant corridor of Canberra.

In regard to consulting work and being involved in the project, there was one individual that had expressed an interest in being involved in the project but had not secured any work. The Canberra Metro representative who was at that meeting specifically sat down and spoke to him and gave him the contact phone number of someone he could speak to to take that further and see whether there were any reasons why he had not yet been able to secure any work.

There was also some discussion in regard to contractors who were not necessarily local contractors and there was a discussion about the unique equipment that was required by Canberra Metro to undertake some of that work and the fact that it did not actually exist in the ACT and they had brought it in from outside this region.

MR PARTON: At page 65 of the report we are given a breakdown of the items comprising the community engagement costs. Is it possible to provide—and it may not be possible here—specific amounts on the community engagement costs as listed for market research, design and creation of display tools, digital imagery, community stakeholder workshops and events, and general advertising, please?

Ms Fitzharris: Certainly. We will take that one on notice.

MR PARTON: I am now back at page 12 of the report, regarding the restructuring. Was there a duplication of roles or functions during the merge of Capital Metro Agency and TAMS?

Ms Fitzharris: I will let Mr Ponton answer that.

Mr Ponton: With respect to light rail specifically, no, but in relation to the corporate functions, yes. There was duplication of roles, particularly around our governance area. I guess the short answer is yes, there was duplication of roles. But in terms of the specific detailed lower level positions in this organisational structure for light rail, the answer is no. It was more in the corporate area. In terms of TCCS, with the parks and conservation team going out, we needed to do a restructure of that area, which created a changed function. It was not duplication, but there was a significant change in that part of the organisation.

MR PARTON: It must have been quite difficult. How were the roles and the responsibilities delegated through that transition period?

Mr Ponton: In relation to what was TAMS at the time, we focused very much on the corporate functions in bringing the two organisations together. The light rail project essentially continued to run as a separate project because it was at a critical juncture, with contract signing imminent. Lower down it ran as a separate project and, as I said, we focused very much on the corporate aspects, the financial aspects and the like.

MR PARTON: What was the selection process for staff that were moving across into TCCS? What I would like to get to is what percentage of staff left each agency during the change.

Mr Ponton: As a result of the restructure, there were a number of executives who left, as provided for under their executive contracts. It really came down to working through the ideal structure for the organisation and the substantial change in those roles and the change in the levels of some of those roles. For example, we created two deputy directors-general at the band 3 level. We had a number of people who were at the 2.6 level. There was a substantial change to those roles.

As I said, we had the Parks and Conservation Service leaving the organisation, which meant that one executive had essentially half of their functions removed. In relation to

the corporate side of things, we had two chief operating officers as a result of having two organisations. It was a case of identifying the individuals and the level, because they were both at different levels, as I recall—I might need to check that, although I am fairly certain that is the case—and the skill set that we had in moving forward.

MR PARTON: During that whole process were there any conflicts noted within the departments or amongst senior staff?

Mr Ponton: Conflicts in?

MR PARTON: It must have been a fairly tumultuous process for some.

Mr Ponton: Any change management process is tumultuous. You need to be very careful with a change process that you are engaging with staff at all levels on a regular basis and are providing information as often as you possibly can. That is certainly what we did.

MR PARTON: Has there been any significant disharmony or change in the culture of the absorbed entities now that they are together?

Mr Ponton: I would say there has been a change in the culture, which is what we were driving for when we created the organisation. We have had a very strong focus on the customer experience, which was not really embedded in the organisations previously. That has been very much a strong focus in the organisational change that we are looking for, understanding our role in serving the citizens of Canberra. I think the change in culture has been positive. In the early months there were some tensions as people started to settle into the roles and we were bringing together the different teams, but I think it is safe to say that, on the whole, it is a very positive work environment.

MR COE: Is everyone located in the one building: the corporate and the previous Macarthur House complements?

Mr Ponton: We are now located in two buildings but next door to one another in Dickson.

MR COE: Can you tell me what advertising took place for the position of project director and director of operations?

Ms Fitzharris: Of light rail? Do you want to talk to that?

Mr Edghill: Certainly. I am assuming not the project director when Emma Thomas was appointed—

MR COE: No.

Mr Edghill: but project director Scott Lyall?

MR COE: Yes.

Mr Edghill: The initial appointment of Mr Lyall occurred in late 2015, from memory. When Mr Lyall was appointed at that point in time it was not as project director; it was effectively replacing the departure of Mr Allday, whose title was, I think, executive director for procurement and delivery. There were inquiries made of the market at that time as to people with appropriate skill sets to fill that position. This was in the context of the infrastructure market in Australia and particularly the east coast being very hot. For example, in New South Wales they have over \$70 billion worth of infrastructure projects in the pipeline over the next four years. That does not include the Parramatta to city metro, for example. I have been at conferences where officials from other states have put out an open invitation to those assembled that if any of them are any good at project management, please give them a call. That is the context that we are operating in.

MR COE: But where was it advertised?

Mr Edghill: It was not advertised.

MR COE: Not at all?

Mr Edghill: There were inquiries made of the market and then, as a consequence of those inquiries, Mr Lyall was appointed to that role. Mr Lyall, in moving into the project director role, certainly proved himself to be a very capable performer. So when the corporate changes were happening within TAMS and Capital Metro Agency and there was the creation of TCCS—when Emma Thomas, who was the designated project director, was appointed to the director-general role—there was an opportunity, as the project moved from business case phase into construction phase, for Mr Lyall, with his deep experience and proven performance, to be moved into the project director position.

MR COE: And the director of operations?

Mr Edghill: The director of operations is a particularly specialist role. That particular gentleman is engaged through a contract with a company called SNC-Lavalin. I understand that there was a procurement process, and SNC-Lavalin are on the existing panel that was formed. There was a competitive procurement process that was undertaken that led to the engagement of a person in that director of operations position.

MR COE: What are the annualised salaries for those two positions?

Mr Edghill: Because both of those people are engaged through a contract between the ACT government and their respective companies, we are not actually paying a salary. That will be a matter between those companies and those individuals. The costs associated with those two contracts are, I think, a matter of public record and in the annual report.

MR COE: I am not sure, because there are several contracts with regard to the director of operations. I note there is one that says \$1.148 million for the director of operations. I was wondering: what is the annualised salary of that? That is just a lump sum. Is that for a month? Is it for two years? What is it for?

Mr Edghill: If you follow that particular line over to the right, you can see that that is the maximum amount over a two-year period. It would be inclusive of total territory costs. On an annualised basis, inclusive of all the costs that may come under our contract, the annual payment to SNC-Lavalin in that respect is in the order of 550. What they are actually paying Mr Kilfeather we are not privy to. That would be a matter between SNC-Lavalin and Mr Kilfeather.

MR COE: Sure. With Mr Lyall it is a different arrangement? He is the sole director of that company, is he?

Mr Edghill: That is my understanding.

MR COE: On top of that figure, which has been reported as around \$600,000 a year, there is an apartment. How many other people working on the project are provided with an apartment?

Ms Fitzharris: In terms of working on the project, I think it is fair to say it is for accommodation costs; is that correct?

Mr Edghill: Indeed. There are different mechanisms as to how people are housed here in Canberra. The project is obviously a light rail project. We do not have a light rail system in Canberra yet, so the expertise that we need to source for specialist functions comes from outside Canberra. There is a need for us to ask service providers to locate people here in Canberra for the course of the construction. In the case of Mr Lyall, part of the arrangements that were agreed cover accommodation. For other people who are specialists who are temporarily located in Canberra, accommodation arrangements may be a matter between them and the respective services contractor.

MR COE: How many people engaged by—

Ms Fitzharris: Directly by TCCS?

MR COE: the agency are provided with either an accommodation allowance or an apartment or property?

Ms Fitzharris: No-one is provided with an apartment directly by the directorate. If we do not have that, we can take that on notice.

Mr Edghill: Yes. To give you a sense, presently we have 14 consultants working on the project. I think two are living here in Canberra. There are others who commute from interstate. We can take that on notice.

MR COE: What is the arrangement? Who pays the rent? Is it paid for by the project director, or is the rent paid by the government?

Mr Edghill: There is some flexibility under the contract. The key component is the upper dollar limit to what is applied. It depends where that person may be living when the lease ends. My understanding at the moment is that the ACT government directly pays the amount, but if arrangements were to change—should Mr Lyall move and be

living somewhere else and should he enter into a lease agreement—the effect would be, from a financial perspective, exactly the same, in that he would then on-bill that up to—

MR COE: What procurement process did capital metro go through in terms of this apartment? If the government is paying money out, there must be procurement or a contract associated with that. So where is that contract?

Mr Edghill: The details of the apartment are set out in the contract with Mr Lyall. To be honest, whether Mr Lyall is living in a hovel or a mansion is neither here nor there to us. What is of concern to us is that the dollar amount does not exceed the amount that Mr Lyall is entitled to under our contract with him.

MR COE: Is Mr Lyall invoicing you for the apartment?

Mr Edghill: At present—

MR COE: Because if the payment is going directly to the property manager or to the owner of the apartment then what is in the other contract is neither here nor there.

Mr Edghill: My understanding is that under the present arrangements the invoices are coming to us directly, but the liability of the ACT government is up to the amount that has been agreed with Mr Lyall.

MR COE: If there is an invoice coming to the ACT and a contract which, at \$875 a week, goes well over the procurement rules of under \$25,000, where is the procurement process that capital metro went through in order to pay for this apartment?

Mr Edghill: The procurement process is bound up with Mr Lyall's contract that clearly contemplates that, either directly or through Mr Lyall invoicing us, he is entitled to accommodation up to that dollar limit in the contract.

MR COE: But you are paying an entity that does not have a contract with the ACT government. You are paying an entity that has an arrangement with a consultant, or a director of a company has an arrangement with the ACT government. Surely there are some procurement issues there. In effect, you are paying a landlord somewhere for something which you have not engaged in that process.

Ms Fitzharris: Under an approved contract already.

MR COE: But the approved contract is not with the landlord. The approved contract is with somebody else.

Mr Edghill: We entered into a contract with Mr Lyall—which was approved, appropriately, internally—that clearly contemplated that accommodation would be provided up to that dollar amount.

MR COE: I am not doubting that the contract exists. It is whether it complies with the procurement rules and the procurement law. I would find it very hard to believe that a

third party can sign a contract to then pay somebody else an amount of \$875 a week. Did you get advice on this?

Ms Fitzharris: I will certainly take it on notice and get that advice for you.

MR COE: It should be listed in here as a contract, or it should be on the contracts register, if nothing else.

Ms Fitzharris: Certainly my understanding is that a number of these contracts—and correct me if I am wrong—are often subcontracting arrangements. That is provided for within the procurement policy framework and the legislative framework, and that is not unusual at all. I would consider this to be similar to that, but we will certainly take advice. We will take that question on notice and provide the answer back to the committee.

MR COE: Sure. Usually in a subcontracting arrangement the contractor pays the subcontractor, not the actual client.

Ms Fitzharris: It may be that this is not unprecedented but, like I say, we will take it on notice and provide advice back to the committee as soon as possible.

MR COE: Yes, if you could. What is the limit on the accommodation cost, because \$875 per week is getting up there? What is the limit which Mr Lyall is allowed to spend on an apartment?

Mr Edghill: The \$875, which is stated in his contract.

MR COE: What checks did you do on the apartment to ensure that \$875 represented good value for money for the taxpayer?

Mr Edghill: We had determined that for a furnished apartment that was appropriate in the circumstances, that \$875 was an appropriate figure. Again, it is an amount that Mr Lyall is entitled to have reimbursed to him or paid for directly. Do I inspect Mr Lyall's living conditions? The answer is no, I do not directly.

MR COE: The ACT government is paying for it, so it is in effect leased accommodation by the territory. Is the territory a signatory to the lease?

Mr Edghill: Yes.

MR COE: The territory did take out the lease?

Mr Edghill: That is my understanding, yes.

MR COE: That begs the question: how was procurement done, if indeed—

Ms Fitzharris: Like I say, Mr Coe, we will certainly provide advice back to the committee.

MR COE: How many of the 14 consultants has the ACT government taken out a

lease on a property for?

Mr Edghill: I would need to take that on notice to determine if there are any others whom we have directly engaged with.

MR COE: You mentioned that \$875 a week was the maximum amount payable. Was there an option to simply pay \$875 a week as unaccounted for allowance to the contractor? Or was it always dependent upon presentation of a lease to that amount?

Mr Edghill: The latter. I do not have the exact wording of the contract in front of me, but it was always the contemplation that it would not be simply an \$875 amount which is paid to Mr Lyall, that there would need to be some evidence of paying for accommodation.

MR COE: The \$875 amount—when was that determined? It is a very precise amount.

Mr Edghill: Yes.

MR COE: It is interesting that somebody should find an apartment that is exactly on that precise amount of \$875.

Mr Edghill: If Mr Lyall finds an apartment above \$875 then he has to bear that difference himself.

MR COE: Right. So it is possible that Mr Lyall negotiated to the cap of \$875 and therefore has got that arrangement within the window?

Mr Edghill: That would be a sensible way to approach looking for an apartment.

MR COE: But you did not do that negotiation?

Mr Edghill: Directly myself? No.

MR COE: Thanks.

THE CHAIR: I refer to page 11 of the report. It says that 2016-17 will be a significant year for the construction of light rail. I would appreciate an update on what construction you are doing.

Ms Fitzharris: I think anyone who drives down the corridor can see significant construction activity underway, which we can talk to in quite some detail. But as it says in the report, there are effectively six zones within the route. Each zone is at a different point in its construction.

At the moment obviously the most notable construction activity along the Northbourne corridor is the tree removal and some of the utilities work there. Further up the corridor you will see significant work on the depot at the southern end of Mitchell, along Flemington Road, and then again very significant work at the top end, near the Gungahlin town centre. That work will continue.

As I mentioned earlier, there is the weekly summary as well as an indication of the construction schedule for the life of the project, which we released, I believe, midway through last year, indicating when early works and major works would get underway.

The light rail will be operating late in the second half of 2018. So there is a considerable amount of work to do in that period. It will involve some disruptions. We are looking to minimise that as much as possible, particularly around peak hours and obviously after hours. There have been some closures of intersections or part closure of lanes during off-peak periods, but there will be periods when there will be intersection closures. Also, Flemington Road will become a one-lane road for a significant period of time over the course of this year, which was mentioned in the presentation that we gave yesterday evening at the Gungahlin Community Council.

Information is finding its way out today and tomorrow extensively across the community, particularly for those that are impacted in the local area around the Flemington Road closure. There are a number of other works underway, some of which at the moment involve construction of the road surface so that light rail can be constructed in the middle. You will see that up at the top of Hibberson Street, at Kate Crace Street, and also around Mitchell, where the road will become the permanent road with light rail in the median. It is under construction.

There is a temporary off-road cyclepath near the resource management centre at Mitchell as well. You cannot drive down the route without noticing the impact of construction, but we are communicating extensively with the community. The weekly update is terrific. If you walk, cycle or drive down the corridor, you will see different parts of the construction.

I am sharing around a lot of images of what the construction looks like down some of the pits and some of the work that you cannot see visually if you are not part of the construction team. There is an extraordinary amount of work underway, but if there are any specific questions or any more detail you require, Mr Edghill can provide information.

THE CHAIR: I was particularly interested in the stabling yard. That is what I call it. I do not know if that is the—

Mr Edghill: Yes, certainly. Bulk earthworks at the Mitchell depot are largely complete. Effectively, there are two main components of the Mitchell depot. There is the actual building structure that will house the operational control centre and the workshop. There is also the outdoor stabling area, which houses the trams overnight that are operating in the system.

Much of the bulk work to date has involved excavating to level out that particular area. As the bulk earthworks are now complete, what we will see throughout the remainder of the year is the foundations of the structures they are working on now. We will begin to see that building come out of the ground. What we will also see this year is the Mitchell depot area. It will be one of the first areas, if not the first, where tracks are laid for the project. The reason we will be laying tracks at the depot first is that that is where we will put the light rail vehicles as they begin to be delivered later this year. That allows us to begin the lengthy commissioning process towards having those

LRVs put into operational service.

THE CHAIR: I have a few more questions on this. With the works, you were saying that Flemington Road has to go down to one lane. There is some communication going out to residents who will be affected, but what other ways are you looking at to mitigate the impact, because obviously it is quite a busy road?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, it is. It is the obvious question to ask and it was discussed last night. We are looking at some specific things that we could do with the buses. We had a discussion at the community council last night. A couple of members mentioned that entrepreneurs could get involved in the transport sector. Certainly, there could be Uber drivers, for example, that may be looking to carpool across the region to reduce the number of people in their cars every day moving in and out of Gungahlin, because I am very conscious that there is not only work on Flemington Road; there is work on Horsepark Drive and Gundaroo Drive as well.

We know that it is going to have a significant impact on the local community over the course of this year. But we are both working as quickly as possible to minimise the duration of the impact and we are providing as much information as possible. Certainly, the additional lane on Gungahlin Drive, some of the signalisation there, the completion of the Barton Highway intersection and the signalisation there will help to some extent, but we recognise that it will add to the pressure on Gungahlin roads.

THE CHAIR: Just out of interest, with all these works going on, how many people are actually working on stage one?

Ms Fitzharris: Right now—could we give a snapshot?

THE CHAIR: I do not need a definitive number; ballpark is fine.

Ms Fitzharris: Okay.

Mr Edghill: It is hundreds. I think probably around 300 is a more accurate number. I had the very good fortune of being at Canberra Metro's compound on Northbourne Avenue during the week as they were undertaking site induction activities. They do that on an ongoing basis. The place was a hive of activity at 7.30 in the morning. There are many people who are engaged as a consequence.

Ms Fitzharris: How much of that workforce is locally employed?

Mr Edghill: Let us see if I can—

Ms Fitzharris: Certainly it is a requirement of the contract that there be a significant local engagement. I believe that in the construction phase 75 per cent local—

Mr Edghill: Yes, if not more than that.

Ms Fitzharris: was the minimum.

THE CHAIR: Yes, that is where I was going to. How does it match with the

government's local industry participation policy?

Ms Fitzharris: The industry participation plan is in its final stages now between TCCS and Canberra Metro to get the fine grain detail. But there has certainly been a lot of work done. The business link program is an example of that in terms of making sure that we have that local industry and local employment impact that was an important part of the project.

Mr Edghill: Approximately 82 per cent of the current workforce within Canberra Metro are local employees at present.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MS CHEYNE: My questions are about jobs and study. I have heard or read that there will be civil engineering degrees at ADFA.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, I think for the first time this year. They have previously been offered only to defence force employees. Yes, for the first time there is an opportunity for UNSW Canberra to offer that to civilians. In its first year I believe the uptake has been pretty good, but they expect that to continue to rise over the coming years.

Mr Edghill: We understand there to be, separate to that arrangement, 13 graduates currently working on the project who have been engaged by Canberra Metro or their subcontractors. As we were going through the business case and the procurement phase, we were keenly aware that one of the positive legacies that we wanted to leave for Canberra was an uplift in the skills and the experience of the local workforce.

With that, we took the initiative to speak with various tertiary providers, including UNSW Canberra, who have a partnership with ADFA. One of the pieces of feedback that we had heard along the way from various people in the industry was that there were no undergraduate engineering degrees available to kids here in Canberra. The anecdotal evidence was that they were going off to the University of Wollongong and other places and maybe setting themselves down a path that did not involve their coming back to Canberra.

There was an engineering degree already in existence in Canberra, although only open to defence students through the UNSW Canberra and ADFA arrangements. We took the initiative to have a chat to them and say, "Look, we have got a big infrastructure project coming up and we are happy to facilitate your second year engineering students working on that project if, in return, you open up your program to civilian students."

We understand that what made that attractive to UNSW Canberra and ADFA was that, firstly, it provided their existing students and future defence students with an opportunity to witness engineering projects from the private perspective, not just from a defence perspective. But also the increased number of students who would apply for the course allows UNSW Canberra to offer different streams within the course.

For example, at the time when we were talking to them they were very keen on having extra students, both civilian and defence, that would support a pavement engineering

course within the structure, because that is of importance to the Air Force and their runway activities. As a direct consequence of the light rail project, we were able to reach an agreement with defence and with UNSW Canberra to facilitate the opening of civil mechanical and engineering degrees to civilian students in Canberra.

MS CHEYNE: What is the funding arrangement? How does it work?

Mr Edghill: That is one of the neat things about it. We are not paying anything. We are simply allowing their students the opportunity to have work experience placements on this project.

MS CHEYNE: Speaking of work and jobs, what percentage of the local workforce, again, is contributing to or working on the Canberra Metro project?

Mr Edghill: Approximately 82 per cent at present.

MS CHEYNE: How does that compare to the government's policy on local participation in the workforce?

Ms Fitzharris: It was 70 per cent. That was the target.

Mr Edghill: Yes.

Ms Fitzharris: So we are well exceeding the benchmark that we set.

MS CHEYNE: Are your projections that you will continue to exceed that?

Mr Edghill: We receive monthly reports from Canberra Metro; so we monitor it from time to time but we have no reason to believe that we are going to be under our target at this point.

MS CHEYNE: With the monthly reports, has it remained consistent around that 82 per cent or has it grown?

Mr Edghill: There are different phases of work—

MS CHEYNE: Yes.

Mr Edghill: throughout the project. So we would expect it to bounce up and down a bit as different packages are released to market. But, to my knowledge, we have not been under the target in any of the reporting periods. It has been a positive story so far.

MS CHEYNE: Thank you.

Ms Fitzharris: Just to summarise, I think the question was asked last night about everything being on track in terms of timing. The answer is that that is certainly the case. At the moment there is no reason to believe that the contract would not be completed in the time frame.

MR PARTON: During the recent election campaign there were a number of residents

in Tuggeranong who suggested to me that ACT Labor phone canvassers had promised them that the light rail would be in Tuggeranong in five years, so I am assuming October 2021. Why would they have given that advice? Will it be in Tuggeranong by the spring of 2021? If not, is the minister able to give the committee an ETA for capital metro getting to Tuggeranong town centre?

Ms Fitzharris: With regard to the first part of your question, I am here as a minister in the ACT government and a Labor member of the Assembly, but I am not aware of that occurring. It would be a question that you would need to ask of the Labor Party.

In terms of the broader network, again there have been extensive conversations. We reached the peak of debate on light rail last year; that was very clear. The work that is underway to talk about our public transport network has been happening over many years, but specifically around the development of the transport for Canberra policy in 2011 and 2012 and subsequent work around the Civic to Gungahlin corridor. We recognised that that corridor was growing, that its potential for greater density and more people living in it was significant and that congestion on Northbourne Avenue was growing. It was, by a reasonable stretch, our most congested road, causing major issues for people who needed to use it and every day reducing the productivity of the network as a whole for people who needed to use the Northbourne Avenue and Flemington Road corridors.

At that point it was envisaged that there would be a frequent public transport network across the city. We have added the blue and red frequent buses as a first stage of rolling out frequent public transport across the city. Subsequent to that, there was consideration of light rail as one part of that frequent public transport network. With the construction of stage 1 of light rail, Labor and the government always said that it was part of a network. In order to start a light rail network, you need to start somewhere. We started on our most congested corridor, and no-one disputed that Northbourne Avenue and Flemington Road was our most congested corridor.

You will be aware that subsequent to that there was a lot of work done on the light rail network plan, which was the minister for planning's responsibility. That, I believe, received quite a lot of consultation in 2014, 2015 and 2016. As a result of that, it always identified those frequent networks. They are fairly obviously to anyone; they are really networks between the major town centres, and also out to the east, to Russell and to the airport.

I do not recall the exact dates, but there was then specific consultation done through planning and in close consultation with Transport Canberra, and TAMS at the time, on the delivery of the light rail network. Stage 1 having been identified, what were the priority corridors for stage 2? That work involved extensive consultation—from memory, surveys and community events—and four corridors were identified as the priority corridors. They were the parliamentary triangle, Civic to the airport, Civic to Woden and Belconnen to Civic. The government short-listed it to four and made the decision midway through last year that it would deliver city to Woden as stage 2 of light rail to provide that north-south spine between Gungahlin, Civic and Woden.

MR PARTON: You are telling me that when we talk about a city-wide network, we are talking about a city-wide transport network. So, based on your answer, it is quite

possible that there will never be light rail in Tuggeranong?

Ms Fitzharris: No.

MR PARTON: You have given the four priority routes that were identified. When we look at the time that it takes to roll out and we look at the ETA for stage 2 to Woden, and then we factor in the other three highest priority routes, it puts Tuggeranong a long way down the track, as it were, doesn't it?

Ms Fitzharris: Delivering major infrastructure takes a long time, as we discussed yesterday evening. Labor committed to build light rail in 2012, and it will be operating in 2018. That is 6½ years. That is a very quick period of time in which to deliver such a major infrastructure project, to go through all the necessary engagement, to do the necessary design, to bring on board all the expert advisers that we need and then go through an approvals process, the procurement process and the construction process. It will take some time.

We have never not said that that is the case. In fact, what we did say was that it is essential that we have reasonable public debate about these projects. Many commentators around the country say we have to have reasonable public debate about investment in infrastructure in this country, because it is lagging behind where it probably should be. That is because major infrastructure projects are the subject of, in some cases, quite extreme public debate. That is not in the interests of the country, and it is certainly not in the interests of Canberra.

We are now on a path to investing in a major public transport network, and that includes buses, light rail and active travel connections, as well as exploring other future opportunities in how we move around the city. The next stage we expect to take around the same period of time, but we expect also that the government will continue to talk to the community about where stage 3 should go.

MR PARTON: Is there a chance that cost-benefit analysis will determine that it is not feasible to go to Tuggeranong, or do we ignore cost-benefit analysis?

Ms Fitzharris: I do not know. We would have to do that work. What a cost-benefit analysis looks like for that, I do not know, but we would necessarily do the range of different considerations and the costs and the benefits. In the context of developing stage 2, we will have stage 1 up and running and operating. We have seen in different jurisdictions that patronage figures, for example, have exceeded expectations on a number of light rail projects, notably on the Gold Coast, although I note that there are a range of other factors that we need to take into account. We will continue to do that work. It is really important to recognise that these are massive projects that do take a long time to deliver.

The government has made a commitment to public transport investment. We are doing that through light rail and we are doing that through buses. I welcomed the opposition's commitment to public transport in Canberra last year, because I think we finally got past the point of debate that Canberra is only ever made for the car. Every major city around the world knows that the future of transport is not in private motor vehicles driven by one individual. It is a hugely expensive network to build, operate

and maintain, and it has detrimental effects on productivity, the environment and quality of life. I welcome this point where we are now. We have passed that point where public transport is not part of Canberra's future; it is very much part of Canberra's future.

MR COE: With regard to the next stage, is the rail link going to be the most direct route possible to Woden, or is it going to take the scenic route through Russell, Kingston, Manuka, Deakin or somewhere else?

Ms Fitzharris: You will be aware that in the light rail network plan there was an identified route, but not an identified alignment. We have said on many occasions, both before and since the election and when the tenders for stage 2 design definition work went out late last year, that that is exactly the work that we are undertaking at the moment.

MR COE: Sure.

Ms Fitzharris: It is not yet determined.

MR COE: Will that be determined by a cost-benefit analysis?

Ms Fitzharris: There will be a range of different factors that we will consider. That will be part of the mix, as it was when considering the stage 1 of light rail.

MR COE: So you are in effect doing staging analysis now? Is that what you are doing?

Ms Fitzharris: In December, the tenders went out. They closed, in a couple of different stages, for each different package, in January. Almost all of those packages have now been settled or, if not, will be settled in the next couple of weeks. That will help us determine the next stage of the work.

MR COE: Okay. Mr Edghill, you mentioned 14 other consultants in response to a question earlier. What are these consultants doing? What is the breadth of work that is being done in-house by TCCS in light rail and what is being outsourced to consultants?

Mr Edghill: Are you happy for me to answer, minister?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

Mr Edghill: There are a range of specialised activities involved in the project at the moment. We are in our design and construction phase. Part of the day-to-day workload that we bear at present is, as I mentioned before, the three-stage design process contemplated by the contract. When, for example, Canberra Metro submits a component of the design to us, part of the work that is being undertaken by our specialist advisers is in relation to that design process. For example, when we are looking at issues specifically in relation to track signalling or the design of the light rail vehicles, they are activities which we are assisted with by our suite of advisers. We have advisers in place to assist us with various operational matters as well.

The reason we use these advisers as opposed to engaging people through direct employment arrangements is twofold. First, the construction period is finite, so there are skills needed, and there have been ever since the outset of the project. There have been a range of advisers who have come in and out. That is one of the advantages that using advisory services presents to us: we are not paying for somebody for ever and a day; we are paying as we need them. And when they have performed the part of the work that is specialist in nature, we do not need them anymore; there is an opportunity for them to move on. The other reason we use the advisory process is the specialist nature of much of the work that we are doing at the moment. Because we do not have a light rail industry in Canberra, the expertise resides elsewhere, and it is sensible to engage people through those advisory contracts.

MR COE: I want to go to the organisational chart of capital metro, as per page 12 of the annual report. I note that that has been superseded by the new arrangement, but we did hear from Mr Ponton earlier that this tree became a branch of TCCS. There have been changes, obviously. How many of those positions—people who are not consultants by title or are not advisers by title; people who are actually embedded in the organisational structure—are consultants as opposed to staff?

Mr Edghill: You are right; there have been changes from this diagram on page 12. Of the boxes there, there are two which are consultants; the rest are ACT government employees. I am an ACT government employee; the director-general is an ACT government employee.

MR COE: Sure, but as of now, how many would have a title of director or executive director who are consultants?

Mr Edghill: As of now, also two: the project director and the director of operations.

MR COE: Of the other 12 consultants, is there a fair chance that at least some of them—if not all of them—are having accommodation paid for?

Mr Edghill: I would have to go through each of their individual arrangements, but it is common in contracts of this nature that there may be entitlements to disbursements which include accommodation and travel.

MR COE: You confirmed earlier that the ACT government, or a representative of capital metro or TCCS, had signed the lease for the apartment of Mr Lyall. How many other leases has the ACT government been a signatory to that are for accommodation for somebody working on capital metro?

Mr Edghill: My understanding—and I am happy to check this afterwards—

MR COE: Please do.

Mr Edghill: is that it is the one contract which is contemplated, Mr Lyall's contract, which is publicly available. It was definitively contemplated that there would be accommodation arrangements up to the \$875 that we spoke about before contained within the contract arrangements with Mr Lyall.

MR COE: With regard to other allowances that would be paid in addition—when \$600,000 is not enough—what are they? There is an apartment or accommodation allowance. Is there anything else that is payable?

Mr Edghill: I would make the comment that we are not operating in a Canberra market. We are operating in an Australian market here, and I am very confident that the arrangements that we have in place with Mr Lyall for a person of his skills and experience are appropriate in the market. In fact, I think we are getting a great deal with Mr Lyall.

MR COE: You are getting a great deal with the apartment?

Mr Edghill: The apartment is part of the arrangements with Mr Lyall, and disbursements are part of the arrangements in any contracting or consultancy arrangement that we enter into. I am very confident that the arrangements that have been agreed with Mr Lyall are appropriate in the context of us undertaking a large and specialist infrastructure project in the ACT.

MR COE: How many of these consultants is the ACT government paying to fly in and fly out?

Mr Edghill: I would have to take on notice how many consultants were entitled to travel reimbursement under the—

MR COE: Are there some that are perhaps flying in on a Monday and flying out on a Friday?

Mr Edghill: Yes. To be honest, one of the challenges that we have experienced in the project to date has not just been the need to gain specialist knowledge; during the last calendar year the political debate that was happening certainly did not make it easy for the project team to be running job ads.

MR COE: You did not even run them for these two positions.

Mr Edghill: Part of the solution to that, and to fill the needs that we have within the project, is to engage people on an advisory basis. One of the things that we are conscious of is that we have transitioned from the business case phase to the procurement phases and we need to ensure that there is continuity of knowledge within the project. There are a number of consultants who do not live in Canberra but traverse from other locations and work here during the working week under the arrangements we have in place with them.

MR COE: For each of these 14 consultants, can you please provide the amount that they are paid and perhaps an annualised amount, if it is not clear? In addition, can you tell us what accommodation expenses they are entitled to, and in what form, and also what travel arrangements they have in their contracts as to perhaps the class of travel, the expense, how many flights they are taking and any other relevant allowances?

Ms Fitzharris: We will take that on notice.

Mr Edghill: Yes.

Ms Fitzharris: Mr Edghill said it should be a matter of public record in terms of the contracts.

MR COE: I have looked for the apartment, and I cannot find the apartment in the contract.

Ms Fitzharris: We will take that on notice. As I said, it is 2015-16, but we do not have—

MR COE: The contract register should have that.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes, but we were preparing for the 2015-16 annual report.

MR COE: The contract register has got nothing to do with the annual report.

Ms Fitzharris: That is right.

MR COE: That is a requirement of the procurement act.

Ms Fitzharris: I am not looking at that right now, and we are not going to do that while we take your questions. We will take them on notice.

MR PARTON: That \$875 a week being considered an appropriate level—is that indicative of a housing affordability crisis in Canberra, despite the reports in the press this morning?

Ms Fitzharris: It is a furnished apartment.

MR COE: It is a bargain.

Ms Fitzharris: That is a cheap shot. But I would say—

MR COE: It is a very expensive apartment for a cheap shot.

Ms Fitzharris: I would add to the comments. The government made the point on many occasions throughout the last year—as did many significant industry representatives—that certain elements of this debate were handled very irresponsibly by the opposition talking about tearing up a contract, and the impact that that would have on people willing to invest in Canberra in future. I had conversations with people from significant construction firms who said, “It’s going to take me a while to convince my bosses to come into the Canberra market because of the reckless”—

MR COE: Can you attribute that? Who said that?

Ms Fitzharris: I am not going to attribute that.

MR COE: You have just made a statement and you cannot back it up.

Ms Fitzharris: You have been making many statements and allegations here that you have not attributed to anyone.

MR COE: You are the minister. You are bound by cabinet rules, and you are bound by the ministerial code of conduct.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MR COE: So you cannot just go around making allegations like that without being able to back them up.

Ms Fitzharris: What sorts of allegations? I said that it was in conversations I have had. You well know this, Mr Coe; we have had this debate. The opposition's reckless and irresponsible approach to this political debate over the course of the last year had an impact on the project and an impact on Canberra.

MR COE: That is why we are paying \$875 for an apartment, is it?

Ms Fitzharris: No, that is not—

THE CHAIR: Excuse me, Mr Coe. Please continue at your leisure outside of the report hearing. In the time we have left, I would like to ask a question on the infrastructure sustainability rating. I am interested in getting a bit more information on what sustainability measures are captured in the tool.

Ms Fitzharris: Are you referring to something in the annual report?

THE CHAIR: Yes, I am referencing page 31, to be specific, minister.

Ms Fitzharris: We can have someone come up and speak with you specifically about that.

Mr Sancbergs: There are a series of parameters that are measured through the Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia tool. It measures a range of things like management approach, water re-use, material re-use, biodiversity and biodiversity benefits.

THE CHAIR: These have been worked into the project design and delivery to minimise the environmental impacts; is that right?

Mr Sancbergs: That is correct, yes.

THE CHAIR: What benefits do you expect to see from using this tool?

Mr Sancbergs: We have set a fairly ambitious target for the project, with an excellent rating. It is a score we are seeking to achieve. The rating will ensure that we are efficient in the use of materials as we deliver the project, that we are not being wasteful, that we are managing our water effectively as a scarce resource and that we are seeking to maximise the re-use of any by-products that come as a result of the

project.

THE CHAIR: If I have read this correctly, you have not received the rating yet, but at the end of the project you get the—

Mr Sanberg: The rating is achieved over a number of stages throughout the project. The target has been set in the contracts. Canberra Metro has to work through its design phase to identify strategies and approaches and undertake design in a particular way to achieve the rating for the design phase, which then sets up the construction so that at the completion of construction all of that is measured again to validate that we have achieved the targets.

THE CHAIR: That is all my questions. Thank you.

MS CHEYNE: I have questions relating to some of the things on pages 26 and 27 of the report about safety, communication and accident and incident reporting. I note that there was just one accident/incident report form received and one incident logged. Respecting privacy, are there any details relating to what that incident was?

Mr Edghill: Sorry, which page?

MS CHEYNE: Page 27. It is the third paragraph from the bottom:

During the reporting period, one Accident/Incident Report form was received ...

Mr Edghill: I think we would have to take that on notice.

Ms Fitzharris: We might have to take that one on notice.

MS CHEYNE: That is fine. More broadly, in terms of prevention measures, I note that in the reporting period there were weekly safety talks. Are those continuing, to your knowledge?

Mr Edghill: I can talk to this one.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes. More broadly, we have had a lot of conversations about safety being a priority on the construction site. That is everything to do with the trees and the condition of the trees. Bringing down those trees a bit quicker than normal was a decision based on the safety of the travelling public along Northbourne Avenue and, notably, of workers on the site.

The majority of work on the site is happening in the median of a major road, so the construction activities come with a number of high risks. We want to make sure that we do everything we can to minimise those. I know that safety has been an important part of the message right from the very start. As well, in the business forums that I have attended, of which there have been a couple, Canberra Metro and Transport Canberra have been at pains to stress that the safety of the site and the safety of the workers on the site and the surrounding public is of the utmost importance.

Mr Edghill: In terms of the reporting period, this is really looking at the CMA

office-based staff at the time. There was not too much construction happening during this period.

MS CHEYNE: There were pretty regular safety talks just for staff in an office?

Mr Edghill: And safety talks continue in the office. For example, even in our executive meetings on a weekly basis, involving the D-G, me and other senior colleagues within the directorate, we begin with what we call “safety share”. We all take turns in bringing a safety point or a safety topic for discussion at the outset of the meeting. The idea behind that is to ensure that we remain focused on the importance of being safe, not just within this project but across the entirety of the directorate.

Within the Canberra Metro construction site it is very reasonable to say that the market here in Canberra is seeing safety standards and a focus on safety that is absolutely top-notch. For example, I have had the benefit of being inducted onto the construction site. That is in addition to having the asbestos awareness training, the construction white card and so forth. Even the induction is a three-hour process that everybody working on the site needs to go through, and it covers safety matters. The project is using John Holland’s global mandatory requirements. That is a list of absolute rules, and anybody not following those rules will not remain on the site. Then there are other site-specific conditions which are applicable to the project.

There are probably four main risks which are faced on the construction site here. One is underground services. One, which is the same for any kind of construction project of this nature, is the interaction of the plant and people. There is obviously live traffic in close proximity to the median, so that is another risk. And then, probably the biggest risk in any construction project is you, or me, not paying attention, not doing as we should.

As part of the induction process that is ingrained into everybody working on the site. They have site inspectors; they have safety people throughout the organisation. In addition to safety, consideration and focus are given to environmental matters. We were talking about community consultation before. As part of the site induction process everybody is provided with a card with the 1300 number on it, so if any issues, complaints or anything arise from members of the community, everybody there knows how that person can have their issue resolved by speaking to the right person. It is a very thorough process, and I think the focus on safety in this project would be the equal of any project in Australia at present.

MS CHEYNE: The minister just mentioned—

THE CHAIR: Sorry, can we put further questions on notice. We have another committee coming in a minute, so we need to wind up.

Ms Fitzharris: Which I am appearing in front of too.

THE CHAIR: Can you do it in two minutes, Tara?

MS CHEYNE: Let us try.

Mr Edghill: Good luck.

MS CHEYNE: I want to go to safety, trees coming down.

Ms Fitzharris: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: In the committee on Monday we talked about whether there is possible re-use of trees that are coming down. Is there?

Ms Fitzharris: Yes. In fact, there are lots of suggestions being put to us of a very wide range of uses, many of which have come from the community. Some will work well; some might not work so well. We are in the process, through Canberra Metro, of seeing how best to do that, how best to leave a legacy from the trees which have been in the median for a couple of decades now. There will be a need to factor in the condition of the trees and how the particular tree species is good for re-use.

As well as some re-use for play, there are obvious re-uses of the trees in providing environmental benefits in some of our nature reserves and some of our waterways. Other examples include having them put in playgrounds, particularly as part of natural play. And some artists and artist groups are looking at how they could possibly use the trees to provide artworks. Maybe it is public furniture; maybe it is a specific artwork. I am not sure that we yet have a time frame for when we will know a bit more about that. Do we know?

Mr Edghill: No, but it will be in the near future.

MS CHEYNE: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: That concludes the committee's proceedings for today. On behalf of the committee, thank you for attending the hearing. Before we adjourn, I would like to remind members one final time that supplementary questions should be lodged with the committee support office within five business days of the uncorrected proof transcript becoming available; responses to questions taken on notice should be submitted to the committee office within five business days of the uncorrected proof transcript becoming available; and responses to supplementary questions should be submitted to the committee office five business days after the questions are received.

The committee adjourned at 3.29 pm.