



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL
TERRITORY**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

(Reference: [Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2019-2020 \(No 2\)](#))

Members:

MRS V DUNNE (Chair)
MS T CHEYNE (Deputy Chair)
MS B CODY
MS N LAWDER

PROOF TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2020

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Secretary to the committee:
Dr B Lloyd (Ph: 620 50137)

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.

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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 9.30 am.

ORR, MS SUZANNE, Minister for Community Services and Facilities, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety and Minister for Government Services and Procurement

SABELLICO, MS ANNE-MAREE, Deputy Director-General, Community Services Directorate

CALDER, MS ROBYN, Executive Group Manager, Corporate Services, Community Services Directorate

MURRAY, MS CHRISTINE, Executive Group Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate

CHARLES, MS AMANDA, Senior Director, Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate

THE CHAIR: Good morning and welcome to the second day of hearings of the inquiry of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts into Appropriation Bill 2019-2020 (No 2). Today we will hear from Ms Suzanne Orr MLA, Minister for Community Services and Facilities, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety and Minister for Government Services and Procurement, and her officers; Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Attorney-General, Minister for Seniors and Veterans and Minister for Building Quality and Improvement, and his officers. This afternoon we will hear from Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Transport, Minister for City Services, Minister for Recycling and Waste Reduction and Minister for Roads and Active Travel, and his officers.

I will ask witnesses whether they have read and understood the privilege statement, copies of which are on the table. Witnesses are encouraged, when they take a question on notice, to say the words “I will take that question on notice.” It makes it easier for everyone to find things that we have decided to take on notice.

I welcome Ms Suzanne Orr, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety, Minister for Government Services and Procurement, and Minister for Community Services and Facilities, and her officers, to the table to answer questions regarding the appropriation for the following items: as Minister for Disability, the disability justice strategy; as Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety, the independent WorkSafe ACT, to better protect workers in the ACT; and, as Minister for Government Services and Procurement, meeting the future government accommodation needs and modernising procurement practices. As Minister for Community Services and Facilities, the minister does not have the lead for the cultural tourism hub at Yarramundi.

Ms Orr: No, that is with the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

THE CHAIR: And improving and expanding online services?

Ms Orr: That would cover my area plus others—it is a cross-portfolio issue.

THE CHAIR: It is cross-portfolio, and that comes under procurement.

Ms Orr: Yes; you are welcome to ask me a question on it.

THE CHAIR: That comes under procurement.

Ms Orr: That one comes under—

MS CHEYNE: It is with CSD and TCCS; is that right?

THE CHAIR: It comes under CSD.

Ms Orr: Yes, it covers a lot of CSD.

MS CHEYNE: Okay. Maybe you can tell us more about it.

THE CHAIR: Mr Steel is the lead.

Ms Orr: I am happy to take questions on it.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Mr Steel is the lead on that.

Ms Orr: Minister Stephen-Smith is the lead on that one.

THE CHAIR: Okay. We will begin with questions about the disability justice strategy.

Ms Orr: I will just say for the record that I have read the privilege statement and I understand it. We will get Ms Charles to answer questions.

THE CHAIR: Could you, minister, outline for the committee what the disability justice strategy is supposed to do and what the timetable is?

Ms Orr: The disability justice strategy is there to create a community of practice within the justice community. That takes in all different groups and breaks down barriers to people with disability accessing justice services. That is what it is intended to do. It has a four-year action plan, and this funding goes towards operationalising. We have already started to see the first parts of that action plan put into action. I will hand over to Ms Charles to run you through the detail of it, because she lives and breathes this strategy.

THE CHAIR: Minister, you said there is an action plan. What is the time frame of that?

Ms Orr: Four years for the action plan.

THE CHAIR: From when to when?

Ms Orr: It was launched on 9 August 2019.

THE CHAIR: Thanks.

Ms Charles: I am the CSD lead on the disability justice strategy. The disability

justice strategy is about creating equality for people with disability, with the law. That means engaging with all of our justice agencies to ensure that they see people with disability and are confident and skilled in providing appropriate supports.

THE CHAIR: How would that play out on a day-to-day basis?

Ms Charles: People with disability are over-represented in the prison system, in youth detention, in being victims of sexual assault, victims of violence, and are over-represented in every single justice aspect, in every single legal aspect. People with disability experience significant compounding disadvantage in engagement with law and justice. What it will involve is how we support our justice agencies, who are all good people doing good work, to be able to see people with disability and make adjustments so that they actually can access the justice system.

THE CHAIR: What are the impediments to people with disability accessing the justice system, in terms of an advocacy—

Ms Orr: If I could just jump in here, I think a really good example is one of the first actions that has already been carried out under the plan, which is the simple English—

Ms Charles: Easy English.

Ms Orr: Sorry—the easy English tutorial classes where these groups can go along and learn how to take what is quite complicated legal language and put it into something that is easy to understand.

THE CHAIR: Who are those workshops for? Is it for lawyers or—

Ms Charles: At this point, it is for workers from the justice agencies. We have had four workshops to date. We have had 52 different people from justice agencies. That includes Child Protection, ACT Policing, courts and tribunals, Legal Aid, Canberra Community Law, a whole range of legal agencies. What they learn to do is to translate what is sometimes quite complex messaging into relatively simple English so that people can actually understand what is happening for them.

Easy English is different to plain language in that it has an image attached to it, so people actually know what to expect and what to do. If people turn up at a police station because something has happened to them—and for people with disability it is very likely that something will happen to them in their lives that is not okay—then they need to feel confident about communicating with the police and the police need to feel confident about hearing what is happening for them.

Legal Aid need to feel confident about knowing that this person is able to consent and what they can do in this conversation. At every step in accessing the justice system, which is, by dint of what it is, an adversarial system, people with disability are disadvantaged, not because we want it to be that way but because it is a complex system that we all struggle in.

Ms Orr: I was just going to say that in the document that Ms Charles just held up is the easy English version of the disability justice strategy. We can table that if it helps.

THE CHAIR: That probably would be handy, rather than using it as a prop.

MS LAWDER: Easy English has been around for a long time; I think it goes back to the national disability strategy. Why are we only just putting this into practice now?

Ms Charles: We are not just putting it into practice now. In different places we have utilised easy English in different ways. The office for disability has been supporting Canberra Community Law and a range of different organisations over a period of years to translate things into easy English. We do not have a lot of skill base in the ACT to do that, so we are utilising people from Victoria at this point in time. The disability justice strategy has allowed us to have some funds to pay people to come to Canberra to train people. A range of our advocacy organisations and some of our legal agencies had already translated things into easy English prior to the justice strategy, but it costs a bit of money. This has been able to free us up to do that.

Ms Orr: It is also important to note that the process of putting the disability justice strategy together has brought a lot of people to the table, so to speak, and has a commitment that, I think it is fair to say, we have not seen previously in really putting this in and getting it out on a scale that perhaps has not previously occurred, even though things have been happening.

THE CHAIR: I do not have a handle on what the disability justice strategy is. We have talked about easy English. What else is involved in it? Ms Charles has listed a group of agencies that are involved in it, but what are the things that are in the strategy?

Ms Charles: The most important part in the justice strategy is that the system sees people with disability, which means that people with disability have their experiences and what they require from a communication or engagement seen.

The disability justice strategy is a 10-year plan that has a first four-year action plan that is the foundational plan for getting our justice agencies, our broader community and people with disability ready and commencing engagement on how people can become more skilled and confident in engaging with justice agencies. Our justice agencies, through a whole range of different actions and activities, can become more confident in seeing people with a disability, knowing that they experience some needs and being confident in meeting those needs.

It is potentially changing our system. Currently we do not have a lot of data gathering on people with disability in the ACT. This is the same across the country. Part of the action plan is around how we gather data; how we share information; how we support agencies to be confident; and how we support people with a disability to say, "I experience disability and what I need from you is this, to be confident in what I am doing." Does that help at all?

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MS LAWDER: How does that work in practice? In theory, under disability discrimination and human rights, you do not have to self-identify. It is almost at odds

with the requirement to self-identify.

Ms Charles: We are not going to ask people to say, “This is my diagnosis.” We are talking about people saying, “When I engage with you, I cannot hear what you are saying.” If people have a hearing impairment, they cannot hear, but they do not want to say. We know that in engagement with justice services, and many services, people do not admit: “I don’t understand. I don’t know. I’m not confident.”

We want to provide an opportunity where services can say, “Is there anything I can do to make this engagement easier? Do you require any assistance with your hearing? Do you require any assistance with reading? Do you require any assistance with self-care or understanding what is happening here?” That is not asking people to say, “I am a person with this experience of disability.” It is inviting people to say, “I’m not very good at hearing with my left ear”, “I’m not a great reader”, “I don’t understand what you are telling me” or “This sounds too complex; I need someone to come with me to these conversations.” We want to provide the prompts so that people can say, “This is what I need from the system.” Does that make sense?

MS LAWDER: The budget review paper talks about improving screening and identification for people with disability in contact with the justice system. Who are you training or assisting for the screening and identification?

Ms Charles: The first part of that conversation, which we are currently working on, is needs identification. There are a whole range of screening tools out there that people can use. They screen for intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, hearing impairment et cetera. They are all separate screens. Then there are a whole range of assessments, such as functional assessment. Those things take time and engagement; we cannot start off with those. If we start off with needs identification—“What can I do for you to change this conversation?”—we will have an understanding if someone indicates, “I require assistance with reading,” or says, “If you give me this document to sign, I can’t read it.” That happens frequently.

MS LAWDER: I am just asking who may be doing that screening. Who are you assisting?

Ms Charles: In terms of needs identification?

MS LAWDER: Yes.

Ms Charles: Frontline justice agencies. We are talking about any time someone has engagement with something that leads to a justice engagement, which we know is the pointy end of the criminal system. But we also know that with conversations right down at the civil system level—such as at ACAT or when engaged in an interaction with a housing provider or a telco—when people with disability are not confident and do not engage and say, “I am not understanding this conversation,” they experience disadvantage that can lead to an engagement with the legal system.

If, early on, everybody who is engaged—it could be education, health, telcos, banks, police, child protection workers, courts et cetera—asks questions to understand more about what people need in that conversation, people are more likely to have their

needs met. We are focusing on the justice system but keeping it from criminal justice, which is often the pointy end of the civil justice component.

MS LAWDER: At the screening and identification point, does that information flow through so that someone does not have to keep identifying it at later points?

Ms Charles: This is one of the things that we have heard from community. Community believe that if they tell someone, “This is my experience,” and they get heard, they would like that information to be shared. But we have a whole range of information sharing, data gathering and consent issues. Part of the first four-year action plan is identifying what those issues are, asking how we can begin to deal with those and mapping out what that looks like.

We are talking about a pretty significant cultural change that will take at least 10 years. The first four years of the plan give us the capacity to map out where the points those questions can be asked are; ask who can share information; and ask whether we start with a consent model where, if I consent to share information and the people consent, that information can be shared. We also need to be mindful of various agencies’ data gathering and information protocols where they cannot necessarily keep information that is not related to their core business. I feel like I might be going on too much about this.

MS LAWDER: No. There is another point about autonomous decision-making and whether you are able to make that consent.

Ms Orr: Part of the project goes to supported decision-making, which is something that—as I am sure you are quite aware, Ms Lawder—the disability community is very focused on supporting. Our community partners, who are part of the implementation and meet reasonably regularly, I think it is fair to say, to implement the strategy, are looking at ways that you can make supported decision-making in practice. Amanda, do you have anything you want to add?

Ms Charles: I think that sums it up nicely.

MS CHEYNE: I just want to get this straight in my head. The disability justice strategy was released in August last year and at the same time the first action plan, which is 2019-23, was released?

Ms Orr: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: But there was no funding associated with either of those until this appropriation?

Ms Orr: Part of setting it up, has been to get the strategy action and to start working on it. Part of the steering group work has been to set the directions of how to operationalise the first action plan. The time line does actually line up in the sense of making sure that everything is more clearly articulated and giving, I think it would be fair to say, the autonomy to the community groups that need to come to the table and set the direction of what they are doing too. It is very collaborative; that is how it goes about this. It is there, it is clear and now it is being put into action.

MS CHEYNE: The strategy and the action plan being released at the same time, and at that point in time, gave you enough time to feed into this midyear appropriation.

Ms Orr: Yes, and there were things already in place. The appropriation that has come here is for those later years, for what we were not able to get on with to begin with. But we cannot do everything from day one. For instance, the easy English workshops have already been undertaken.

MS CHEYNE: Yes. What funding pool did they come out of?

Ms Charles: The office for disability prioritised some existing funding because it is aligned with the work of the office for disability.

MS CHEYNE: Yes, okay.

THE CHAIR: You have got \$670,000 that you are—

Ms Orr: In 2019-20—

THE CHAIR: proposing to get out the door between now and the end of the financial year, and this money is not actually appropriated until the first week of April. What are you proposing to do with that \$670,000 in this financial year?

Ms Orr: Quite a lot of that funding will go towards the practitioner spots.

THE CHAIR: To the practitioner.

Ms Orr: It is four positions put in place to work within our partner agencies to actually drive that cultural change so that it is embedded within those organisations.

THE CHAIR: So that is essentially staff?

Ms Orr: Yes.

THE CHAIR: And in the outyears, is that all staff or is there more project work involved in that as well?

Ms Orr: There will be a mixture. Ms Charles, do you want to run through those details?

Ms Charles: There is a range of project work that happens. Adapting resources will be an ongoing part of the four-year action plan. The bulk of the funding that we have received will be to create a community of practice. From April on, we will start with four positions that are based in different justice agencies, to begin to support that organisation to make cultural change to see people with disability. The following financial year there will be an additional two positions and then, the following financial year, an additional two. There will be a total of eight community and practice members who will be based in justice agencies to support those agencies to make changes.

THE CHAIR: At what level are these staff? You have four staff—

Ms Charles: They have been funded.

THE CHAIR: and \$670,000 pro rata over a three-month period. They are either very highly paid staff or there is something else in that \$670,000?

Ms Charles: Within the \$670,000 we have money for supported decision-making, \$60,000 for supported decision-making, which is supporting our advocacy agencies to continue with supported decision-making. We have money for education and resource development, which will be easy English workshops as well as developing videos and other resources that we require to ensure that people can access those services more confidently. We also have money for a business analyst in that space. We have a member of the disability justice strategy team, based in the office for disability, and another one at JACS, in legislation and policy.

THE CHAIR: Could the committee have a breakdown, on notice, of what the \$670,000 is for and then a breakdown into the outyears? Can we also have a breakdown of how much that money has already been committed or cash managed et cetera since the beginning of the project in August?

Ms Orr: Yes. We will take that on notice.

MS CHEYNE: You can probably answer this now: is the \$4.8 million from now into the outyears enough, in your forecast, to complete all of the actions with staffing aligned in the first action plan, or do you think that you will have to go back and ask for more money at some stage?

Ms Orr: I do not think we can pre-empt the future, but certainly we think it is a reasonable amount, from what we know at this point in time.

MS CHEYNE: I appreciate that some of the actions can be done in house and they are about doing strategies and things like that—because some of them include screening tools and things like that, which are going to be costly. I am curious to know, as part of what Mrs Dunne has asked for, what is going to cost the most.

MS LAWDER: Are there any plans, minister, for improving accessibility for people with disability in water recreation areas like Kambah Pool, Pine Island, that kind of area?

Ms Orr: It was not part of the budget, but it is fair to say that, across everything we do and everything that the office for disability does, we are always looking at ways that we can make Canberra more inclusive for people with disability. As we do not have a specific budget item for that, I think that is probably as much as we can say.

MS LAWDER: Okay.

MS CODY: Minister, the government has invested about \$2.2 million over four years to digitise key business processes within CSD. Can you give me bit more of an outline

on what that—

THE CHAIR: Have you got a question on the disability strategy?

MS CODY: No. But neither was Ms Lawder's, so—

THE CHAIR: Sorry, I thought it was. I actually just have one quick follow-up question, if we could and if you do not mind.

Ms Orr: This is a good project, so we will get to Ms Cody's question and we will run you through all of that.

THE CHAIR: Okay. This is something that Ms Cody and I probably come across in the inquiries in the HACS committee. Ms Charles, a couple of times you mentioned care and protection. One of the things that we have come across and that is reported to us regularly through the inquiry that we are currently conducting is that people with a disability, as parents, when they come into the care and protection system, often do not do so well. There is often a high likelihood that their children will be taken into care, or there is a predisposition to take children into care. Are there elements of the disability justice strategy that will address those issues?

Ms Orr: The disability justice strategy will work with the care and protection services, as part of the community, to raise the same awareness that is seeking to be raised across all of those justice communities. Ms Charles, do you have anything to add?

Ms Charles: The care and protection committee members have been fabulous in terms of their goodwill and engagement in this conversation and in developing practice guidelines and engaging with people with disability and families with disability. Committee members have been really keen on trialling the early identification tools, so they are on board in this conversation, absolutely.

THE CHAIR: What do you mean by an early identification tool in this context?

Ms Charles: As I said before, in relation to screening and assessment we have our identification, people identifying their needs. In those conversations, people are able to indicate, "I have some of these needs," which people would not normally offer early on in a care and protection conversation. But if the question is asked, "Do you require any assistance with reading or do you require any assistance with writing or understanding or doing this on your own?" people are more likely to indicate: "This is what I need in the system."

THE CHAIR: That is about actually navigating the system. What about the interaction at the pointy end, about whether the children in this arrangement should be taken into care? Where does that fit into it?

Ms Orr: I think questions regarding the decision-making of care and protection are probably questions best put to care and protection. I do not think—

THE CHAIR: I am just trying to—

Ms Orr: The disability justice strategy is about creating a culture around all of these justice organisations so that disability is not a barrier to accessing the full range of services and supports that these groups provide. That is what we are looking at. I think the question that you are asking is more of an operational question for a different area.

THE CHAIR: Ms Cody, we will go back to your question. Have we finished on the disability justice strategy?

MS CODY: Yes.

Ms Orr: Ms Cody, would you like to repeat your question?

MS CODY: I can certainly repeat my question, minister. I note that you are investing about \$2.2 million over four years. Regarding digitising key business processes within CSD, with a focus on more efficient reporting and data linkages, can you expand on that a little bit for me?

Ms Orr: Thank you for asking that question because sometimes when we invest in our IT systems it is not necessarily frontline news. This will be quite a big change for the good, in the way that CSD in particular goes about its day-to-day work. I will hand over to Anne-Maree Sabellico to run through the detail.

Ms Sabellico: Within CSD we have multiple systems that do not link. We have the housing system and the child, youth and family system. We have multiple systems for grants programs, for funding of the NGO sector, and, of course, we lead a large number of human services programs. In order for us to be able to better support the decision-making around some of those, it is important for us to build our infrastructure to better collect, analyse and use the data we have available to us, to better inform decision-making—particularly, say, for our frontline workers, who need far more timely and readily available information, and where the information is brought together in a way that assists with informing their decision-making. Current systems need some enhancements in order to do that.

We also need to look at how we then extract that information and appropriately report. An example is that we are responsible for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agreement, and the outcomes framework which works across all directorates. We need a way to collect, compile and extract reports around that, to be able to show the success or otherwise in meeting our targets across the 10-year plan. It is about how we do that, and building and automating those processes.

Internally to CSD, we still have quite a significant number of manual processes that we run, particularly around our complaints processes. It is about how we then look to automate some of those processes, in terms of contemporising the way in which we work. The other significant thing is data migration—having the capacity to migrate the data from our different systems into the data lake. We have successfully—

THE CHAIR: Did you say data lake?

Ms Sabellico: The ACT data lake, yes.

THE CHAIR: Like the wine lake that the EU used to have.

Ms Sabellico: It is a centralised point for the ACT that all data can be safely and securely put into—a data warehouse by another name.

THE CHAIR: That was my next question: what is the difference between a data lake and a data warehouse?

Ms Sabellico: Fairly similar. We have been able to successfully do that with our child, youth and family data so that we can do some more analytical work with that to give us the information we need, particularly around the prevalence of issues within the system. What is the multiplicity of issues that people might be facing and how frequently do we see that? What have been the responses to date and what could be the responses in the future? It will help us to make some significant policy decisions going forward.

MS CODY: With the impacts on some of those most vulnerable families, how will that improve their experience?

Ms Sabellico: We have been able to pull together the data in a meaningful way for the frontline workers. It should provide better access to the most critical information—currently, they have to trawl through lots of files or records—and be able to provide that information in a more timely way so that there are more timely decisions.

You can also look to build into the system—and this is one of the projects that we will be undertaking—how you then prioritise the workload or the more critical matters within the system so that the managers and the executive are informed about the areas where work needs to be done. It will assist us in being able to identify and raise the profile of some of those matters going forward, so that we can get a more systematised approach.

MS CODY: In the first part of your answer to my first question, you were talking about grants programs. With the money that is received from the commonwealth, will there be better tracking of that as well, to help everyone in the ACT disability sector?

Ms Sabellico: Initially, we are looking at the grants programs that are run within CSD that are funded from the ACT. A number of those could also have some commonwealth dollars attached. We can certainly look at that as we go through. This is about having a look at all of our current systems and processes, doing a bit of a process analysis or review, and looking at how we can simplify and streamline, and make sure that we have the most accurate data available to us.

MS CODY: I note that this is over the forward estimates—over the next four years. What do you hope to achieve over that period and what are your time lines?

Ms Orr: It is a larger project, given the size of the task at hand, and it is something that the directorate has worked on, in developing this proposal and in taking it through the budget process, quite closely with the chief digital officer, to make sure that it is working across government as well. As to the detail of what will happen over the next few years, I will hand over to Anne-Maree.

Ms Sabellico: We have a tiered work program with respect to all of the priority areas that we need to address. The funding over the forward estimates is both for staffing, in order to undertake the work, and for the capital build that will be needed to invest in the types of systems we need to supplement and enhance what we currently have in place. With the current child, youth and family case management system we will need to invest in the sort of box you need at the back end in order to bring the information to life in a way that is far more meaningful for people to use.

MS CODY: Has the work begun? Have you started assessing?

Ms Sabellico: Yes. Over the last year we have been working across the directorate on prioritising the areas we need to work on now. We have been looking at where we get the best return on investment earlier. We have been looking at what processes, if we were to change them now, will have a greater impact in the longer term, and what processes we need to do a bit of testing on in order to be able to look at where we are heading with those. We do have a forward plan that we are working towards, and that will be continually reviewed by our digital and data steering committee, which has the accountability for managing this.

MS CHEYNE: Do you have some systems that are entirely manual?

Ms Sabellico: Yes, we do.

MS CHEYNE: Like what?

Ms Sabellico: Our complaints systems are effectively manual. Where we do have a system to track and monitor, it is an Excel spreadsheet. We are looking at how we then contemporise all of those systems so that we can improve the flow and people's access to that information.

THE CHAIR: Excuse me if I am slow—it is a Monday morning—but I am not entirely sure what the CSD involvement in this project is. Could you, in 25 words or fewer, describe what CSD's involvement in this project is?

Ms Sabellico: This project is all about the internal systems, frameworks and operating environments around our digital and data capability. So it is just a CSD project from—

MS CHEYNE: It sounds as if a whole heap of things are currently done via paper files and they are going to make sure case managing systems are digitised.

Ms Orr: It is going to be contemporising all the systems at CSD.

THE CHAIR: Contemporising?

Ms Orr: That is the word Ms Sabellico used, yes, which is quite a good word to describe it.

MS CHEYNE: Record keeping is of particular interest to this committee. How have

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you made sure that record keeping, when it has largely been paper based, is a system that has some integrity behind it and that things do not go missing?

Ms Orr: The first thing to note there is that CSD has adhered to all the legislation in keeping its records. It has probably just been a more timely manual process. Did you want to add anything to that?

Ms Sabellico: No. Other than that, with respect to the record-keeping system, we are now wanting to look to keep all of our records electronically. We have the system; we now need to actually do the training around getting people to use the system and how it links to the case management system. The important part is to make sure that we have that integration right, in the back end, so that you have a paper file and you can extract it from the system as well as what you need from your case management system. So it is side by side. There is a fair bit of work to do in terms of automating those things, which is one of the significant reasons we had proposed to do this work—because we know that automating and bringing those systems up to date will give us a better ability to use that information in a way that is more meaningful.

MS CHEYNE: How are people currently storing paper files? Are people putting them in cabinets next to their desks or leaving them on their desks, or—

Ms Sabellico: The expectation is that, where there are locked cabinets for people to keep their files, where they have paper files, they are locked.

MS CHEYNE: What class of cabinets do people use?

Ms Sabellico: They need to—

Ms Orr: My experience as a public servant—and I think your experience as a public servant, Ms Cheyne—would point to the answer to that question. Depending on the classification of the document there is a clearly articulated way of handling it, and I am confident CSD is adhering to that.

MS CHEYNE: I am keen to know what classes of cabinets are used for different things.

Ms Orr: We can take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: Improving and expanding online services. In this budget review document when you look at CSD, it says, “Please refer to Transport Canberra and City Services.” In this financial year you have a recommended appropriation of \$649,000. What is that \$649,000 being used for?

Ms Orr: Sorry. Is that the one in the capital line that you are referring to?

THE CHAIR: Yes, the capital line. What is that being used for and are these essentially two separate projects: one for CSD and one for TCCS? Why are they put together like this? They are two separate projects.

Ms Sabellico: The project for CSD is separate from the project for Transport

Canberra and City Services.

THE CHAIR: I wonder why, therefore, when you look under CSD it says, “Look at TCCS.” What is the \$649,000 and the \$1.5 million next year being appropriated for?

Ms Sabellico: That will be the cost of being able to—

Ms Orr: Just to clarify, it is more just the way the papers have been grouped together. The CSD project is separate to the TCCS one.

THE CHAIR: Yes. In terms of clarity it would be better placed in CSD rather than making it look like it is a joint project across agencies.

MS CHEYNE: You might not have been responsible for that.

THE CHAIR: No. What is the \$2.1 million that is being appropriated across the two years for? Noting that you have \$649,000 to get out the door this year, what are you doing with that money?

Ms Sabellico: The money to date has been used to undertake the feasibility study and the prioritisation of the work.

THE CHAIR: So, again, you have done work before this.

Ms Sabellico: Yes. We have been doing some work in order to—

THE CHAIR: So you have cash managed somewhere along the line?

Ms Sabellico: Yes. We prioritised some money to undertake the work so that we could be ready from day one of the appropriation.

THE CHAIR: When did you start the work on this?

Ms Sabellico: A significant start on the work would have been in January.

THE CHAIR: Once you knew that there was an appropriation bill. You were not doing stuff way back in July-August and then went, “There is an appropriation bill coming up; we will put that in there.” It was decided that you needed to do this, and you started cash managing it once you knew that there was a budget bid in. That is a slightly better situation than some of the others that the committee has come across. What is the \$600,000 for?

Ms Sabellico: There are a number of licences that we need to fund in order to start to get people the access to the systems we need, particularly for record keeping. We also need to put in place some of the infrastructure, the design and the build work. So we need to pay for that initially, particularly the design work in terms of what we need in order to do the build going forward.

There are a number of pieces of modelling that we have costed in. We will need to get some consultants in to support that work, and that will be undertaken in this period of

time. We also have some costs associated with working with our staff to understand what the build needs are. There are a range of things, both this year and next year, in order to be able to do the design work, the build, the testing and the validation of all of those systems from a capital perspective.

THE CHAIR: So what you are saying is that the \$600,000 this year is prep, essentially, which you have been working on since the beginning of the year? Is that a reasonable assumption?

Ms Orr: It is capital, I think.

THE CHAIR: I will get on to that, but is that what you are saying at the moment, Ms Sabellico? Are you saying that it is essentially prep for the implementation of the project which will be completed in the next financial year?

Ms Orr: Well, it is going to be completed across a range of financial years because it is not a small-term—

THE CHAIR: So there is only money for two financial years in here.

Ms Sabellico: For the capital?

THE CHAIR: For the capital, yes. Yes, that is what I am asking the questions about.

Ms Sabellico: Then we will need to support the implementation. So, yes, the capital, as I have stated, is to support the design work—the analysis, the design work and the build, and then the testing and validating of those systems in order to support implementation and the culture change program that we will need to embed for people to use the system.

THE CHAIR: I am interested because this is capital and there seem to be some activities in that that do not quite feel like capital. I know it is a very dark art determining which is recurrent and which is capital, but licence fees and things like that I would have thought were not necessarily capital expenditure. So perhaps it would be a good idea to have a breakdown of what the capital expenditure is across those two financial years. I also know that there is \$220,000 over those two financial years—and I know that there is more in the outyears—for associated expenses. What are the associated expenses? Is that essentially staff?

Ms Sabellico: Yes, there is also funding for staff to support the work that we need to undertake.

THE CHAIR: There is a big kick-up in the third year and then it falls back again. What is the reason for that?

Ms Sabellico: We profiled the work that we needed to do in terms of how long it would take to do the design, the build, the test and the validate and how much work, then, is involved in getting the training, the support, the implementation right. Then there is a tail in terms of being able to sustain that implementation appropriately.

THE CHAIR: It is about one staff now, going up to something like two, six and then back to about four?

Ms Orr: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Do you envisage that those four would become a permanent part of the establishment beyond the outyears, if you are going to have a tail to sustain the system and keep it up to date?

Ms Sabellico: Yes, but whether it would be four or fewer—

THE CHAIR: But you would need a tail of some sort beyond the outyears.

Ms Sabellico: You would need a tail to continue to support implementation.

THE CHAIR: Are there any other questions on this? There is an item which I had marked and now I cannot find. It is \$1 million this financial year for modernising procurement practices.

Ms Orr: Yes. That is actually in a different section. That is government services and procurement.

MS CHEYNE: That is CMTEDD?

Ms Orr: Yes, that is CMTEDD.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else in CSD?

MS CHEYNE: Not for me.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you very much.

ORR, MS SUZANNE, Minister for Community Services and Facilities, Minister for Disability, Minister for Employment and Workplace Safety and Minister for Government Services and Procurement

NICOL, MR DAVID, Under Treasurer, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

STRACHAN, MR SHAUN, Deputy Under Treasurer, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

YOUNG, MR MICHAEL, Executive Group Manager, Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

MASTERS, MS NICOLE, Executive Branch Manager, Procurement ACT, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

THE CHAIR: First of all, can I correct that it was not \$1 million; it was only \$100,000. I read the one and the zeroes and I did not have it open in front of me. I apologise. Can you tell me what we are going to do for \$100,000 to modernise procurement practices? That is a staff member, I presume.

Ms Orr: It is a staff member and a lot of it goes to the social procurement capability of the team, which is something we discussed previously in the annual reports hearings, which was my first time here. A lot of that discussion goes to how we put in place practices and procedures that are easily followed across the public service and goes to meeting our social procurement responsibilities. I might hand over to whoever wants to take the question to provide a bit more detail. David, did you want to go first, or Shaun?

Mr Nicol: I can start and then Shaun can add. We have had a series over the last two or three years where many more policy areas are coming forth and engaging with procurement to use procurement as a way to influence policy outcomes, whether that be Indigenous procurement, whether it be LGBTIQ, whether it be community groups et cetera. To date, I think we have addressed each one of those separately and they are now operating. We have three or four starting to operate in the one field.

We want to have another look and make sure it is integrated properly over the entire procurement space, including things like integrating with our international obligations under various trade treaties which impose obligations on us and making sure we have an effective, transparent system of procurement. This initiative is essentially to start that work and hopefully go a good way to completing it. Shaun, did you want to add?

THE CHAIR: Nothing else to add, Mr Strachan?

Mr Strachan: No.

THE CHAIR: This is a one-off project. It says \$100,000. Are you going to get \$100,000 out the door in this financial year? You will note that this is a frequent flier question.

Mr Nicol: Yes, I understand.

THE CHAIR: This is three months after the appropriation. Is this three staff or is this

one staff pro-rataed, an extraordinarily highly paid staff member.

Mr Strachan: I acknowledge the privilege statement. Just in terms of the question, we have actually taken on board the initiative straightaway. We have actually sought to approve a suitable candidate to commence the work. We have found a candidate. That person starts in a couple of weeks time and we will be building on the role of that individual to help accelerate the thinking and the engagement across government.

THE CHAIR: And is that—

Ms Orr: I will pre-empt your question of when that recruitment started. It was recently.

THE CHAIR: Yes. Again, though, we are having a discussion here about the appropriation. You are recruiting people in anticipation of the appropriation. Is that right? You will have started someone before this money is appropriated?

Mr Nicol: The money will go to pay this person, yes. If the appropriation did not proceed we would meet the cost of that person in house by restructuring costs.

THE CHAIR: Again, I go back to some of the questions I asked the other day. Were you intending to do this work anyhow and an appropriation bill came along and you went, “Let’s put some money in the appropriation bill?” You would have managed this internally elsewhere otherwise?

Mr Nicol: The bid went forward to government and government considered it and supported it. I think your question probably goes to the decision-making process—what we would have done. We would have done it probably more slowly.

THE CHAIR: Was this a budget bid for the next budget but it has been brought forward?

Mr Nicol: No.

THE CHAIR: There was a call-out—“What do we need in a supplementary appropriation bill?”—and you said, “This is a good idea”?

Mr Nicol: In fact, it was a—

Ms Orr: I think this is a question for me to answer. It was clear when I took on the portfolio, particularly after the last estimates, that there was an appetite from a range of people within the Assembly but also in the broader community to look more closely at this area and this practice. I know you have raised questions particularly around modern-day slavery. We needed to have the capability to look at these things in a way that we have not previously. Obviously the midyear financial review was an opportunity to start that work. That is what we have done.

THE CHAIR: But you are doing it in anticipation of the appropriation. Are you going to get all the money out the door that is appropriated in this financial year?

Mr Nicol: That is our intent, yes.

THE CHAIR: You have brought somebody on, as a contractor essentially?

Mr Nicol: An employee.

THE CHAIR: You are employing this person for three months for \$100,000?

Mr Nicol: The \$100,000 will cover more than the cost of just this employee. It will go to whether we engage independent expert advice as to how these systems work. That is still to be considered and decided. The intent would be—and I think that is what we will be doing; we will need the staff member to engage on that front when they come on—to get that procurement activity underway very quickly and to get that work done very quickly.

THE CHAIR: Could you, for the information of the committee, on notice, provide a breakdown of what the \$100,000 is for?

Mr Nicol: We can take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: And the time frame for getting that money out the door?

Mr Nicol: Yes, we can do that.

MS CODY: I have some supplementary questions. This is regarding the modernising procurement practices.

Ms Orr: Yes.

MS CODY: How will this funding enable the ACT to ensure that the procurements are socially responsible? You know that is a big deal for me.

Ms Orr: Yes, I appreciate it is a very big deal for you, and I think a lot of people support you in making that a big deal. What we are looking at here—and Mr Nicol alluded to it earlier—is that we have had a lot of other areas across government raise procurement as a way to meet their social objectives. One example would be the multicultural policy, that is also through CSD, that has been raised as one of the actions to do business with a range of multicultural groups.

They raised that we should be making sure that groups that would not necessarily fit—yes, I guess for lack of a better word, fit—within a standardised procurement process still actually have an opportunity and they are not excluded just because they do not have to work the system per se. A lot of this work here is looking at where those things have come up, because we do have a range of them across a range of different areas.

The LGBTIQ strategy raises it, and there are quite a few others as well. It is certainly an area where procurement is getting approached by a lot more line areas who are saying, “Actually, can we have a chat about how we can do this?” We know it is something that interest is also growing in, not just in what has occurred but in what

will be coming in the future.

It is looking at how we can take what are considered to be very good intentions and really good objectives to be aiming for and do more than just have them and aim for them but actually realise them. That means working them through the procurement processes and making it operational in a way that can be done across the public service when they are doing their procurements. Did either of you want to add a bit more detail?

Mr Nicol: The only thing I would add would be that, obviously, a key objective of procurement is value for money. I do not think value for money is inconsistent with some of these other objectives. We can achieve value for money whilst promoting these objectives. But I think you have got to be pretty careful about how you do that to make sure the system is clear for our public servants, who are procuring things, to make sure that they are achieving all the objectives that might in some areas conflict, so that we can get a way that they do not conflict and we can achieve multiple policy objectives at the same time.

MS CODY: How is that building on the government's commitment to growing jobs and the economy?

Ms Orr: It is putting in a place a range of measures that will continue to support, I think it is fair to say, local businesses and local groups as well. We do have the local business strategy, so that is all part of this and making sure that, in looking at what we are doing, we are getting all those different groups to come together. I guess it is fair to say it is opening up government business to a range of people that otherwise might not have that opportunity. Mr Nicol, did you want to add anything?

Mr Nicol: Yes. We are very keen to ensure that local businesses can compete fairly for government contracts. Part of this strategy is working with local businesses to ensure that they can put in competitive bids so that they can be assessed against other bidders. We often get comments that say our system favours one set of bidders over another. I sometimes get criticisms that we favour local business over non-local businesses and vice versa. Sometimes I get accused of favouring large businesses over small business and, again, vice versa.

We need to make sure that all of the processes we undertake in procurement—because there are significant sums of money involved in the ACT government's procurements—are fair, transparent and defensible but also that local businesses can put their best foot forward and compete. Under a process, we do have to assess tenders that we are given. A good tender that has convincing arguments in it can often win on the day of a procurement process. We want to make sure our local businesses can compete. That is all the better for us, because the better outcomes we get the better value for money we will get. But we will also achieve these other policy objectives.

MS CODY: When do you see this beginning? Is there still some work to be undertaken here? We have heard Mr Strachan say that, and you, Mr Nicol.

Mr Nicol: This is an ongoing process. We will not stop the current procurement

system and put in place a new one. We will constantly put in place improvements; that is how I envisage it. For example, the government released the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement policy—

Ms Orr: Yes.

Mr Nicol: which is one example of how we could improve the processes. We are putting a lot of effort into education of our procurement people across the ACT government. We are trying to build capability in our essential procurement team to become a much more enabling team. How do we get better outcomes whilst complying with all of the legislative requirements and other good policy processes that we have to comply with? I envisage that this will be a constant improvement process and procurement will continue. We will not delay or defer anything, but we will constantly look to improve how that process works. Mr Strachan, did you have anything to add to that?

Mr Strachan: No, I think that is fine.

MS CODY: Will this basically be building on secure local jobs?

Ms Orr: That would be taken as one tenet of this—

MS CODY: Yes.

Ms Orr: so we will continue to build upon all of those. Importantly, as Mr Nicol has already said, it will be operationalising a way that all of those can be happy in unison.

THE CHAIR: Could I take up a point that the minister made? We have talked across this table on a number of occasions about the implications for appropriate and equitable employment, not just in the ACT but across the world. We do purchase across the world and there are issues associated with modern slavery and supply chains.

Ms Orr: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I will ask these questions here, but I will also ask them this afternoon of the minister. For instance, there is a proposal that stage 2A of light rail will be wireless and therefore will require energy sources in the equipment. Battery components are an area where there is a lot of concern about what might be called conflict elements—cobalt, for instance—being procured ethically. Given our obligations under the commonwealth legislation in relation to modern slavery, what assurance do we have that, when we are buying—this is only an example—batteries to power vehicles, the components of those are ethically sourced and the supply chain is clean?

Ms Orr: I think the first thing to note there, Mrs Dunne, is that I appreciate that this is an area that you have been very focused on and it is an area that I am certainly very conversant of too. As I am sure you can appreciate, there is no easy answer to any of this particular area.

THE CHAIR: Absolutely.

Ms Orr: It is one where, as I have said previously, we will keep looking at what we can do. Part of the appropriation and part of the work that we are hoping to do is to start to answer some of these questions that you have just posed, look at how we can work our way through those very sorts of questions, noting that we are a small jurisdiction and this is a worldwide issue.

THE CHAIR: Yes, but we will be purchasing, and we have a responsibility under the modern slavery legislation to have clean supply chains. How do we go about that? Are you just relying on somebody bigger than us to guarantee the supply chains?

Mr Nicol: I think it is beyond our capability to ensure every supply chain of every purchase ourselves; we just do not have the physical capability to do it. In tender processes, we do ask for tenderers to demonstrate good procurement and sub-procurement practices. On bigger procurements, we can dive into those issues and make assessments ourselves. We rely on third-party regulatory and licensing practices where they are available. And if there is a reputable third-party institution that has authorised or stated that a company complies with these sorts of procedures, we will generally accept that; we will not generally re-check that. I might ask Nicole Masters to provide some more details, perhaps some examples of how we do that.

Ms Masters: I am not sure that I can add an awful lot other than to say that individual directorates are responsible for their procurement activities and follow the processes and protocols that we have in place across government. We are looking at the New South Wales and commonwealth slavery legislation and the processes that those two jurisdictions have put in place, which have not really commenced yet. We are actively looking at those to see how they go.

I think the threshold for reporting under the commonwealth legislation is \$100 million, and \$50 million for New South Wales. That is the threshold for reporting for companies or turnovers. I am not sure whether it is turnovers or value. At the end of the day, it is a worldwide issue and we are looking to see what other jurisdictions are doing. It will be part of the work that we will do with this new resource that we have to try and analyse more thoroughly any possible processes that we can put in place to ensure that these types of things can be evaluated, particularly in relation to large projects where we would expect to have some visibility and transparency.

THE CHAIR: I will put on the record, minister, that with a project like the “batteryfication”, for want of a better word, of the light rail vehicles, there will be a lot of direct procurement of rare earths and rare minerals which come out of conflict zones—not direct procurement by the ACT but somewhere along the line. How are we going to ensure that that is not conflict energy, essentially?

Mr Nicol: I will take that comment on notice. It is an important one that we are aware of. We will be looking at that process. That particular one does come to mind as one that is high risk. One of the things we will be doing as part of this project is to look at stratifying our risk in our procurement. I do not think that every procurement involves these high risks.

THE CHAIR: No.

Mr Nicol: I think this one does, but laying asphalt probably does not.

THE CHAIR: Yes, but every time you buy a lithium battery, you have to ask that question.

Mr Nicol: Indeed. We are looking at ways we can ensure that we meet our obligations in this area.

THE CHAIR: I have a couple of general questions about procurement. I want to ask about the notifiable invoices register. Who has responsibility for that?

Ms Orr: It is not something that is in the budget papers.

THE CHAIR: I know it is not, but I have a slightly captive audience.

Ms Orr: I know you have a captive audience, but we did prepare for the budget papers. If you ask the question, we will see what we can do, but it might not be something that we can answer today.

THE CHAIR: I am perfectly happy for you to take it on notice. There was a PDF version of the notifiable instrument invoices register, which has disappeared. It has been substituted with a data ACT version. There are issues associated with the lack of consistency in the date format which make it very difficult to search. I have asked questions about that.

Ms Orr: Mrs Dunne, that is really quite outside the scope of the appropriations.

THE CHAIR: Yes, but I will ask the question. If people want to take it on notice, that is fine.

MS CODY: We are looking at the appropriation bill, though.

Ms Orr: Yes. There are other avenues to raise it in.

THE CHAIR: I have used other avenues, but I have not got an answer.

MS CODY: We only have 25 minutes left and I have a whole bunch of questions around WorkSafe.

Ms Orr: I would rather stick to the appropriation.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Could I just ask why we have moved from the PDF version to the database?

Ms Orr: No.

MS CODY: Chair, I believe that this is out of the scope of today's questioning. I would like to move on.

THE CHAIR: I will put it on notice, just to keep Ms Cody happy.

MS CODY: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Are there any other questions about procurement?

MS CHEYNE: No.

THE CHAIR: We will move to employment and work safety.

Ms Orr: It seems that everyone forgot.

THE CHAIR: We have an extensive list of witnesses, but you seem to have sent other people: people other than the people on the extensive list.

Ms Orr: These were the people who were on the list, and this is pretty standard.

THE CHAIR: The committee secretary asked for a list of witnesses and we have an extensive list, provided by somebody to the committee secretary. If you have changed your witnesses, it would be courteous to the committee's secretary to let people know. It is really not the time to be giving names to the committee secretary. Mr Young, you are here in—

Ms Orr: Sorry, Mrs Dunne. Just for clarification, we did send through the witness list. I believe it was sent through with the people who are here today. I am happy not to make a point out of it, but perhaps we need to—

THE CHAIR: There has been a breakdown in communication somewhere.

Ms Orr: There has obviously been an issue.

THE CHAIR: It is not the habit of the committee to not have name tags for the people notified that they are coming.

Ms Orr: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Mr Young, in your capacity, do you want to give the committee a brief outline of what the appropriation is for?

Mr Young: The budget information that is before you is to provide funding for an initiative to make very significant changes to the way that the territory conducts its compliance enforcement of workplace health and safety legislation. It is responsive to an independent review of that compliance and enforcement infrastructure which was undertaken in 2018. The government responded to that review by accepting all of the recommendations in principle in October of that year.

THE CHAIR: October 2018?

Mr Young: Yes. That initiated a project to put in place those recommendations. As

we said, it is quite a sweeping project, so there are a number of deliverables to be achieved across a period of years. There are milestones which you may already be aware of. Significant changes were made to the WHS Act in the territory which would essentially establish new governance arrangements for WorkSafe ACT.

THE CHAIR: New governance, did you say?

Mr Young: New structure, organisational changes. In particular, it established a new position of WHS commissioner. That commissioner is essentially a statutory appointment and the person who will have the regulatory powers under the WHS Act vested in them. It also establishes WorkSafe as an office of the commissioner. A significant change there was essentially to take those compliance and enforcement powers which had previously been vested in the director-general of the directorate which the regulator sat within and to vest them directly in the independent commissioner. That was deliberate.

THE CHAIR: Just for clarity, the work safe commissioner is currently in Access Canberra.

Ms Orr: Work safety, yes.

THE CHAIR: How does the work safe commissioner fit into this new structure? Does the work safe commissioner answer to the commissioner, rather than to a minister?

Mr Young: It is actually two positions. The current position is the work safety commissioner. They have powers under the act, but those powers are limited essentially to education and awareness-raising activities under the WHS Act. The punitive compliance and enforcement powers start with the director-general of the agency which it sits in—currently CMTEEDD—and are passed back to the commissioner by way of delegation.

One of the recommendations in the 2018 review was essentially to clean up that delegation line and to vest the compliance and enforcement and the education and awareness-raising powers in a single statutory position. That is a new position with a very similar name, which is the workplace health and safety commissioner. There are two positions: one is a public servant and the other is a statutory appointment. That position has been advertised. It has not yet commenced. Recruitment action is underway. The legislation which establishes that position, although part of the act has not yet commenced, is scheduled to commence on 30 April this year.

THE CHAIR: This initiative has \$744,000 in this financial year, amounting to \$8.6 million over the outyears. For next year and the remainder of the outyears there is another \$6 million for revenue associated with that, so the costs over time will be largely offset. Could the committee have an understanding of what the \$744,000 in this financial year is for, in the first instance?

Mr Young: Certainly. The supplementary funding for the part year is to provide, in the main, some of the positions, the first being the new WHS commissioner. That is a new statutory officer position and remuneration is determined by the ACT

Remuneration Tribunal. That determination has been handed down.

THE CHAIR: Has been?

Mr Young: It has been. There is also a new position of finance and budget support manager. There is a media and communications adviser. There is funding for an inspectorate resource, focusing on psychological health initiatives. There is also money to commence the scoping and procurement of a new ICT system to support inspectorate activities.

THE CHAIR: How much is set aside for ICT?

Ms Orr: Mrs Dunne, would you like a breakdown of what that?

THE CHAIR: It would probably be easier to have a breakdown, rather than—

Ms Orr: We will take that on notice and provide it to you.

MS LAWDER: You mentioned a commissioner and a media person. Are any of those moving across from the existing commission or are there savings in the existing area?

Mr Young: With one exception, the positions that I just listed are new positions. The inspectorate resource, which is focusing on psychological health, is in place at the moment, but the funding for that position was temporary and this initiative will make it permanent and ongoing.

Mr Nicol: I should add that the current commission and employees doing the commission's work will move over and form part of the new body. This initiative is essentially to expand the resources over the four years for the new function.

MS LAWDER: That was my question: is there a corresponding reduction in the budget of the existing commission?

Mr Nicol: The funding for Access Canberra will drop by the amount of the current activity, and that funding will be provided to the new body. We have not—

MS LAWDER: How much is that reduction in the existing—

Mr Nicol: I call it a transfer rather than a reduction. Michael, you might have that detail.

Mr Young: I do. Yes, as you have rightly pointed out, WorkSafe is currently operating as an office within Access Canberra. People that are engaged in that work will be engaged with the new office of the WHS commissioner. There is a process underway to identify the staffing and the funds that need to be removed from Access Canberra and set aside for the new office once it commences. That base funding is around \$5 million a year.

MS LAWDER: How many new positions will there be?

Mr Young: Once it is fully operational this proposal would establish 12 new positions. I should say, though, that the structure that I am talking about here today is very responsive to the recommendations of that review. It has been developed in a very consultative way with all of the affected staff, but it is only a proposed structure. The ultimate structure will be something that the WHS commissioner, once appointed, and given their independent function, will be able to exercise influence over. The figures that I have just provided are based on that proposed structure.

MS LAWDER: Can you remind me of something? You might have said it earlier. How many additional WorkSafe ACT inspectors do you expect to have in this funding allocation?

Ms Orr: I think what Mr Young was going to there was that this allows for 12 FTE.

Mr Young: Yes.

Ms Orr: The actual finite numbers will be done in consultation with the new commissioner, as is the current practice now around the resources.

MS LAWDER: This may come from the breakdown, because you must have some idea, in terms of putting together these allocations.

Mr Nicol: We can give you the detail for this year and forward years as to what the funding is made up of. As Mr Young has said, the commissioner is a statutory independent role and they can run their organisation, within their budget, however they wish to.

MS CODY: Establishing an independent work safe commissioner: I am very excited by this. Mr Young, you talked about the Nous report. The establishment of the work safe commissioner is recommendation 21, from memory. You can correct me if I am wrong, Mr Young.

Ms Orr: I am very impressed that you—

MS CODY: I have read it inside out and back to front. How are the other recommendations going?

Ms Orr: That is a really good question, because there are a number of other recommendations. A lot of those flow out of the work of establishing the office. Quite a lot of preparatory work has been going on in the transition team—transitioning WorkSafe to a fully independent work health and safety office. I will ask Mr Young to run through a lot of the details, but we have been checking and continually monitoring how we are going in setting up a lot of the procedures and governance requirements that come out of the recommendations that were made. I would note, however, again, that we cannot finalise those without the commissioner being in place. Mr Young can run through a lot of the behind-the-scenes work that has been going on during that transition.

Mr Young: You are correct. Recommendation 21 was to establish WorkSafe as an

independent entity. There were 27 recommendations and the project to implement those has been underway for more than 12 months. A significant number of them were implemented by way of those legislative changes that we talked about previously. As you are aware, the recommendations went to just about every aspect of the operation of WorkSafe, from training of inspectors to ICT systems and the way data and analytics are used to inform compliance enforcement action and resource application. There were significant recommendations around communication activities, the design of the website et cetera.

The project team, which has been in place for that time, has been working very hard so that, to the maximum extent possible, once the office commences and a commissioner is in place, they have as much infrastructure and as much development in that infrastructure as possible, while also maintaining their need for independence and the ability to exercise their own decision-making on those arrangements. One of the standing items that the steering committee which has been overseeing this has been giving careful consideration to is that question of just how far we can go without being seen to tie the hands of this new, independent role.

Ms Orr: It is actually a very fine line, I think it is fair to say. I have been very impressed with the work that Mr Young and his team have been doing in not crossing that line. I am quite comfortable, having regard to the amount of work that they have done, that they have put the new commissioner in a position where they are not starting completely from scratch on day one but they do have enough autonomy to set the direction for the new WorkSafe.

THE CHAIR: Just to clarify, the part that relates to the workplace commissioner commences on 30 April. Do you propose to actually have a commissioner appointed to commence then?

Mr Young: Recruitment action is currently underway and the time line for that would allow the position to commence.

THE CHAIR: That is the ideal.

MS CODY: I know that WorkSafe has gone through a number of iterations. I am going back. In the early 2000s it was independent, from memory.

Ms Orr: Back then, yes.

MS CODY: Mr Young, is that correct?

Mr Young: The arrangement that I described before in terms of the compliance and enforcement powers being delegated from a director-general is a longstanding arrangement that was in place and it was an office with more of its own brand when it sat—

MS CODY: Outside?

Mr Young: Yes, outside Access Canberra.

MS CODY: And then it got moved into the office of regulatory services or something and now Access Canberra, I believe. It will be even more of a statutory body after the next report and with the new legislation that we have seen passed in the Assembly.

Ms Orr: Yes. I think that is a fair way to describe it.

Mr Young: I am not sure “statutory body” is quite the term. The WHS commissioner is a statutory appointment and that person will be able to form an office. It will be a reporting directorate for the purposes of the Financial Management Act, which means it will produce its own annual report and audited financial statements.

Ms Orr: Ms Cody, as I am sure you are probably aware, it goes to a number of the other recommendations that were raised in the Nous review to further clarify the governance arrangements and the reporting arrangements for WorkSafe ACT. A lot of the work that Mr Young has been doing and the transition team has been doing has been putting in place those governance structures that would actually allow and realise those following recommendations that come from establishing the office.

Mr Young: Technically it will be a public sector body for the purposes of the annual reports act.

THE CHAIR: Can I clarify: how does the current work health and safety structure in Access Canberra relate and how will it relate to the commissioner? Will they cease to be part of Access Canberra and be answerable to the commissioner?

Mr Young: Yes, the process that is underway currently has identified the staff and funding which is associated with WorkSafe, albeit operating as a branch within Access Canberra. Those staff and that funding will be transferred and will make up part of the office of the WHS commissioner, once established.

THE CHAIR: And that is ideally at the end of April. Could I ask a variant on the question that I have been asking before. You said, Mr Young, that the Nous report was essentially accepted and agreed to in October 2018. Minister, why are we waiting until a supplementary appropriation to appropriate this money? It seems that it was government policy from roughly October 2018. We have had an appropriation bill for 2019-20 and the outyears. Why was it not funded then? Why is it being funded now?

Ms Orr: The recommendations were accepted in principle and the work is underway to lead that transition, including legislative change, which we needed to finalise before we could progress. Mr Young might be able to go into more detail as to how we have worked for what is quite a significant change that cannot happen overnight.

MS CODY: But part of the legislative change has only just recently been passed through the Assembly?

Ms Orr: Yes. It was introduced just before I became a minister and it was the first thing I passed as a minister. It was quite recent, at the end of last year, as I am sure, Mrs Dunne, you will remember.

THE CHAIR: No, it is not emblazoned in my memory.

MS CODY: It certainly is in mine.

Ms Orr: Passing the legislation was, I guess, the next major step in realising the rest of the recommendations. I think the time line does line up quite reasonably, given the amount of work that is there.

THE CHAIR: I see that the time line does, but you were anticipating this work from October 2018 but it was not appropriated. There was not a thought of appropriating it at the time of the main appropriation?

Ms Orr: In October 2018? I think that does—

THE CHAIR: I know there was an appropriation in—

Ms Orr: I might pass to Mr Young. I think he can provide you the detail there.

Mr Young: I think the ultimate costs of the new agency were very much influenced by the legislative reforms which established the governance. There was quite a bit of public debate going on at the time around what that governance might look like. That had very significant implications for the ultimate cost. The budget review process that we are talking about now is actually the first opportunity to bring forward a funding bid, following the passage of the legislation which gave the scope of the relevant activities.

Some consideration internally was given to the question of going forward at the budget review or waiting for the next annual cycle, but there was a strong view that, I guess, significant recommendations had been made which should translate to making workplaces safer, preventing injuries, and there was an onus to put those arrangements in place as quickly as possible, which is why we took the first opportunity to bring forward a funding bid.

MS CODY: Of course, after the Nous report there was a whole bunch of stakeholder consultation that also was undertaken to ensure that we were meeting the objectives of not only the Nous report but what was going to be best for the sectors?

THE CHAIR: Is that a statement or a question?

MS CODY: It is a question.

Mr Young: The Nous review itself was extremely consultative. As you know, that report is a public document and it describes the extensive engagement that was conducted. That triggered, as we have discussed, a legislative reform program which was subject to its own consultation with industry stakeholders, and the work that has proceeded from the review has also involved and will involve significant changes to the way people are working inside government. That has triggered the usual business practice, union-based consultation. Multiple streams of consultation have been going on since early 2018 on this question and they have all informed the ultimate position that we have arrived at here today.

THE CHAIR: Could I quickly go back to something, minister, that I overlooked. It is not in relation to WorkSafe ACT. It is meeting future ACT government accommodation needs, the appropriation there. Does anyone have any questions in relation to that?

MS CODY: I do, but I note the time.

Ms Orr: Sorry, we actually have to change officials.

MS LAWDER: I am interested in the additional \$10 million allocated under the line item of meeting future ACT government accommodation needs. What is different or what has changed from when the budget was set?

Mr Nicol: I could perhaps give a story of the time line. The government has got two major office accommodation buildings under construction, the Dickson building and the Civic building. They have been announced and implemented over the past two or three years. The Dickson building was not sufficient to accommodate all ACT government public servants who work in Civic.

Many of those leases for those public servants are coming up for renewal in the next 12 to 18 months and the government took a decision, essentially, to centralise the procurement of the replacement of the office space for those staff. We went out to the market for an expression of interest late last year. This item awaited the outcome of that process, which is still underway. We are in the process of negotiating with a preferred tenderer and that cost is essentially to meet the transition and capital costs of fitting out the new accommodation that we expect to occur.

THE CHAIR: But you are going to do all that in the remainder of this financial year?

Mr Nicol: There are two possibilities that are still under negotiation. One is we will get the building owner to essentially fit out the buildings. There is some reason to expect that they will do this very rapidly, because the buildings are currently empty and—

THE CHAIR: The Dickson building is currently empty?

Mr Nicol: No, no, the building that we are currently negotiating with—

Ms Orr: This will be a new one. It is not Dickson or Civic.

Mr Nicol: in Civic, which I have not mentioned before, because we were under negotiations. There is a possibility that through the negotiations we will either pay for that fit-out with a capital contribution, which is what the capital amount of that is for, or we may negotiate an arrangement where we essentially pay that off through the rent, in which case we will have to adjust our plans.

THE CHAIR: This is a possible expenditure that may be a capital expenditure, but you may negotiate another way of paying for the fit-out?

Mr Nicol: That is right. We will determine which is the best offer made by the

building owner.

MS LAWDER: If I can reiterate my question, what changed from the budget? I mean, you know the leases are coming up.

Mr Nicol: We had not gone out to market and did not know what was on offer.

MS LAWDER: But surely you know when you are planning ahead for these things.

Mr Nicol: Yes, and we could have put a number in the budget that would have been very speculative in terms of the size.

THE CHAIR: But actually, by your own admission here, this is also a speculative number.

Mr Nicol: There is an element of speculation, yes; I agree. But if we do not have the money to appropriate it, we will not be able to undertake the work to have office fit-outs and we will have public servants who will not have a lease.

MS LAWDER: What was the original allocation in the budget for meeting future ACT government accommodation needs?

Mr Nicol: The answer to that question is very complex.

MS LAWDER: I am interested to know what sort of a percentage \$10 million is? Is it a 10 per cent addition, a one per cent addition?

Mr Nicol: I will take that on notice in terms of the specifics. But, in general, some of our existing accommodation, where the leases are coming up, the landlords have informed us that they will not be renewing those leases, so we have to find alternatives. For others we could have potentially negotiated a renewal and then the questions would have come up as to whether we would have had to renew the fit-out in those buildings, because some of them are quite dated. Every now and again, although I know governments do not like to spend money on public servants and the fit-out of their accommodation, you have to fit out office buildings, if only for occupational health and safety reasons et cetera.

THE CHAIR: Do you actually have a building in mind for this?

Mr Nicol: Yes.

THE CHAIR: How many staff are we talking about?

Ms Orr: The groups captured by these are ones with very specific operational requirements. Elections ACT, for example, is one of the groups that is captured by this. It would not be appropriate to necessarily locate them with the public service, because they need their own space. That is what this is going to address. Mr Strachan, in the minus two minutes we have left, did you want to add anything?

THE CHAIR: Yes. I am just mindful of the time, so very quickly.

Mr Nicol: Number of staff.

Mr Strachan: We have around about 11 particular service agencies and specialist activities and a little bit over 400 FTE.

MS CODY: I was really after how many staff were going to be relocated.

Mr Nicol: We can give you a list of the agencies and the staff.

THE CHAIR: If you want to elaborate on that on notice, that would be great.

Mr Nicol: Just the one thing I would add is that, with the centralised procurement of this, we expect to make pretty significant reductions in ongoing rental for the equivalent space that we are currently in.

THE CHAIR: You might like to elaborate on that.

Mr Nicol: We can—

MS CHEYNE: Will these staff be subject to an activity-based working environment?

Mr Nicol: That is still subject to discussions. It will depend on the operational needs of each agency. For example, one of the other agencies is ACAT, which has to have hearing rooms et cetera and they tend to be very specific. That is one of the reasons why we have to spend some funds on capital. Whether it is capitalised and we spend the funds, or whether we pay it off, essentially, through the rental stream is a thing that we will be negotiating.

THE CHAIR: Minister, thank you for your and your officials' attendance here today. There are a range of things that people have said they will take on notice. The time for answers to questions on notice is five days from the receipt of the uncorrected proof to have those answers back to the committee.

Ms Orr: I do have some information, Mrs Dunne, that would go to Ms Cheyne's question on record management, if you wanted me to read that now.

THE CHAIR: No, I do not want you to read—sorry—because there is another minister waiting in the wings.

Ms Orr: No worries.

THE CHAIR: You could table it.

MS CHEYNE: Thanks. If you table it, then it does not have to be a question on notice.

Ms Orr: We will just take it as a question on notice.

RAMSAY, MR GORDON, Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events, Minister for Building Quality Improvement, Minister for Business and Regulatory Services and Minister for Seniors and Veterans

GLENN, MR RICHARD, Director-General, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

CVETKOVSKI, MS DRAGANA, Chief Finance Officer, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

TAYLOR, MR ANDREW, Public Trustee and Guardian, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

CONNOLLY, MS HELEN, Senior Director, Guardianship Unit, Public Trustee and Guardian, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

KELLOW, MR PHILIP, CEO and Principal Registrar, ACT Courts and Tribunal, Justice and Community Safety Directorate

THE CHAIR: I welcome Mr Gordon Ramsay MLA, Attorney-General and Minister for Building Quality Improvement, and his officers, to the table to answer questions regarding the following appropriation lines: delivering a family liaison officer to assist families, from the Justice and Community Safety Directorate; additional support for guardian services, from the public trustee and guardian; supporting the environmental defender's office; and, moving to EPSDD, as the Minister for Building Quality Improvement, building regulation reform.

I want to begin by asking questions about delivering a family liaison officer to assist families. The line item in the budget states that this appropriation will help improve access to justice for families and develop a restorative approach for people involved in these processes. There is a press release from 13 February about this as well. It states that the government will begin recruitment for a family liaison officer to provide support for families and friends of deceased Canberrans as they progress through the court system. This is primary funding for the Coroner's Court; is that correct?

Mr Ramsay: That is right.

THE CHAIR: Could you acknowledge the privilege statement as you speak for the first time.

Mr Ramsay: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The work in relation to a family liaison officer is part of the broader work around the restorative cities work and bringing a restorative approach to a range of matters across government. One of the areas that people would be most familiar with is the restorative justice unit. Restorative justice is a subsection of the restorative cities work.

We have done some significant work over the last couple of years in relation to developing restorative practices in a range of areas. One of the areas where we have seen a need to expand that work and to develop that work is the coronial area. There have been a range of legislative reforms introduced to the Assembly that are leading to that, bringing about changes to the way that the Coroners Act is understood, the objects and purposes of the Coroners Act. There are a range of very important legislative matters there. As part of that, one of the things that came through very

clearly in our consultation, not only with the coronial reform group but with a number of people across the community, was the importance of being able to have a family liaison officer.

What we heard was that in coronial matters the traditional and legal approach and the appropriate understanding of a key area of coronial reform was to determine what was the cause of death and how those circumstances may be avoided as much as possible into the future. That particular approach is, effectively, a legal, analytical approach. What we have heard very clearly is that it is important to have a relational approach as well, knowing that when people are moving through coronial matters, they are, in some form, in the stages of grief itself and it could be helpful to have somebody who can work alongside them and with them to help them understand the process. At times the coronial system can be adversarial, where it looks as if the family is on one of the ends of that adversarial system.

The family liaison officer is to work with them: to not only help them understand the process but also help them move through the process and communicate with them and support them along the way. That is the key focus of that family liaison officer.

THE CHAIR: This is one FTE?

Mr Ramsay: That is right. It is a full-time equivalent.

THE CHAIR: At what level?

Mr Kellow: I acknowledge the privilege statement. It is ASO6.

THE CHAIR: So it is one ASO6?

Mr Ramsay: That is right.

Mr Kellow: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Is that pitched at the right level?

Mr Ramsay: It is partly funded through the budget and partly funded through the confiscation of criminal assets. That is why the numbers are as they are.

THE CHAIR: Could we have a full breakdown of the costs associated with this initiative and the sources of the funding?

Mr Ramsay: Yes, we are very happy to.

THE CHAIR: Thanks. On notice.

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Just for the inquiry today, minister, how much is coming from the proceeds of crime fund?

Mr Ramsay: It would be an equivalent amount, as in the appropriation.

Mr Glenn: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The funding directly from budget for the family liaison officer is at 0.5 FTE. The other half would come from the confiscated assets trust.

THE CHAIR: So what is on page 58 represents 0.5 FTE?

Mr Glenn: That is correct.

THE CHAIR: For an ASO6?

Mr Glenn: An ASO6. The remainder of the money is coming from an allocation from the trust to get to a whole person, a whole FTE. In 2020-21 there is \$76,000 that is reflected in the budget paper and an equivalent now from the trust to get to the full FTE.

THE CHAIR: Is there already a person? There is \$38,000 for the last three months of the financial year. Even if that is half an FTE, that is more than a quarter of the allocation.

Mr Kellow: Sorry, I cannot break that down.

THE CHAIR: Off the top of my head, \$38,000 is 0.25 FTE.

Mr Kellow: Yes, 38,000 is 0.25 FTE.

THE CHAIR: So this year it is all coming out of the budget and next year it is partly funded out of the trust?

Ms Cvetkovski: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The funding in 2019-20 covers six months of the year, from January 2020 to 20 June 2020.

THE CHAIR: Okay. So it is six months, even though the appropriation will not come into effect until the last three months of the year. Do we actually have somebody in this position at the moment?

Mr Kellow: No, we are just about to recruit that person.

THE CHAIR: When will they start?

Mr Kellow: I am hoping that the advertisement will go out this week or next, and then we will try and get someone started within the next four or five weeks.

THE CHAIR: I am unsure as to why we are appropriating half a year's FTE when you have not got someone in place, and you will not have them in place before this appropriation. I am just a little confused.

MS LAWDER: Will you be able to spend the money?

THE CHAIR: Will you be able to spend the money?

Mr Kellow: That is a good question. It is a full-time position, so we will spend most of that money. That \$38,000 represented just a half FTE, so it will go into topping—

MS LAWDER: Sorry, did we not just say it was a 0.5 FTE?

Mr Kellow: No.

Mr Glenn: It is 0.5 from budget.

THE CHAIR: It is 0.5 from budget, 0.5 from the trust—

Mr Kellow: That is right.

THE CHAIR: but you have appropriated 0.5 of an FTE across the appropriation period that we are currently in, even though—

Mr Glenn: It was 0.25 from budget for 2019-20. The variable will be how much of the CAT funding is required to engage that person once they are brought on board.

THE CHAIR: So it may be that there is nothing that comes out of the trust fund.

Mr Glenn: It may be that it is less than 0.5.

THE CHAIR: Can we have that in a breakdown, please?

Mr Glenn: Chair, I think we can describe it. We will not know the precise numbers until we know the actual timing of the commencement date.

THE CHAIR: Yes, okay.

MS LAWDER: You must have had something to base your budget bid on.

Mr Glenn: This is 0.25 of an FTE.

MS LAWDER: But if you can provide that breakdown—

Mr Glenn: The variable number will be the amount of money from the CAT fund. We can make an estimate. If we make an estimate of the start date of the individual, we can estimate how much CAT fund money will need to go to engage that person for the remainder of this financial year.

THE CHAIR: But we were told that this money was appropriated at half an FTE for this financial year—this \$38,000 plus another \$38,000 from the trust. But you have not recruited anybody. You are unlikely to recruit anybody in the third quarter of this financial year, meaning that there is only the fourth quarter of this financial year where you might expend funds appropriated. Is that right?

Mr Glenn: For the 2019-20 financial year, it is 0.25 of an FTE from budget, so—

THE CHAIR: Yes, which is 0.25 from budget, 0.25 from the trust.

Mr Glenn: It is 0.25 from CAT, if necessary. If the money is not necessary from CAT because there is only a quarter of a year to engage the person, then we will not need—

THE CHAIR: But we were told a minute ago by—I am sorry, I will have to have another practice of your name—

Ms Cvetkovski: Dragana Cvetkovski.

THE CHAIR: We were told that that was actually an appropriation for six months. So is it for six months or is it for three months?

Mr Glenn: The appropriation is for six months. The amount that is appropriated is the equivalent of 0.25 of an officer for six months.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Mr Glenn: If, by the time the recruitment is available, the officer is engaged for three months then that will satisfy the payment to that person. If it is longer than three months then the additional amount will be made up from allocations from the CAT fund.

THE CHAIR: Yes, okay. Any other questions on the family liaison officer?

MS CHEYNE: No.

MS LAWDER: Just to quickly follow up: there have been people lobbying for some changes for the coronial process and this is one of those which has been funded. Are there any other needs that will be included in this funding allocation?

Mr Ramsay: This particular funding allocation in the budget review is for that family liaison officer.

MS LAWDER: Just the staff.

Mr Ramsay: The broader work that is happening in the matter is certainly in the legislative amendments that are now before the Assembly. There has been an excellent round of consultations and I really appreciate the way that not only the coronial reform group but a range of others have worked. We have had really very positive input from ACT courts and tribunals. It was very pleasing to have the acting Chief Magistrate involved in that, as well. They have fed into the reforms that have happened already legislatively.

I note that there are further matters of reforms that I anticipate will be around later legislative amendments, as is the case with a number of legislative changes which are systemic changes. These are quite profound systemic changes to the way that the coronial system works. They are not always able to be done in one legislative amendment.

It was one of the things that was great to have when I was over in Whanganui for the restorative cities work there, and to have one of the coronial officers coming up from Wellington to be part of that. It is great to see that other jurisdictions are watching what is happening here in the ACT with the restorative approach to coronial matters.

THE CHAIR: Any more questions on that particular item? There are a couple of items in the appropriation that relate to domestic violence. Could we move on to those? I am really a little unclear what the items on pages 58 and 61 cover. If someone could give us a rundown on what they cover, that would be helpful. Is there somebody here who can answer the question?

Mr Glenn: Yes, we are just getting a copy of that now. Sorry, chair. Those page numbers were—

THE CHAIR: Page 58. It is the charter of rights and additional support for victims of crime. There is \$215,000 for the remainder of this financial year and, overall, \$2 million in the outyears. On page 61 there is strengthening support for young people and families affected by domestic violence and there is money that goes at various times to JACS, Legal Aid and the Education Directorate. Then there are offset expenses. I just wanted to drill down. Are these items aimed at putting back into domestic violence places the services that were previously provided under the safer families levy?

MS CHEYNE: Is this you?

Mr Ramsay: There are two matters that you have referred to, madam chair. The first one is the victims of crime. They sit under the minister for justice. So that would be something that would be appropriately spoken with Minister Rattenbury about. But the strengthening support for young people and families affected by domestic and family violence is something that both Deputy Chief Minister Berry and I have responsibility for, so we can certainly speak to that from the justice—

THE CHAIR: Yes. I stand corrected; they are not both related to domestic violence. Can we go to the item on page 61?

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Firstly, there was an issue raised during the budget estimates about money that had come out of agencies and that was being put back. Is this the money being put back?

Mr Ramsay: That is right. What we said at the time of the initial budget, and at the time of the budget estimates committee as well, was that there was a decision that we would move the funding for these services out of the safer families levy, to enable the safer families levy to continue to be used for more innovative approaches. It is appropriate that the Deputy Chief Minister talk more from that side on the things that are being funded there.

We also said at the same time, both in the Assembly chamber and in estimates, that it

was always the government's intention to work with Legal Aid, with the courts and with others for the funding that had previously been under the safer families levy to be funded in a different way. This budget review measure funds that in that different way, so it is an appropriation for it, rather than being done by the safer families.

THE CHAIR: So there is essentially \$1.6 million and change in the outyears for JACS and Legal Aid. Does it put back everything that was previously paid for under the safer families levy?

Mr Glenn: Chair, that continues the funding, because the funding was still available for the 2019-20 year for all of the positions within Legal Aid. It continues a legal 1 registrar and a registry officer in the ACT courts and tribunal. There is one position that was funded by the family safety levy, which was an ICT officer within the courts, which is not addressed in this measure and is being dealt with internally by the court.

THE CHAIR: The ICT officer is remaining but is being budget-managed inside the courts?

Mr Kellow: I think it would be fair to say the innovative courts management system has just finished being rolled out. We are now looking at the staffing to support that, so within that body of work there will be work that we will do in the family violence area. Rather than coming up with particular positions, it is making sure that the work is performed within the existing resources we have for the business as usual phase of the system.

Mr Glenn: What this measure has done is sustained the funding for all of the frontline services that go to support victims of family violence, within both the court and Legal Aid.

THE CHAIR: This may not be your area, but there is money in and money out in the education space. What does that apply to?

Mr Ramsay: I think that is around providing legal assistance to young people in the families as well. That is a pilot program of a legal liaison officer in schools, but the detail on that one would be more appropriately dealt with by the Deputy Chief Minister in her portfolio of prevention of domestic and family violence, but also as minister for education.

THE CHAIR: Are you saying that is Ms Berry's bailiwick?

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

MS LAWDER: Can you provide the reassurance that this new appropriation will fully cover all of the services and positions that were previously funded under the safer families levy?

Mr Ramsay: All of the frontline services, yes, as Mr Glenn—

MS LAWDER: Frontline services?

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

MS LAWDER: Does that mean there are some other non-frontline—

Mr Ramsay: No, the only one that is not being funded under this was that ICT position that was talked about.

MS LAWDER: Okay, good. With the enhanced processes for family violence orders, what are the processes and what is being enhanced? What does that exactly mean?

Mr Kellow: I think it flows from the reforms that came into force in 2017, which overhauled the legislative framework. From the court's perspective, the main process was to provide a firm platform for the conferencing. With the help of conferencing officers, who are legally trained mediators, we try to work with the parties to put in place orders that are acceptable to both and then to escalate that, if need be, to a registrar for interim orders and then to the court, again, if there are issues with that. There are also protections now in terms of unrepresented parties not being able to cross-examine, so the complainant need not be cross-examined by the person who is the subject of the complaint. That is carried out by a registrar.

MS LAWDER: Is that already in place now?

Mr Kellow: They have been in place for the last couple of years, so the funding allows us to continue those arrangements.

MS LAWDER: Why is it in this appropriation and not in the normal budget, if it is a continuation of what has been happening over the past few years?

Mr Kellow: It is just a change in funding source. It had been originally funded from the safer families levy and it is now coming straight from budget. The reference in these papers is simply recognising that shift and the way that it has become a mainstream service and part of our base budget.

THE CHAIR: We move on to supporting the environmental defenders office. Before this appropriation, what was the arrangement for funding the environmental defenders office?

Mr Glenn: Chair, the environmental defenders office has been funded over a number of years by the ACT government. There had been commonwealth funding committed to the EDO, which was no longer available. That has resulted in the ACT needing to pick up the slack in that regard to sustain the environmental defenders office. This measure picks it up for the remainder of this year and for next financial year.

THE CHAIR: Are they currently funded in this financial year?

Mr Glenn: Yes, they are.

THE CHAIR: For how much?

Mr Ramsay: There are some conversations that are happening in the environmental

defenders office, the various offices around Australia, for the potential for it to become a national organisation and therefore involve governance and structural changes. Because we were aware of that and other matters at the time of the budget, there was funding for a six-month period. Those merger conversations have not progressed at this stage as fast as the original expectation was that they might, so government formed the view that it was appropriate for us to provide, effectively, this additional 18-month funding while the environmental defenders offices around Australia—

THE CHAIR: Is my interpretation correct, then, minister, that in the 2019-20 budget there was \$75,000 allocated to the EDO, and this is a top-up for this year?

Mr Ramsay: That is right. And then continuing at that same level.

THE CHAIR: So that they would be funded at \$150,000—

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

THE CHAIR: for this financial year completely and next financial year—

Mr Ramsay: And next year completely; that is right.

MS LE COUTEUR: And after that?

Mr Ramsay: Again, because of what is happening at a national level, it is unclear what funding the environmental defenders office will require from any jurisdiction. The structure of the governance changes is such that we thought it was more appropriate for us to provide this 18-month funding while that is worked through. The government will be in a position to consider what may be necessary, in an ongoing way, once those conversations have taken place between the various arms of the environmental defenders office.

THE CHAIR: I presume we can ask Minister Gentleman about it in strengthening bushfire preparedness on Wednesday. As there are no more questions on the Legal Aid Commission, where do members want to go from here?

MS LE COUTEUR: I have been waiting for disability justice strategy.

THE CHAIR: We did that this morning.

MS LE COUTEUR: Sorry; in our timetable it was on at 11 o'clock.

THE CHAIR: No, it was on at 9.30.

MS LE COUTEUR: Sorry.

THE CHAIR: I am mindful, Ms Le Coureur, that the timetable changed many times, so I do apologise, but that was on at 9.30.

MS LE COUTEUR: Yes, okay. We thought we had actually—

MS CHEYNE: The secretary sent it out every time there was an update.

MS LE COUTEUR: Okay.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: And there have been numerous updates.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Mr Ramsay: Sorry, madam chair, just as a point of clarification, my understanding is that the environmental defenders offices have merged, and that happened at the end of last calendar year. But the savings and the implications for funding will probably not be known for the next 18 months. It does not change the funding arrangements, so for clarification on when those merges—

THE CHAIR: The environmental defenders offices around the country have become a sort of national environmental defenders office, with branch offices?

Mr Ramsay: That is right. We anticipate that the funding implications for any jurisdiction will be unclear for about 18 months.

THE CHAIR: We have to move on to building quality. Are there any issues in the JACS portfolio that members want to ask questions about?

Mr Ramsay: The only other one from my area, if you wanted to, was guardianship.

MS LAWDER: The additional support for guardianship services is noted as being two full-time staff for clients with a plan with the NDIS. How many clients will be covered by those two additional staff?

Mr Taylor: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The number of guardianship clients in the last several years has fluctuated between 190 and as high as 220 or 230. Some of those clients with the public trustee are mutual clients also of financial management orders. The reality was that, prior to the allocation of this appropriation, the representation of persons under order for guardianship was at a crisis level. We effectively had a significant shortcoming in terms of the number of staff that were available to deal with current clients. There were a significant number of unallocated clients—I think 35 at peak.

All public trustees and public advocates in all states and territories have felt this significant increase in responsibility caused by the NDIS. It was a commonwealth program, an unfunded program, and not one where anybody had any idea of the extent to which it was going to test the staffing levels of the guardianship unit.

Quite a significant amount of the work that we undertake in relation to the NDIS goes to the development of service agreements for our clients that are under NDIS plans—indeed, even the development of those plans themselves and review of those plans. Another significant reality is that Australia has obligations under the United Nations

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Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities—specifically, in relation to the current substitute decision-making framework and the fact that it should be moving towards a supported decision-making framework.

In the absence of any program being put in place at the moment, the public trustee and guardian is developing a model which we see as a possible response to the Law Reform Advisory Council review of the guardianship act.

MS LAWDER: Have these two additional staff already been engaged?

Mr Taylor: They have not already been engaged. The public trustee and guardian is largely self-funding, except for the official visitor role and the guardianship function. We received about \$933,000 in funding for the guardianship function. The reality is that the public trustee side of the organisation has been subsidising the guardianship unit, which is not appropriate.

MS LAWDER: If these two additional staff have not yet been engaged, how will you spend that money in the remaining quarter of the year?

Mr Taylor: We have already been spending the money without the appropriation; that is what I am saying. We will be partly repaying the public trustee and guardian's budget. Once their staff are engaged the appropriation will pay for those.

MS LAWDER: What level will those staff be engaged at?

Mr Taylor: ASO6 level.

THE CHAIR: What would be the case load for an individual officer in the guardianship and trustee office who is looking after NDIS clients?

Ms Connolly: I acknowledge the privilege statement. Probably more than 50 per cent, closer to 60 per cent, of clients subject to orders would be with the NDIS—adults between the ages of 18 and 65 who are NDIS participants. A guardian with experience would have between 35 and 40 clients that they support at one time.

THE CHAIR: Is that what you are aiming for or is that what is currently the case?

Ms Connolly: There are still some unallocated cases.

THE CHAIR: The unallocated cases would be going to these new staff, essentially?

Ms Connolly: Yes.

Mr Taylor: Yes.

THE CHAIR: When you recruit them?

Mr Taylor: I want to make the point that we are already doing this. We have had to pick up the extra workload in guardianship from the public trustee and guardian's budget. We were extremely hopeful of getting this budget injection as early as 1 July

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of the current financial year. It was not allocated at that time.

THE CHAIR: Can I read into that, Mr Taylor, that you made a budget bid for the last appropriation?

Mr Taylor: For the current budget year.

THE CHAIR: For the current financial year, you made a budget bid?

Mr Taylor: Yes.

THE CHAIR: And now you are in catch-up mode because that budget bid was not funded?

Mr Taylor: Yes, absolutely.

THE CHAIR: Are there any other questions in relation to the public trustee and guardianship services? There being no other questions of a JACS nature, we will move on to building regulation.

RAMSAY, MR GORDON, Attorney-General, Minister for the Arts, Creative Industries and Cultural Events, Minister for Building Quality Improvement, Minister for Business and Regulatory Services and Minister for Seniors and Veterans

BRADY, MS ERIN, Deputy Director-General, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

LEE, MS THAO, Chief Financial Officer, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

MORRIS, MS VANESSA, Director, Building Policy, Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate

THE CHAIR: In relation to the building regulation reform stage 2, how much was provided in the original 2019-20 budget for building regulation reform and how does this fall within that?

Ms Brady: I acknowledge the privilege statement.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

Ms Brady: I might need to get one of my colleagues to clarify the correct amount of what had been previously appropriated for the stage 1 reforms or, if we do not have that, we might need to take it on notice. But I will just see if Thao can answer.

Ms Lee: We might have to just—

THE CHAIR: The first part of that question, I think, we will take on notice because we are short on time. How do these appropriations of \$636,000 and \$800,000 over the remainder of this year and next financial year augment what is currently being done?

Ms Brady: Some of the money for these two years is to focus on developer licensing and some of it is to focus on the stage 2 reforms. In particular, some of the work that we are doing in the stage 1 reforms will require ongoing work. For example, we are doing work on dispute resolution and we have been closely tied in with what is happening at the national level. That may flow into the next year as we align with other jurisdictions. There will also be more consultation that we need. Part of the funding is related to some legal contractor services that we may need and some focus consultation that we may require. If you would like more detail, I might get one of my colleagues—

THE CHAIR: I would like some detail at some stage on the developer licensing scheme. But also you are saying, Ms Brady, that there are some elements of stage 1 which will be rolled into the outyears?

Ms Brady: Into this second stage.

THE CHAIR: It may be better, unless members have another view, to perhaps take that on notice: you might outline what is in stage 1, how much money is in stage 1, and what might be rolled over into the other financial years, into the outyears?

Ms Brady: Sorry, if I can clarify in case I did not say that correctly, it is not that we are rolling over work from stage 1 into stage 2. It is that some of the reforms in stage 1 get to a point which concludes them as the reform currently but they still require ongoing work. It is not that we are rolling stage 1 into stage 2.

THE CHAIR: The development is in stage 1, but there is ongoing work, so there has to be money associated with that ongoing work?

Ms Brady: For some of those items, yes.

MS CHEYNE: Is there a way to equate the money with your status of building reforms page online, which has 43—

Mr Ramsay: Thirty-one of them achieved so far, yes.

MS CHEYNE: Yes, of 43.

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: I see you are licensing a huge body of work but there are a few things that are incomplete and in progress. Are we able to see where that funding relates to those different things, or are we talking about something different here?

Ms Brady: For the funding for this budget approval?

MS CHEYNE: For this, yes.

Ms Morris: I acknowledge the privilege statement. In relation to the appropriation that relates to stage 2 reform, we have got some major reforms, as you mention, that relate to consultation on particular issues—practitioner licensing, accountability and insurance and those kinds of things. The funding that we have will obviously take us through this financial year. And there will be, obviously, some legislative work that will need to keep going towards that.

There are also things that, as Ms Brady said, are outside our reform program—national reforms that are under the building ministers forum—which obviously were not in place when our original budget appropriation for the reforms went through. There is a large body of work at a national level that also relates to potential changes to licensing, potential alignment between jurisdictions, that will need funding ongoing as well.

THE CHAIR: I think it probably needs a breakdown of what is in stage 1, what is required from the building ministers forum, what is in stage 2, how much of that is a continuation of things that were established in line 1 and how much comes from the national work so that the committee and the community can have a clear breakdown of what is actually involved.

Ms Morris: Okay.

THE CHAIR: On notice. What are the elements in the reform licensing scheme?

Ms Brady: I might let Ms Morris talk to the detail.

Ms Morris: At this stage the reform is about consultation on the findings of the review as they relate to the ACT licensing system. Obviously, with the national work there is some work that will feed into that as well. It is really about, firstly, the scope of our licensing system and does it cover everyone that it should. Also, within those practitioners that are licensed, what are the correct categories for licensing? It is effectively reviewing what we currently have and seeing the scope—and this is the consultation phase of this—of the licensing and who is actually accountable under that licensing system.

THE CHAIR: Is that licensing professions—plumbers, electricians, carpenters—

Ms Morris: Practitioners, yes.

THE CHAIR: and builders, people who have actual builders' licences, C class, B class, A class et cetera?

Ms Morris: There are a range of people. We are also including people who are involved in the design of buildings and people who are potentially involved—

THE CHAIR: Does that mean architects, draftsmen and engineers will all be licensed?

Ms Morris: Correct. At this stage that is what the consultation will be about. We did some consultation previously on what types of schemes to regulate people who are designing buildings could look like.

THE CHAIR: Project managers?

Ms Morris: Potentially. It does relate to how our system is currently set up. Our licensing system is very much at the stage that, when we license builders, we license people to do or supervise building work, as opposed to contract for the building work. But that is a live question in the ACT: when people are contracting, say for residential building work, should there be some level of accountability for those people and not just the people who have building abilities?

MS LAWDER: I want to ask about the consultation process that you have been going through with regard to the licensing scheme. Can you outline who you have been consulting with and the feedback?

Ms Lee: At this stage, the broader public consultation piece, where we get to do this, would be in this financial year. But certainly, throughout the review and all of the work we have been doing so far that relates to, say, codes of practice for people, the issue of licensing and who is accountable comes up. We have had a fair bit of feedback from different agencies and different bodies about who should be part of that work. The next piece is a broader public consultation piece.

Ms Brady: But for a lot of the work that we have been doing, we consult regularly

with HIA, MBA, the surveyors group. There are a main group of stakeholders that we continually consult with, such as those I have mentioned and the Property Council.

THE CHAIR: Sometimes called the usual suspects.

Ms Brady: They are the main players in the industry, yes.

Mr Ramsay: We bring those together in the billing reform advisory group, the BRAG, as well. That has had a key role in working through reforms, and the reforms around regulation. That is a particularly helpful group working right across the industry to bring people into one place at the one time.

MS LAWDER: Will legislative changes be required, and what is your time frame?

Mr Ramsay: The reality is that the need for legislative changes comes from the process of the consultation itself. However, certainly the policy intent is that we are looking at the development of a property developer licensing scheme. If that does go ahead that would require new legislation.

MS LAWDER: But if you are licensing contractors et cetera that would require legislation.

Mr Ramsay: That is right.

MS LAWDER: Is there a timetable?

Mr Ramsay: The timetable for that at the moment is the timetable that arises out of the consultation. Rather than going into the consultation with a set, determined time frame, we think it is better to do that consultation first.

MS LAWDER: When does your consultation period end?

Ms Morris: We are able to start consultation obviously in this financial year and complete that by then. That does not mean all the final results will be in from that by the end of the financial year, but certainly the consultation will be completed by the end of the financial year.

THE CHAIR: I am struggling. You got \$636,000 to get out the door by the end of the financial year. What is that going to be spent on and will you get it out the door?

Ms Lee: That is a breakdown combination of some FTE components and also for a consultant contractor to get the work out. There is about \$167,000 that relates to the one FTE for the six months and that is a combination of—

THE CHAIR: One FTE for six months, \$167,000. What level is that?

Ms Lee: That is for two positions at 0.5 each, which gives one FTE. One sub A and a sub C, from memory, for six months.

THE CHAIR: Then they will continue into the next financial year?

Ms Lee: Obviously the money will transfer over to the new financial year. Within our business cases we do have some flexibility to move between FTE and also our supply consultant contractor, given that we understand it is coming up to March already, and there is only, like you said, a quarter of the year left. We would round it up and use that money for a contract consultant to get the work.

THE CHAIR: When you say supply contractor, you have somebody on foot already and you would ramp up their contract, or would you be going out for a procurement for that?

Ms Brady: We are just doing some recruitment at the moment to get someone in to start setting up the project. We are just in the process of that at the moment. The funding also for the contractor consultancies that makes up a bit under half of that amount for this year is to do with potential specific, focused legal advice that we may need, particularly around the licensing and the dispute resolution work.

THE CHAIR: I am hoping you are getting legal advice on that one.

Ms Brady: What we are finding is the importance of the consultation. We do have some budget for engagement and consultation so that we can do appropriate engagement. That is some of the funding as well.

THE CHAIR: Would it be fair to say, minister, that this \$1.4 million and change is essentially about developing the developer registration scheme?

Mr Ramsay: That certainly is a substantial element of it.

THE CHAIR: What are the other elements?

Ms Brady: Particularly into the next financial year, the reform stage 2, as we have just mentioned, particularly around the dispute resolution, some of the reforms get you to the point where we have done engagement and we will probably need to then follow through with some actions and work with other jurisdictions. That is what a large part of that \$800,000 is for, in the next financial year, and continuing with some legal input, particularly around the dispute resolution work as we move into the next financial year. I do not know if Ms Morris has more detail to add.

Ms Morris: Effectively, too, it is those things that the minister mentioned: what is arising out of consultation and working through some of those things that may need short-term legislative changes and the ones that we are working on that need long-term legislative changes.

THE CHAIR: But you do not quite know what they are?

Ms Morris: At this stage, as the minister mentioned, it will be what comes out of consultation. As we mentioned, there is the overlay now of national work that was not in play when we first were funded for this work. There are two parallel processes: there is our own reform process, but there is also work coming out of the national building ministers forum as well.

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THE CHAIR: And that will all be answered in the body of work we asked for on notice.

MS LAWDER: Is any of this budget allocation for travel?

Ms Brady: No.

MS LAWDER: It is all FTE and—

Ms Brady: FTE, contractors, consultants and engagement.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much, minister, for your attendance and the attendance of your officials here today. I remind people that questions taken on notice are due five days after the circulation of the proof *Hansard*, with the five days starting on the day after.

Hearing suspended from 11.55 am to 1.00 pm.

STEEL, MR CHRIS, Minister for City Services, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Recycling and Waste Reduction, Minister for Roads and Active Travel and Minister for Transport

PLAYFORD, MS ALISON, Director-General, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

McHUGH, MR BEN, Acting Deputy Director-General, Transport Canberra and Business Services, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

CORRIGAN, MR JIM, Deputy Director-General, City Services, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

PEDERSEN, MR ANDREW, Chief Financial officer, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

STURMAN, MS JUDITH, Executive Group Manager, Transport Operations, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

DAWSON, MS JO, Executive Branch Manager, Light Rail Operations, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

OLDFIELD, MS MEGHAN, Executive Group Manager, Infrastructure Delivery and Waste, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

SMITH, MR JEREMY, Executive Branch Manager, Infrastructure Delivery, City Services, Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

EDGHILL, MR DUNCAN, Chief Projects Officer, Major Projects Canberra Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate

THE CHAIR: We are resuming the second day of hearings of the public accounts committee inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2019-2020 (No 2). This afternoon we have before us the minister with responsibility for transport, city services, recycling and waste reduction and roads and active travel, and his officers. Questions involve learning from the first stage of light rail under Major Projects, extending light rail to Woden, delivering stage 2A, taking light rail to Woden, raising London Circuit, light rail additional services and safety infrastructure enhancements, more bus drivers for the weekends, Woden depot stage 2, and modernising public transport. We will then move on to recycling and waste reduction and the kerbside bulky waste collection. As the Minister for Roads and Active Travel, questions will involve improving Tharwa and Nudurr drives, and expanding online services. Thank you, minister and officials, for appearing here today.

MS CHEYNE: We did a light rail review last week. I am sure Mr Edghill will be happy to speak about it again.

THE CHAIR: Yes, we did touch on light rail.

MS CHEYNE: We touched on it for an hour.

THE CHAIR: We touched on some Major Projects stuff. Minister Steel may wish to add something to it. Going systematically through the book, the first item that I come to is the \$88,000 for learning from the first stage of light rail. It was touched on briefly the other day. My understanding, minister, is that that is for a staff member for part of the year—to do what?

Mr Steel: To assist with undertaking the review. I will pass over to Duncan Edghill to

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provide some further detail on that. We tabled a scope of that work in the Assembly, and we will be reporting back in May with the final outcome. I will hand over to Duncan to talk about where the funding is going.

THE CHAIR: When did you table that?

Mr Steel: I am not sure what month it was last year. We were required by the Assembly to table the terms of reference for that review.

Mr Edghill: I acknowledge and accept the privilege statement. The \$88,000 is for an administrative resource for part of the year. As we move through the contract negotiations for light rail stage 2, and as we have requests for information relating to light rail stage 1, there is a need for us to go back into light rail stage 1 documents and refresh our memories as to what happened so that we are learning those lessons from stage 1 in stage 2. It is a short duration administrative piece of help to enable us to do that as we move through stage 2 negotiations.

THE CHAIR: When does it start?

Mr Edghill: It will start, hopefully, as soon as possible after the funding becomes available.

MRS DUNNE: You said, minister, that terms of reference were tabled last year, but you have not started the project?

Mr Steel: I do not think the project is underway. It is just that this particular staff member will be translating the—

THE CHAIR: What part of the project is underway?

Mr Edghill: We may be talking about a few different but interrelated things. There is the piece of work around the review of light rail stage 1; the minister has undertaken to table a report in the Assembly in May. That work is on foot at the moment. There are also, in terms of the broader project, ongoing contract negotiations. It is in that respect that this administrative resource, as we get to the really busy end of concluding those negotiations, will provide administrative help for us to go back into stage 1 documentation.

THE CHAIR: With the appropriation of \$88,000, you do not have a staff member working on it yet? You are actually waiting for the appropriation?

Mr Edghill: Before we employ that staff member, yes.

THE CHAIR: That is an innovation; thank you. What is the relationship between the body of work that the minister talked about that he is reporting to the Assembly on in May and this? Does one grow out of the other?

Mr Edghill: Everything that we are doing in light rail stage 2 is interrelated at the moment. Certainly, the team that we have is not what I would describe as an inordinately expansive team. The reality is that when we have people come on board,

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each one of us in the team tends to help out with everything that is going on in the light rail space that needs to be done. The interrelation between the two is that this person, when they come on board, will undoubtedly be helping us to resolve any tasks that we have taken on within light rail stage 1, including the task which had been mentioned previously.

This person will be brought on board to help us through the administrative processes of going back through our stage 1 documentation, primarily to assist with what we are doing with light rail stage 2 contract negotiations but, invariably, when we have FOI requests or other requests for that information, that person will be a much-needed resource within the team to help us work through those things.

THE CHAIR: I propose to go through this sequentially. We started on page 64; we will go to page 66 and the items there, then to the capital and revenue items.

MS CODY: I did have a couple of questions, but they have possibly been answered, so I am happy to move on to the next one.

THE CHAIR: The next item sequentially is the kerbside bulky waste collection. Ms Cheyne, do you have a question?

MS CHEYNE: Yes. You did not want to do all the light rail stuff at once?

THE CHAIR: Yes, I think that is a much better idea. We will go to light rail additional services and safety infrastructure. Is that Major Projects or is that TCCS?

MS CHEYNE: TCCS.

Mr Steel: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: So if we did light rail additional services, future light rail routes, and extending light rail to Woden—

THE CHAIR: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: That is all light rail? Nothing else? Is there a better order for you, minister and officials, in terms of who comes up?

Mr Steel: No; we will have to bring different officials up, I think, depending on which one you are talking about.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

MS CODY: Sorry, can you just repeat where we are starting?

THE CHAIR: We will do light rail additional services, safety and infrastructure enhancements—

MS CODY: Excellent.

THE CHAIR: on page 65.

MS CODY: Yes, I am on that.

THE CHAIR: And then planning for future light rail, on page 67. Then the two items on page 76, extending light rail to Woden, delivering stage 2A, and raising London Circuit. Is there a revenue item as well? No. So we will do those things and then we will go back and do the others.

MS CODY: Okay. Fantastic.

THE CHAIR: We will keep it together thematically. So, additional light rail services, Ms Cheyne.

MS CHEYNE: With the government providing additional light rail services to address demand during the first phase of these extended peak periods, what has been the response since this was introduced in early February?

Mr Steel: This is a really great example of how we are using transport data to inform transport planning and operations. There are two tranches of changes, one of which came into force in February, and we have already seen a significant benefit from that. This included extending the peak periods in the morning from 9 am to 9.30 am—by half an hour. We know that crowding was occurring on light rail during that period. As a result of increasing that period of light rail coming every six minutes, we have seen a 7.04 per cent increase in the number of passengers during that half an hour period, which is quite significant. So, just by putting on extra services, we are seeing the public respond very well.

And then in the afternoon we brought forward the peak to 3 pm rather than 4 pm, particularly to account for the coming home from school period of time in the day. We are seeing a really great response there as well—4.72 per cent more passengers using the extended peak there. And then in the evening, when we extended from 6 to 6.30 in February, there was a 10.18 per cent increase in the number of boardings. That is really great, and it goes to show that these extra services are being used and people are responding. When we make further changes in April, in term 2, we are further extending the peaks in the afternoon to 7 pm and also on Sundays bringing forward the start of the light rail to 7 am. We are expecting that to be well used.

MS CHEYNE: Have you had anecdotal feedback about the changes that were introduced in February? I know there had been some empirical or anecdotal evidence that people were saying, “Light rail is a bit too full for me sometimes.” It is a victim of its own popularity, but it sounds as though, because you have put on extra services, people have been voting with their feet and making use of that. Is it feeling a little less crowded for people?

Mr Steel: Certainly anecdotally that is the case. I went up to Marketplace Gungahlin last week, in the morning, to chat to some customers coming to and from the light rail, just to get a sense of the issues they had experienced and whether they were seeing a benefit, and that was certainly what they were saying to me. Prior to these changes, we were seeing some customers get on the light rail at Manning Clark and come to

Marketplace Gungahlin, then go down to Civic, just in order to get a seat. So there was some quite interesting behaviour. We certainly do not want to discourage people from using light rail, and these extra services will mean that there is more space on light rail vehicles so that people are not packed in as much.

Also, further down the light rail line—at places like Dickson, where there is an interchange between buses and light rail—previously people often could not get on. Now there will be extra capacity for that. The five-minute frequency, which will start in term 2, will mean there are more light rail vehicles travelling down the corridor. Hopefully, they will not be as packed as they have been, but we are also seeing an increased use of light rail as a result of putting on these extra services, so we have just got to continue to monitor the use. We are certainly looking at the data on how it is being used and seeing how we can make sure that the services are meeting demand.

MS CHEYNE: In some of those peak periods, particularly where there has been a spike in school children using it, I understand anecdotally that there are some occasions where there are quite a lot of people or kids coming off at once, and that it has been difficult for people to navigate around that volume in order to get on. Has there been a way to change that as a result of the data? Are you able, because there are more frequent services, to wait 30 seconds longer just to allow for that changeover?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jo to talk about how the operations work in that regard. Certainly we think that the extended peak in the afternoon has made a real difference already, but we will continue to make a difference there. It is a busy time of the day. Unlike the morning, where everyone is going to school and to work at about the same time, in the afternoons and evenings it is spread over a longer period. That is why we think the six-minute frequency during the afternoons and evenings is about right, but five minutes is actually what is necessary in the mornings to get that extra frequency, to get people to where they need to go in a more compressed time period. I will pass over to Jo Dawson to get some further comments on that.

Ms Dawson: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement.

THE CHAIR: Thanks.

Ms Dawson: With respect to the first stage of applying the extended additional services on light rail, we have had some really positive feedback—both online and back to Access Canberra—from customers appreciating the additional services after 6 pm, with people saying that they tended to miss the six-minute services to 6 pm and got there just a little bit late. Having that extension after 6 to 6.30 has been a real benefit for them. We also had some commentary coming in from members of the public about the additional services during school exit periods, because that has smoothed out the numbers of children on services, along with members of the public. They find them easier to manage.

In terms of the kind of crowding—how people exit and enter—one of the things we have done is to work with the schools to help educate some of our younger passengers about providing room for people to exit the LRVs, light rail vehicles, to give people room to get on and off. Some of that education is providing real benefit in terms of speeding up the entry and exits during the switchover at stations and stops.

MS CHEYNE: Could entry and exit also be sped up by installing more spots for people to tap on and off?

Mr Steel: That certainly—

MS CHEYNE: Because people are kind of being fed through the one spot.

Mr Steel: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Because it usually only has one or two.

Mr Steel: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: I have heard anecdotally that people are lining up to do the right thing, but that it is also slowing them down because there is only one spot to do it.

Mr Steel: That is certainly something we can consider in discussions with Canberra Metro as well. Obviously, the new ticketing system, which we may want to talk about today, might provide further opportunities, depending on what the capabilities of that system are once it has been procured.

THE CHAIR: Can I ask general questions about capacity? Before these changes, what was the headway in the peak periods? Was it the same in both morning and afternoon?

Mr Steel: Yes: six minutes return headway during the peak periods. The only change to headway will be to five minutes from term 2 for the morning peaks. Then we are just extending the peak periods, both in February and in term 2.

THE CHAIR: What is the point at which you increase the headway where you then increase congestion on the lines? If you get down to two-minute headways, are you going to get a tram jam down the line?

Mr Steel: Yes, you will.

THE CHAIR: Where is the sweet point?

Mr Steel: We are just working through with Canberra Metro the implementation of the five-minute headway at the moment. Jo might be able to comment further on that. In terms of looking at where we increase the headway, it is around the data. We have looked at where the peak periods are throughout the day.

THE CHAIR: I am just asking a general question about the capacity. How much can you reduce the headway before you create congestion?

Mr Steel: I will hand that over. If Jo does not have an answer on that, we can take it on notice.

Ms Dawson: There is a balance between the headways and then looking at the

integrated transport network. The more we increase headways, the more we are then calling traffic signals that will impact the road network as well. There is a balance in terms of that. During special events, we do run our headways closer together, where we are trying to manage peaks, with things like New Year's Eve, where we are trying to get people out of the city more quickly. At the moment, with our current fleet of 14 LRVs, we can manage up to five-minute headways. We cannot operate more frequently than that, other than in special instances.

THE CHAIR: Have you done research on what is the sweet point? Could you decrease it to three minutes or something like that?

Mr Edghill: I was involved in the original design of the system. There are two elements that go to how frequently you can run the trams. One is the number of trams; the other one is the power traction system. The power traction system has been designed for three-minute headways. You can bunch up trams and run it or buy more trams and run at three minutes. After that, you would need to begin thinking about putting additional power capacity onto the system. Three minutes is what the system has been designed for.

Mr Steel: I understand the New Year's Eve frequency was set at three minutes, getting people out of the CBD.

MS CODY: I have some questions on planning for future light rail routes.

THE CHAIR: I have one more question on light rail additional services and infrastructure. We have four columns of "not for publication". What aren't we publishing? We have agreed on what the headways are. On the basis of the current agreement for headways of five in the morning and six in the afternoon over a particular period, why is this figure not publishable?

Mr Steel: We are currently working through final negotiations with Canberra Metro on the delivery of the changes, so the final cost is not available, but we will make it available.

THE CHAIR: When we negotiated the contract with Canberra Metro, was it based on the pre-February headways and peak periods?

Mr Steel: Yes.

THE CHAIR: So this is an additional charge?

Mr Steel: Yes; that is correct.

THE CHAIR: On top of that.

Ms Dawson: Yes.

THE CHAIR: When are we likely to see that?

Mr Steel: Hopefully, prior to the start of the services. I do not know whether you

want to provide further—

THE CHAIR: You have already started the services.

Mr Steel: Not for term 2.

Ms Dawson: I think we expect it to be finalised by term 2.

THE CHAIR: So it would be likely that you would have that information before the appropriation is debated?

Mr Steel: Possibly. We can come back on notice with the exact timing.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

MS CHEYNE: You mentioned before, minister, that the data had been very useful in terms of working out providing additional services. With the additional services we are going to see next month, with services beginning an hour earlier on Sunday mornings and public holidays, obviously you do not have data on people's desire for that. How has that been informed?

Mr Steel: We have some predictive modelling that has been done on that which suggests that it will help smooth out the number of people using each light rail vehicle. People get on and off light rail across the journey, across the 12 kilometres. So in some cases with the data you are actually seeing more than 200 people using one light rail vehicle across the whole corridor. We are looking at how we can smooth that number out across light rail vehicles by adding more services and extending the peaks. We can provide to the committee some of the graphs that are quite useful to see how we have helped predict the demand for services and how many light rail vehicles we will need to smooth that out.

MS CHEYNE: With that data, do you know what is the most popular journey? Is it Dickson to Gungahlin or something?

Mr Steel: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Do you know which one most people are taking?

Mr Steel: I am assuming it is Gungahlin to Civic, but I will hand over to Jo to provide some further detail.

Ms Dawson: We need to do some more modelling in terms of which specific stops and stations are the most popular. We have done a lot of modelling in terms of what time of day, which has helped inform us about when we need to run to the five-minute and then the six-minute extended peaks in the afternoon.

In terms of your question on Sunday services, we are running about 200 to 300 people using light rail pre 8 am on Saturday. We have had a number of customers contact us through Access Canberra to say that they were unable to get to their place of work on a Sunday. Where they had a shift starting at 8 o'clock, our current services were

starting at 8 o'clock so they were not getting into town until 8.30 and the ones northbound were not getting into Gungahlin until 9 am.

Some of the feedback from customers was that they were disadvantaged because they were not able to get to work and they were having to look at using either cars or even taxis or Uber to get to work. We put services on, on a half-hour interval initially, to see if that would provide additional capacity and to give people that option to use public transport to get to work on Sunday mornings and public holidays.

THE CHAIR: You do not dead run? You do not take a light rail vehicle to Civic and have it starting at the same time.

Ms Dawson: On Sundays we had not. We were having one starting at eight, coming from Gungahlin into the city. That one then triggered the 8.30 coming back.

THE CHAIR: So there is no dead running, which is a good thing, but—

Ms Dawson: Looking at the feedback from people who were used to having a bus service starting from seven, it seemed sensible to make sure that we provided that consistency and service for the public.

THE CHAIR: We will move to planning for future light rail routes.

MS CODY: Minister, I have an odd question for you. The money seems to be a net zero.

THE CHAIR: Money in and money out.

MS CODY: Yes, in the budget. What exactly is this line item going towards?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Ben McHugh from TCCS.

Mr McHugh: The net zero outcome for that item is that we will be offsetting the cost for the feasibility study for light rail stages 3 and 4 within existing recurrent budgets. That is where the published zero has come from.

MS CODY: What does light rail stages 3 and 4 look like? Is that a decided route? Is there consultation happening?

Mr Steel: Good question. You might remember with stage 2 from the city to Woden there was some pre-feasibility study work that was undertaken several years ago on that route, looking at a range of different things around the route—environmental issues, some of the early costs and implementation issues with the extension, a range of things around land use with the future corridor for light rail stage 2. Some consultation was actually done on stage 2 as well at that point around preferences with regard to stops and the like. And then, out of that, several different options for the route were developed, and further consultation was done on those different route options through the parliamentary triangle in particular.

We are looking at what we can do to, I guess, kick off the pre-feasibility work for

stages 3 and 4 to Belconnen from the city, the east-west corridor for light rail, and then also a future extension from Woden to Tuggeranong as well. We will be looking at all those same issues that we looked at for stage 2 with the pre-feasibility work for those as well. I will hand over to Ben McHugh to provide some further detail about what exactly we are looking at.

THE CHAIR: Before we do that, could I go back to Mr McHugh's answer that it is net zero. Would this be something that would normally be just considered as agency funded and that would have a zero against it because there is no extra appropriation? I am just interested in the accounting-type treatment that there is in this line item. How was the stage 2 planning dealt with in accounting terms?

Mr McHugh: The question around stage 2 I will have to take on notice as I was not in the role at that point in time.

THE CHAIR: Thanks.

Mr McHugh: But in terms of question one, the directorate's budget does account for, at times, forward planning work around future infrastructure needs. But for specific and known projects, often a capital bid will seek funding for things like feasibility studies, infrastructure planning work and the like. In this case we were in a position that we were able to provide an offset, but that does not occur in every case. That is why the business case was put forward in the first place.

THE CHAIR: Has the work on stages 3 and 4 begun?

Mr McHugh: Not at this stage. We are currently in the procurement process.

THE CHAIR: Again, you are waiting for the appropriation before you do the work? Sorry, this is a novelty, minister.

Mr McHugh: Yes, we have commenced, obviously, the procurement process and are waiting for appropriation before we proceed with engaging contracts. But internal resources have been applied to this thinking for a while.

THE CHAIR: What is the procurement process? What are you procuring?

Mr McHugh: Advisory services to undertake some due diligence on the route alignments along the corridors.

THE CHAIR: The big consultancies rather than FTE?

Mr McHugh: Correct.

THE CHAIR: Sorry, you were asking another question.

MS CODY: What is the thinking—

Mr Steel: I asked Ben to provide some further detail about the pre-feasibility.

Mr McHugh: What does it include? Really it is some due diligence on route alignment options and outcomes. If you think about Belconnen to the city, there has been a lot of thinking around public transport prioritisation along that corridor over the years. We will go back and do some literature review of previous work. We will also look at putting together a communication strategy on how we take the various options to the community and start to test some of those as well.

MS CODY: Will that include looking at things like how it interacts with the University of Canberra and other businesses that are along that corridor or if that is an appropriate—

Mr McHugh: Yes, absolutely, from the high-level planning level down but also looking at utilities and other key elements that need to service the alignment.

MS CODY: There is no preferred route at this stage for Belconnen to the city?

Mr Steel: It is a very complex route and I think we have got to draw out some of that complexity and the best route is not necessarily obvious at this point in time, despite Barry Drive already providing that road corridor through and around College Street. Where the existing buses go is not necessarily where light rail should go. It is one of the options and I think—

THE CHAIR: It is also a bit steep in spots.

Mr Steel: Yes, and there is future development of the AIS that needs to be considered. Obviously that has got a bit of a commonwealth overlay to it as well. And there are places of interest, the hospital in particular, and making sure that it meets the needs of the community, and that is part of the reason why consultation will be required.

We have already, of course, set out the light rail network plan, which is known as the light rail master plan, which obviously provides those future route connections. It is going to that next level of detail around where it should go, and that is certainly what we did with stage 2 when we went out to the community and looked at a range of different options.

One is the Barton dog leg going via Old Parliament House. Then there is the Capital Circle option. Actually we have arrived at a third option, so to speak, which is the National Capital Plan transport corridor around State Circle as the final option for stage 2B, as it is now known.

We will be looking at going through a similar process for the Belconnen through to the airport stage and then also the extension down to Tuggeranong in the future as well, noting that, with Tuggeranong, we have got some projects underway, including duplication of Athllon Drive, where we will obviously need to consider how we make sure that it is light-rail ready. If we are going to be undertaking duplication works on that road we want to make sure that we are not causing problems for the future alignment.

MS CODY: And that is part of this planning stage? This feasibility study will look at things like that as well?

Mr Steel: Yes, all the concurrent projects that are going to be happening.

MS CHEYNE: Is there a site identified in the Belconnen town centre for the terminal?

Mr McHugh: In the early master planning work there were some assumptions that it would be located in a similar location to the Belconnen bus station, the community bus station. We will test that thinking again now.

Mr Steel: It is also, I think, about future extensions as well, beyond that. That goes for Gungahlin as well, you know.

MS CHEYNE: Once you get to the town centre, where do you go?

Mr Steel: In the far future you may want to extend out even further beyond the terminus. And you need to just keep that in the back of your mind as well.

THE CHAIR: We will move on to extending light rail to Woden, stage 2A, then to raising London Circuit. It might be a wide-ranging set of questions. Can you, minister, provide a breakdown of how the \$31.4 million appropriated for design works et cetera in this appropriation will be spent?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Duncan Edghill to provide some further detail on the \$31.4 million, and we can take any further detail on notice.

Mr Edghill: There is quite an amount of work ongoing at the moment, as we discussed on Friday. The \$31.4 million includes quite a variety of different works. First and foremost there is the detailed design work, which is ongoing. Through our arrangements with Canberra Metro, there are also other design works and design review works which are undertaken through our own direct contractors. There is a body of work going on at the moment around updating the technical specifications in the contract for light rail stage 2A. There is a variety of surveying, utilities locating work and other site investigation work underway and planned for the future. There is geotech work which is to happen. There are, of course, agency costs.

THE CHAIR: What was the last thing, Mr Edghill?

Mr Edghill: Agency costs—the cost of our staff in managing all of this.

THE CHAIR: That is part of the \$5 million we were talking about the other day—the agency overheads for governance and stuff. Is that what we are talking about?

Mr Edghill: Yes. There are agency costs associated with all of the work that we are doing—environmental surveys, potential environmental offsets, heritage surveys and traffic modelling. There is a lot of legal work ongoing at the moment and contract negotiations. So there is a legal component to it. There are works that are ongoing associated with the approvals processes, both the EPBC work, which has been noted recently, works and development approvals and other potential physical and agency works there. The amount covers a wide basket of activities.

THE CHAIR: Minister, is this expenditure underpinned in any way by a cost-benefit analysis or market research as to the appropriateness of the expenditure et cetera?

Mr Steel: The cost-benefit analysis is in the business case, which has been made public.

THE CHAIR: There is a cost-benefit analysis. What is the cost benefit of stage 2A and 2B? Do we have a cost-benefit analysis of 2B?

Mr Steel: There are actually multiple different cost-benefit BCR numbers that are provided in the business case, and they are available for the committee to view.

THE CHAIR: Where would the committee view those?

Mr Steel: On the website.

THE CHAIR: What is the cost benefit for stage 2A?

Mr Edghill: I am happy to look it up while we are here, so that I have the same numbers. From memory, depending upon exactly how it is measured, upon one measurement it is similar to the 1.2 of light rail stage 1. I can look that up.

THE CHAIR: So that is a 20 per cent return on a dollar investment?

Mr Edghill: The BCR is, of course, an economic rather than a financial return, but a BCR of 1.2 would indicate that, for every dollar spent, there is an economic return of \$1.20.

Mr Steel: It is based on the fact that this is actually an extension of an existing route. 2A does not exist in isolation from the Gungahlin to city route. It is an extension of the route, so people will catch light rail from Gungahlin down to Commonwealth Park and in the future down to Woden. The benefits can be seen together.

THE CHAIR: Yes, I understand that.

Mr Steel: There are multiple numbers there. Duncan might have them ready to provide to you.

Mr Edghill: Certainly. There are multiple numbers here, but with Gungahlin to Commonwealth Park the BCR that is in the business case, including wider economic benefits, is 1.2.

THE CHAIR: That is on the basis that you already own the light rail system to Alinga Street?

Mr Edghill: That is looking at the entirety of the system.

THE CHAIR: Is that the entirety of the line or the add-on of the line?

Mr Edghill: That is looking at the entirety of the line, Gungahlin to Commonwealth Park.

THE CHAIR: You might at some stage, Mr Edghill, convey to the committee secretary the URL or the source of that, for the committee's information.

Mr Edghill: Indeed.

MS CHEYNE: I can send it to you. I have got it open.

MS CODY: Light rail stage 2A: I know we have a bunch of contract negotiations still underway; is that correct?

Mr Steel: Yes.

MS CODY: The \$31 million that is set aside is part of those negotiations; is that right?

Mr Steel: Yes. I will hand over to Duncan Edghill to explain.

Mr Edghill: With the \$31 million, what goes into it are all of those items that were listed before. Effectively, one way to think of it is that there are four main categories of work going on at the moment, or four main cost categories. The first one is around our own internal agency staffing costs. The second one is the work that Canberra Metro is performing, around the design and other works. There are our own direct advisers. In the design review process, there are multiple designers involved in the project. Canberra Metro ultimately has to design the system and accept the risks associated with that design. Nevertheless we also have our own designers in place to review and undertake certain design works. The fourth category is physical works that may be undertaken.

MS CODY: What does that mean jobs-wise? Will there be additional jobs? Whilst we are doing all of this, surely, it includes—

Mr Steel: I am not sure that we have the final number of jobs that are expected across the project yet. I might take that on notice and see whether we can find that number for stage 2A. The purpose of getting on with stage 2A earlier, by splitting stage 2 into 2A and 2B, is to allow us to keep some of the expertise that we have acquired through doing stage 1 of light rail, particularly in Major Projects Canberra, and continuing that work with some of our contractors as well.

We are hoping that it will create jobs across the corridor during construction. There is a very heated market at the moment for large light rail projects and other rail projects around the country, so there is a lot of demand for those skills. We are hoping that we can retain a lot of that skill, as I said, right here in Canberra with the project.

THE CHAIR: Just to follow up on that, in relation to Canberra Metro, the consortium, how much of that do they have on staff at the moment, or is it a matter of them gearing up again? Are they holding that staff in anticipation of projects?

Mr Edghill: In terms of the construction staff that they were using for stage 1, certainly, most of the staff that they were using were local construction people, and they are obviously not holding those for stage 2; they are off doing other works. Primarily, the Canberra Metro staff at the moment are focused upon the management, the design and the contract negotiations. A lot of the work that they are undertaking at the moment is through their locally based design partners.

THE CHAIR: Is it specialist design expertise rather than specialist construction expertise?

Mr Edghill: At this stage of the project it is primarily design staff rather than construction staff.

THE CHAIR: Is there specialist construction expertise and then light rail fettling, for want of a better word? is there a pool of workers out there who have these particular skills that we would be attracting or are we training up our own staff from other construction types in the ACT?

Mr Edghill: It is a little bit of both. There are some elements of the construction process which are very highly specialised. Probably the best example of that is the signalling system. With respect to having the SCATS system interfaced with the light rail system, as we were building light rail stage 1 we had a gentleman from Ireland who was helping us with that, because that was so specific. That is at one end of the spectrum. Having said that, now that we have actually delivered light rail in Canberra, there is a body of local construction supervisors and other trades who will have familiarity with building a light rail system. We would expect them to be the first people that Canberra Metro look at when it is time to construct stage 2.

THE CHAIR: Before we move to raising London Circuit—I asked this question of the procurement minister this morning, but the question that I asked this morning relates specifically to light rail stage 2A—my understanding is that the entire length of 2A will be wire free and that that will require the new rolling stock to have batteries and the old rolling stock to be retrofitted with batteries. This goes to one of the issues that I am concerned about, issues associated with modern slavery and the acquisition of rare earths and rare metals which are absolutely essential for battery technology. What will light rail in Canberra be doing under the supervision of the government to ensure that the supply chains for the batteries and wherever else you use rare earths and rare metals are as conflict-free as possible? We are acquiring an energy source which comes from places which are not as nice as Australia and where they do not treat their workforce as well as we do in Australia. How do we de-conflict the energy that we are going to use in this space?

Mr Steel: We have not announced the final technology that will be used to power wire-free running through stage 2A at this point in time; that is subject to negotiation at the moment. There are a variety of technologies. There are supercapacitors, not necessarily just batteries, although it does look as though batteries may be a solution by themselves which can be, as you say, retrofitted on the existing 14 light rail vehicles that we have. We always anticipated that would be case and made sure that that was available to us when we were doing the negotiations for stage 1 of the project. For stage 2, of course, they would come ready for wire-free running.

As for the traceability regarding the rare earth elements, we can come back to you on that one. That is a conversation to have with CAF, the Spanish manufacturer of the light rail vehicles, and then acquisition of the technology for wire-free running. But they would have—

THE CHAIR: Are they a part of the consortium?

Mr Steel: They are, yes. They are part of the consortium. They run wire-free operations in several cities around the world. We can certainly provide some further information on the specifications for the batteries.

THE CHAIR: I understand that in a small jurisdiction it is a difficult question—it is “How do you eat an elephant?” to some extent—but it is incumbent upon us, if we have a procurement process which is supposed to be ethical, that that we are mindful of all of these things. I welcome your advice on that.

Mr Steel: Thank you for raising it.

THE CHAIR: We will go to raising London Circuit.

Mr Steel: I am not actually the minister for this project, although it is obviously a related project. We will do our best to answer the questions.

MS CHEYNE: I am pretty sure we discussed it on Friday.

Mr Steel: The Chief Minister is the—

THE CHAIR: We did, but how is raising London Circuit not part of urban services?

Mr Steel: It is a separate but related project for the 2A extension. It is a City Renewal Authority and Major Projects Canberra project.

MS CODY: We did have a rather long discussion about it.

THE CHAIR: We did have a discussion about it.

Mr Steel: Mr Edghill can take any questions you have on it.

THE CHAIR: If the Minister for Urban Renewal is here tomorrow it will be more appropriate to ask her. I misunderstood, and when I listed the things that we would discuss no-one said that raising London Circuit would go with the minister.

Mr Steel: Mr Edghill can take questions on that matter from an MPC point of view if you want to ask them now.

THE CHAIR: No. We had a brief discussion the other day with Mr Edghill from a Major Projects point of view. I think we might have done with Major Projects.

MS CHEYNE: Should we stick with transport and do bus drivers and the ticketing

system?

MS CODY: I wanted to talk about the Woden bus interchange. Is that major projects?

Mr Steel: Yes, because it is tied with the CIT project.

THE CHAIR: And the bus depot?

MS CODY: That is what I meant: the bus depot in Woden.

Mr Steel: That is in Major Projects, but we will—

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else on this list that is Major Projects? If not, we can send Mr Edghill and his staff on their way, rather than having them hang around on the off-chance.

Mr Steel: No, I do not think so. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Anything else that comes up we will have to ask on notice. We will go to the revised budget to increase transport operations. We will go to more bus drivers, back to page 67. There are more bus drivers for weekend services. There is \$1.4 million in this budget. Why is that not extending? Why is that just a one-off?

Mr Steel: It is not a one-off. We are underway with developing a workforce development plan for Transport Canberra. We are waiting to look at what the outcomes of that development plan are for the forward years, but we thought that we needed around 43 drivers this year. The FTE numbers are somewhat less than that; that is because we are recruiting part-time and casual drivers. Since 28 April last year, we have recruited 66 part-time drivers and 21 casuals. We are looking at recruiting further drivers with this funding allocation from the budget review.

THE CHAIR: So you have not recruited \$1.4 million worth of drivers yet?

Mr Steel: Not this group yet, but there are the 87 that I mentioned.

THE CHAIR: What did that cost?

Mr Steel: That was within the existing agency appropriation, but we can come back with the cost of what that is, broken down.

THE CHAIR: I know that there has been a long discussion about needing more drivers, but when we appropriated at the beginning of the appropriation period, you envisaged an uptick in staff. Was that budgeted, essentially?

Mr Steel: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Provision was made for that. Are you saying that the provision was not enough for this financial year? You had provisioning in the budget for an extra 80-odd staff, but you are now adding another 43—did you say?—to that.

Mr Steel: Yes

THE CHAIR: So this is for 43 over a three-month period.

Mr Steel: It takes some time for those staff to go through training. We are now running rolling recruitment campaigns, so there will be several courses. We had nine drivers graduate last week. That will continue, and this will just fund that ongoing recruitment campaign. The network 19 changes resulted in 21 per cent more services being delivered by Transport Canberra, and we are expecting a further increase in the number of services being delivered in term 2 as a result of the update to the transport network. This will help support those extra services being delivered.

THE CHAIR: I am unclear. You are recruiting and training these 43 at the moment, so that is a rolling recruitment?

Mr Steel: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I am unclear as to whether you will expend that \$1.4 million in the period for which it is appropriated—that is, from April through to the end of June.

Mr Steel: I believe we will. The training course for drivers is not particularly long. It will be done until—

THE CHAIR: Are you training people now?

Mr Steel: Yes, we are. There are new training sessions. After everyone finishes, another one starts. That will continue.

THE CHAIR: That is part of the general appropriation for what used to be called ACTION buses?

Mr Steel: Yes. This will add to the number of drivers that we can recruit.

THE CHAIR: Is it just their salary or is it also their training?

Mr Steel: It is also their training. I will hand over to Judith to say a few words about how we are going through that process.

Ms Sturman: I acknowledge the privilege statement. The actual recruitment of drivers is always ongoing because we lose drivers through the normal workforce attrition. The additional cost has been to uplift that recruitment to allow us an extra 43 full-time equivalents. That is not necessarily 43 actual people; it is spread over the part-time role, so that could be a number that is more than 43.

The cost also includes an extension of training facilities within the buildings that we are currently in. That means we can now commence four courses per month instead of three. That allows us to increase the number of drivers that we are putting through the training. The actual budget is for physical amenities. Also, with additional drivers come additional lockers, coin bags and things like that, which are on-costs that we need to consider.

THE CHAIR: Could the committee have a breakdown of what that \$1.4 million is?

Ms Sturman: Absolutely.

THE CHAIR: I know it is only \$5,000, but what is the \$5,000 per year in the outyears?

Ms Sturman: I can provide that on notice.

Mr Steel: Isn't that the depreciation? That is just the depreciation.

Ms Sturman: On the capital.

Mr Steel: Yes.

THE CHAIR: On what capital? This is recurrent expenditure, so why are we depreciating stuff?

Ms Sturman: There are some building costs as part of this, in terms of the expansion of our training facilities within the—

THE CHAIR: Is that capital? It is not being treated as capital.

Ms Playford: Our chief finance officer can probably explain it more succinctly.

THE CHAIR: I know that the constant backwards and forwards about what is capital and what is recurrent is impenetrable.

Mr Pedersen: I acknowledge the privilege statement. This initiative on page 67 also provides \$100,000 in capital to upgrade the training facilities. The \$5,000 expense is depreciation, effectively—20 years, \$100,000.

THE CHAIR: The \$5,000 is depreciation on the associated capital?

Mr Pedersen: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: What needs to be upgraded?

Ms Sturman: There was space within the building, but it had not been segregated into office space so that training rooms could be facilitated to include more people to be trained.

THE CHAIR: Where is this facility?

Ms Sturman: The Tuggeranong depot. It was just open-plan space that was not being utilised. Partitioning had to be put in, to enable those training rooms—

MS CHEYNE: This is not driving training facility space; this is learning, writing—

PROOF

Ms Sturman: Absolutely. A lot of the course is in the classroom, to begin with, so that all of the rules and—

MS CHEYNE: Classroom; that is the word I meant.

Ms Sturman: Safety, customer service—all of that is done in the classroom at the commencement of the course, over the four weeks.

MS CHEYNE: At the moment people are sitting in an open-plan classroom that is really not fit for purpose?

Ms Sturman: They are very tiny rooms. We have the size as well.

MS CHEYNE: A \$100,000 fit-out is decent. Is it for whiteboards and stuff?

Ms Sturman: Yes. It is a facility that can be used by others as well. The continuation of the driver training will obviously require it, but in its down time it will afford other training, and another meeting space as well.

MS CHEYNE: So it is \$100,000 basically for an adaptable classroom training facility.

THE CHAIR: Are we done with more drivers?

MS CHEYNE: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Where is Woden bus depot?

MS CODY: It is on page 79.

THE CHAIR: Yes. There is an additional \$17 million—is that right?—for the Woden bus depot stage 2. There is \$3 million over the outyears in total expenditure and \$17 million over three years additional capital expenditure. What is the \$17 million for?

Mr Steel: This is stage 2 of the Woden bus depot upgrades and includes funding for maintenance and facilities to maintain buses at the depot. That will include 14 bus workshop bays; spare part storage, including for large panels and tyres; staff car parking required to meet development application approval; and shelter for overnight parking of buses. There are also intersection upgrades that are now required for the project. As well, this will fund the fit-out and commissioning of the depot. We have been in detailed discussions particularly with the diesel mechanics and their representatives, the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, about what we need to provide as part of this upgrade, and this will facilitate the construction.

THE CHAIR: So is this the total budget for the new Woden bus depot—because this is listed as stage 2?

Mr Steel: Stage 1 was funded in 2017-18 for \$25.75 million. Preliminary works have already started on that. For example—

THE CHAIR: When did you say it was budgeted—2017-18?

Mr Steel: Yes, 2017-18.

THE CHAIR: And work started when?

Mr Steel: We might have further detail about when works commenced, but we are expecting that the relocation of underground services will be completed by May, which will then facilitate stage 2 to start works with the—

THE CHAIR: Is this Woden bus depot, the old bus depot that was closed down and is now being re-opened?

Mr Steel: That is correct.

THE CHAIR: What is the \$25 million plus the—

Mr Steel: Stage 1 was for demolition of the buildings that were on site.

THE CHAIR: Is it demolished? I do not get down that way very often.

Mr Steel: Yes, it is. It is a completely blank site. It also included funding for decontamination of the site, which was required for environmental reasons.

MS CHEYNE: Do you mean asbestos?

Mr Steel: I am not sure whether there was asbestos. There were unbunded fuel enclosures, storage and waste oil storage issues. There was the relocation of existing underground services, which I mentioned. It also included funding for the preliminary design. Stage 2 will deliver the further projects to enable us to have a proper workshop on site.

THE CHAIR: So the \$25 million was to get it to ground zero?

Mr Steel: And to start construction on the depot itself, yes.

THE CHAIR: Has construction started on the depot?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jeremy Smith to provide an update about where things are up to with it.

Mr Smith: I acknowledge the privilege statement.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

Mr Smith: As Minister Steel said, the original funding in 2017-18 for the \$25 million commenced the construction. We have relocated the high-pressure gas main to the south of the site—out into the southern verge of Paramatta Street—which allows the building envelope to expand on the site, which allows us more buildable ground. We are currently relocating the major sewer line, which runs north-south on the site,

further to the east on the site, which again increases the buildability within the block.

The contaminants that Minister Steel spoke about did include asbestos. In the demolition of the existing old Woden bus depot, there were a number of items of asbestos—lagging around pipes, eave-type materials and stuff like that, which needed to be disposed of. But, as Minister Steel also highlighted, there had been underground fuel tanks on the site, which had previously been removed, but we still had to—

THE CHAIR: But not remediated?

Mr Smith: There had been some minor remediation—more at the ground level—but we had to go in and remediate further down as well. Effectively, we build bunded fuelling facilities these days, which are above ground. They have protection around them so that the contaminants cannot get into the ground. There had also been some waste oil storage on the site. We had to go in and remediate some of the soil around that, as well.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Is that just simply aerating the soil and dealing with the volatile and sublime, or do you actually remove soil and replace it with clean soil?

Mr Smith: We can take the decontamination to a number of different levels. We wanted to try to get the site removed from the EPA's contaminated sites register, so we actually took a more invasive remediation. We removed quite a bit of soil, and that went to an approved disposal site. By doing that we can remove the site from the contaminated sites register. If we cannot quite get to that level, we can just go to a yearly monitoring of it.

THE CHAIR: What happens to the soil that is removed? Is somebody else responsible for getting rid of the contaminants or is it just stored?

Mr Smith: Effectively it goes to the Mugga Lane landfill, which has the appropriate measures in place to ensure that the contaminants do not move into the groundwater and into the soils.

THE CHAIR: So there is a big old soil repository with dirty soil—contaminated soil—in it?

Mr Smith: Effectively, yes.

THE CHAIR: I am a little bit perplexed. We had a \$25 million appropriation. Essentially what you are saying is that that was not enough.

Mr Steel: No. We knew that we need to undertake these preliminary works, and stage 1 also funded the uncovered bus parking for approximately 110 buses as well as some other car parking. But we knew that we needed to undertake further consultation with diesel mechanics about the design of the workshops, which are funded in stage 2.

We are also concurrently undertaking work on the Transport Canberra zero emissions transition plan, which is looking at how we transition our bus fleet to zero emission vehicles. We want to make sure that Woden will be ready to have zero emission buses

and could accommodate them. There may be further upgrades that are required to establish that, but stage 2 will effectively be futureproofing for those needs. That is why it has been necessary to do it in two stages. We are looking forward to that work being completed. There have not been any operational impacts, but the benefits of having this depot there will be significant for the future because of the expanding fleet across Canberra and because it will reduce the dead running of buses throughout the network, which provides efficiencies in how we operate.

THE CHAIR: Can I just clarify? Did you say that you were proposing to build 14 diesel repair bays?

Mr Steel: Fourteen workshop bays.

THE CHAIR: Not all diesel?

Mr Steel: They may be used for electric buses, for example, if that is the outcome of the transition plan for Transport Canberra.

THE CHAIR: How many buses in the fleet are currently diesel?

Mr Steel: We can provide that on notice. There are some LNG buses in the fleet, which we are looking at replacing over the four years, and currently the one electric bus which is operational.

THE CHAIR: LNG buses are replaced with what?

Mr Steel: With either a zero emissions or a diesel bus, depending on what the transition plan says that we should do and based on the infrastructure needs.

THE CHAIR: Then what happens to the LNG plant, which I gather is at Tuggeranong?

Mr Steel: Tuggeranong, yes.

THE CHAIR: And that is the only place where there is LNG?

Mr Steel: That is correct. We are expecting that to be decommissioned at some point in the future once—

THE CHAIR: When did we go to LNG?

Mr Steel: A number of years ago now. Do you have some further detail on that?

Ms Sturman: Something like 2007, is it?

THE CHAIR: Yes, that sounds about right. It was a bit of a flash in the pan, was it not?

Mr Steel: I think it probably lowered emissions for a period and operational costs for Transport Canberra. But the Euro 6 diesel buses have brought emissions down and are

quite cheap to run as well. Also, things have changed since that procurement was made. We will look at further transition to zero emissions, whether that is electric, which we think it probably will be, or hydrogen buses. We have got a steering committee that is currently developing that plan. That will inform what further infrastructure we may need—overhead charging gantries, for example, or charging points in the new depot—but we have made sure that with planning stage 2 we have taken that into account for the design.

THE CHAIR: Are you going to be building in charging stations or are you going to be connecting so that you can build in after?

Mr Steel: That is correct. We are providing the utilities there for the future needs if electric charging was required.

THE CHAIR: And if you have to do electric charging, there will not be an extra capital cost to the budget?

Mr Steel: There would be further infrastructure required in terms of the charging points and the like. But depending on the procurement of those services, that may be provided in a range of ways and funded in a range of ways. We are just waiting on the outcome of the steering committee.

THE CHAIR: And what is the time frame on that?

Mr Steel: They have had several meetings already and we are hoping that they will provide their report around August, depending on how far progressed they are, and that will then inform the procurement of future buses. We have got funding for a further 84 diesel buses. It is costed on the basis of a diesel bus. And we will look to procure zero emissions buses as part of that 84.

MS CODY: Why have we decided to keep Woden bus depot?

Mr Steel: The main benefits of it are to reduce dead running times. When a bus has to go back to the depot for a range of operational reasons and is not carrying passengers, we think it is strategically placed in the bus network and will provide those benefits. It is also an opportunity to have brand new workshop facilities for staff, which is good, and the ability to build in those elements around potential charging infrastructure in the future as well to charge a zero emissions bus fleet. It provides a range of opportunities. Did you want to comment further on what the benefits are?

Ms Sturman: Yes. Those are it in a nutshell. The most important thing, probably, aside from the opportunity for electric buses or a zero emissions bus, is that we need to alleviate the pressure that is on the Tuggeranong and Belconnen depots that are already full. Actually running buses from Woden will be more efficient. It is important to get it built and get those buses in there as soon as we can.

Mr Steel: It is also quite close to Woden interchange. Some of the buses that are currently laying over at Woden may just go back to the depot if they need to layover for a period because it is so close by, rather than laying over at the town centre.

THE CHAIR: What is the timetable for completion of stage 2?

Mr Steel: At this stage, subject to development application approval, we are hoping to go to DA around April and we will be undertaking some community consultation on final designs now as well,

THE CHAIR: Bear with me; I thought that I had asked had works started and you said works had started.

Mr Steel: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Then I said, “Is this essentially getting us to ground zero?” You said, “No, works have started.” What has started?

Mr Steel: Stage 1 has started and stage 2 is subject to the DA which is going through.

THE CHAIR: What has started in stage 1 that is approved and up and running?

Mr Steel: All those preliminary works necessary for the depot that I have mentioned, the environmental remediation—

THE CHAIR: But the actual building was not in stage 1?

Mr Steel: No, the structures were not part of stage 1, other than the platform for the bus parts themselves, the hard stand.

THE CHAIR: The bus parts?

Mr Steel: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I think that is cement, is it not?

Mr Steel: Yes, or asphalt or whatever it may be.

THE CHAIR: Something you park the buses on?

Mr Steel: Yes. I will hand over to Jeremy to provide some further detail.

Mr Smith: Just to give a little more detail to that, when we construct a facility like this, or it may be a school or a hall or anything like that, there are a number of stages that we work on. Some of them are predicated on a DA, some of them are not. We have commenced the service relocation and stuff like that. They are not predicated on a DA; they are predicated on approvals by the utilities providers, Icon Water et cetera, and those approvals have been granted, which allow us to then relocate those services.

For a demolition there is a DA which is associated with that as well. That DA was lodged and allowed us to demolish the old facility. Minister Steel is now talking about a subsequent DA, which then allows us to commence the construction of the new facility itself—the hard stand, the administrative building, the workshop, the car park and the bus shelter et cetera.

THE CHAIR: In that case, why is stage 2 in a supplementary appropriation and not in the principal appropriation? Why was it not appropriated in June?

Mr Steel: The reason was that we were still undergoing that detailed consultation with regard to the design of the workshops and the final design was not at a point where it could be included within the budget, but we were able to do that in the budget review once we had gone through further consultation with them and we finalised what we were intending to get out of the project. There were a number of other complexities to this project. One of them was that a third party decided to build a service station across the road, a 7-Eleven, which has meant that we have had to take that into consideration around traffic in the area.

There will be signalisation that will be required on Athllon Drive and Shea Street and we are also taking into consideration the parking, particularly for bus drivers, provided within the facility. That has added some complexity to the project, but we will still be proceeding.

THE CHAIR: Okay. We still have ticketing systems, bulky waste, improving and expanding online services, capital associated with expense initiatives, Nudurr Drive and 5G services.

MS CHEYNE: Are we are done with Woden bus depot?

THE CHAIR: You are not interested in Woden bus depot?

MS CHEYNE: I was to a point.

THE CHAIR: Because it is under the Woden bus depot component, I want to go to capital associated with expense initiatives. We have touched on the bus depot, the drivers, \$100,000. What is the \$740,000 for light rail additional services and safety infrastructure enhancements? Is that to stop people from walking across the road or walking across the tramlines?

Mr Steel: We are committed to the continuous improvement of safety on light rail and are working with Canberra Metro on how we best do that. We respond to a number of different things: the National Rail Safety Regulator and any comments that they make in their regular reports on the system; and WorkSafe and any recommendations they make around improvements to light rail services. We are also consulting with People with Disability and the Council on the Ageing on what improvements we can make. We are inviting them very soon—I think in May—to come together to talk about how we can improve safety on light rail vehicles for different people in our community.

THE CHAIR: On the vehicles or with access—crossings and stuff like that?

Mr Steel: It is both. It is also a practical experience for people involved and showing them how to best access the vehicles and alight the vehicles if they are not experienced in doing so. We are constantly looking at improvements to safety. One of the things we will be doing is putting hand straps in the light rail vehicles. This is

something that we funded through this initiative.

THE CHAIR: They did not come with hand straps?

Mr Steel: We decided at the time that the light rail vehicle did not require them, but we have been listening to feedback from people using light rail, and the feedback that we have had, particularly from people who are short of stature, is that sometimes they cannot reach the top bar and may need a bit of assistance. There is an opportunity to retrofit the hand straps quite easily. They will be in a Transport Canberra blue colour. As part of that work that we are doing with a range of different groups, we will be showing them how to use the straps which will be installed. There are 28 per vehicle. We have learnt from the experiences of other light rail operations interstate. The recently commenced operations of the Sydney light rail had a lot more straps than were required; we are going for something in between that we hope will make it easier for people.

THE CHAIR: So we had underkill on straps and they had overkill?

Mr Steel: Yes. There are certainly bars throughout the light rail vehicle for people to use, but we are adding those straps. We think that will be a practical measure to improve safety. There have been times when the light rail vehicle has had to stop suddenly because of, unfortunately, people who have been doing the wrong thing on the alignment. When that happens, it can be quite sudden. This will be an improved safety measure that will be added to light rail vehicles. We are expecting them to be fitted over the next few months.

THE CHAIR: Can I add something that I have not experienced but have had feedback on anecdotally: the zigzag approach to crossing the roads. I have had elderly people with motorised scooters who have had quite serious problems when trying to negotiate the crossings. You come in, turn left and turn right. I have had quite a bit of feedback about that. It is not my experience that that is how you approach a light rail stop in Melbourne, so why is there that zigzag? I see that Mr McHugh is nodding; you must have had that feedback elsewhere.

Mr McHugh: Yes.

THE CHAIR: How do we mitigate those difficulties for people?

MS CHEYNE: And not just the zigzag but the time that it takes to get across. We discussed this in annual report hearings last year. Sometimes you get halfway—I saw this a lot during the Multicultural Festival and I have done it myself—and you are at the light rail area, and then you go to the next set of lights, but they have already turned red. That is encouraging people to jaywalk and dash across in front of traffic because they do not want to wait. I think there is a range of issues with the zigzag and the time that it takes, but it is also being able to manoeuvre.

Mr Steel: The education has always been around “wait for signals before you cross”, and that goes for both pedestrians and cars.

THE CHAIR: Come on: we are Canberrans; people do not do that.

Mr Steel: We are not looking at Melbourne, because some of the standards have changed around safety around stops. What is in jurisdictions like Victoria may not reflect best practice unless it is a new stop that has been put in. I think the original design of the crossings was to force people to look for light rail coming in either direction. That is the education that we have been putting out to people. I will hand over to Ben McHugh and Judith Sturman to provide some further detail about some of the feedback we have received and how we are looking at improving safety around the stops and crossing points across the light rail corridor.

Mr McHugh: From the highest level down, and we will get to the operational challenges, the design objective is to have pedestrians, cyclists and other users crossing the line—not accessing the station necessarily—to be pointed in the direction of potentially oncoming vehicles. The point of that is to trigger that. It is also to slow down the speed of the crossing, of the movement, so that people cannot just ride across on a bike quickly and those sorts of things. They are intended design outcomes that force people to behave more safely. There has also been some retrofit of additional low barriers to try and prevent people just jumping what was effectively a low kerb, to get some better enforcement of that. That is the design objective of that change. The opportunity to work more closely with groups representing people who might be in mobility scooters is something that we will take up and make sure that, if there are scenarios where it is more difficult, we improve that if we can.

THE CHAIR: I also had one constituent give me feedback—this person has one of those Dutch bicycles with a pannier on the front where you put your kids—that it does not work.

Mr McHugh: No.

THE CHAIR: It is very hard to get around the corners.

Mr McHugh: The intention is that cyclists dismount and walk their bikes through.

THE CHAIR: Yes, but still. That is a different treatment of cyclists at light rail crossings than elsewhere, because now it is permissible generally to ride your bike safely across a pedestrian crossing whereas once upon a time you had to dismount.

Mr McHugh: Correct.

THE CHAIR: But here you have to dismount.

Mr McHugh: The design objective is for cyclists to dismount and walk their bikes across.

THE CHAIR: Is that the law or is that what you are trying to encourage people to do?

Mr McHugh: I will check. I will get that for you on notice.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else on capital initiatives? The capital initiatives are

expense initiatives associated with capital, on page 79. We have already touched on the bus drivers' \$100,000.

MS CODY: We have not done the ticketing system yet?

THE CHAIR: No. This is a capital question. On page 140 of the other document, the supplementary budget papers, there is a list of technical adjustments for light rail. Maybe the easiest thing would be to take it on notice and answer what those technical adjustments are for. Is that easier?

Mr Steel: Yes, thank you. I am happy to take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: I am happy with that. In relation to light rail, where are we with the defects on stage 1? Have we worked through all of the defects on stage 1 and addressed them with the consortium?

Mr Steel: Yes, we have progressed in doing that. We will take that on notice as well because MPC may have some additional stuff to add. I will hand over to Alison to provide some further detail, and Ben McHugh.

Ms Playford: Major Projects Canberra actually have responsibility for the closing out of stage 1 as a project.

Mr McHugh: I think it would be appropriate for them to respond to any technical requests around numbers. We, as the recipient of the assets in a lot of the circumstances, have been working closely with the team. There were a number of defects that have been corrected over the last few months that were on that list. There are some that still remain in what is called a disputed process, which we work through on the contract. That is referred to the independent certifier to close out. But there has been a lot of progress made on those defects in the last few months.

THE CHAIR: Is asset acceptance complete or are we waiting for all of those defects to be addressed?

Mr McHugh: That is probably a question for MPC under the contract.

THE CHAIR: Who owns the asset?

Mr McHugh: The asset gets returned. In some parts there are retained assets that CMET manage for the duration of the contract. In other parts it comes back to TCCS as the asset owner.

THE CHAIR: TCCS is the asset owner, and will be the asset owner of everything at the—

Mr McHugh: Ultimately.

THE CHAIR: Ultimately. Where are we in the process of taking ownership of the asset?

Mr McHugh: A number of those assets have been handed back, particularly those that sit outside the light rail corridor itself, the operational corridor. Where the project had reconstructed intersections or upgraded landscape on the verges, a lot of that has been returned to TCCS and we are managing that.

THE CHAIR: What is the definition of the light rail corridor?

Mr McHugh: There are a number of different ways that it is defined. The contract defines a number of those. Some of them are dimensional—distances from the tram, for example. That is a complex answer which we could probably provide on notice.

THE CHAIR: Okay, that would be good.

Ms Playford: Yes, best to do it on notice.

THE CHAIR: What I would like to know, on notice, is: how many defects were you working through, how many have been resolved and how many are still being worked through? As much as possible, what is the nature of the defects, and is there anyone particularly superintending the works, addressing the defects and the asset handover to TCCS?

Ms Playford: We are happy to take it on notice, but it would be Major Projects Canberra who have that responsibility and have the officers who can answer that.

THE CHAIR: That is fine. I do not care who answers it, as long as we get an answer. We agreed to take a 10-minute break so that people can stretch their knees and have a cuppa. When we come back we will start with modernising ticketing.

Hearing suspended from 2.26 to 2.36 pm.

THE CHAIR: Can we move to modernised transport network ticketing systems. There are a whole lot of “not-for-publications” in the outyears. How do we come to the amount of money that is supposed to be capital expenditure this year, what is that capital expenditure to be used for and when will we know what numbers will populate the outyears?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Judith Sturman to talk about that \$656,000 figure.

Ms Sturman: Currently we are in the process of ticketing procurement. We are progressing, though, with placing orders for hardware, purchasing hardware which is in the capital and the depreciation figures. But on top of that there is also vendor appointment, systems design and other associated expenses.

THE CHAIR: You are purchasing hardware but we do not know who the operator will be?

Mr Steel: The government is finalising the procurement at the moment. We cannot release details about the final cost because we are in that procurement phase at the moment.

THE CHAIR: I understand that point. But what I am trying to say is that you have not actually determined a provider; therefore you have not determined the technology; but you are buying hardware. That is presumably bits that you swipe?

Mr Steel: We are in sole-source procurement with one provider.

THE CHAIR: Take it back a step. How did we get to where we are, that you are in a sole-source procurement for a presumably pretty large initiative? How do we get to a single-source tender, single-selection tender?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Judith to talk through the time line. In the previous procurement process the government did not think that any of the proponents had a good outcome for the territory and that is why we have arrived at the point we are at, where we are in procurement with a sole source. I will hand over to Judith to explain how we got there.

THE CHAIR: What was the thing that did not give us a good outcome and because we did not get a good outcome why are we not going out to the market but actually—

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Judith to provide some further detail. But when we did go out to the market we did not get the outcome that we wanted in terms of cost and capability. That is why we are now in a sole-source procurement process at the moment, which we are hoping to finalise soon.

THE CHAIR: I would like someone to elaborate on that.

Ms Sturman: First of all, the ticketing industry, in terms of how it is moving, is very fast paced and is a high technology area of course. In 2017 Transport Canberra put an EOI out for a process to go to market and in 2018 we put a request for proposal out. That was completed in 2019. We had three vendors that were included in that process.

THE CHAIR: Was that three people who put their hand up and said, “We would like to be considered”?

Ms Sturman: There were three that we had considered and those three—

THE CHAIR: Could you just unpack that a bit? Were there three people who put in bids or were there three people shortlisted from bidders?

Ms Sturman: This is slightly before my time. I think there were more than three people, but it came down to three. Probably this is on the edge of where we get into that confidential area of the sensitivities of the process going forward. But for reassurance we actually went to a financial review, a technological independent reviewer, and we sought commercial advice on the information provided by each vendor. The advice was that we should continue with a further procurement of that process.

THE CHAIR: How did you come up with, “These are up to putty, so we will go for a single-select tender”?

Ms Sturman: That is probably a process that I cannot—

Mr Steel: We will have to—

THE CHAIR: I think that is probably an answer for the minister.

Mr Steel: Yes, it will be an answer for the minister but probably once we have actually reached a conclusion of the procurement process.

THE CHAIR: Why is that? You said you were in the process of a single-select tender. I do not care who that is. I want to know what the thinking was that got you to a single-select tender. Presumably with transport systems all over the world with automated ticketing there are scads of people who provide the service, or is it an entire monopoly? If you track it down, you end up with the one person?

Mr Steel: I do not think it is an entire monopoly, but I think there are some large providers of ticketing systems around the world. We will have further to say about that. I am not intending to make an announcement here about that.

THE CHAIR: No, I do not want that. I do not want an announcement on the finalisation of the process. I want to know how the agency lit upon the person. You do not need to tell the committee who that is. I understand that. But how did you come up with, “This is the person we will tap on the shoulder and say, ‘We would like you to do a single-select tender’”?

Mr Steel: At the moment, unfortunately, that does actually touch upon the finalisation of the process. We will have more to say about that and we will—

THE CHAIR: I am completely at a loss as to how that could be the case.

Mr Steel: There was an opportunity that presented itself. I will be announcing what that opportunity is with the sole procurement of this ticketing system when I can, and I will be making those details available to the community.

THE CHAIR: I am absolutely gobsmacked that you cannot describe to the committee the process whereby you decided that, of all the people who could provide, we would go with this one. There may be a perfectly good reason.

Mr Steel: There are plenty of reasons. That is the reason. I will not be able to provide that to the committee at this point in time, but when I can I will in relation to who we are going with through this procurement process, who we are negotiating with and the outcomes of that procurement.

THE CHAIR: Will you be in that situation before this bill is appropriated?

Mr Steel: That is subject to a range of different factors.

THE CHAIR: I am a little at a loss as to how you are appropriating \$7½ million for hardware when you have not determined the contract. Will you actually spend that \$7½ million on hardware in the appropriation period?

PROOF

Mr Steel: Yes, we will and we are in the process of procurement, including contract. That is why I cannot comment on it. When I can, I will make that available for the community. But I am not intending on making an announcement to the community about the outcome of that.

THE CHAIR: You have made an announcement. You said you are prepared to spend \$7½ million on hardware. You have made a bit of an announcement. What is the hardware that you are buying with that \$7½ million?

Mr Steel: We will be announcing that once the procurement is finalised.

THE CHAIR: How is it that the Assembly is expected to appropriate something when we have no idea what it is that we are appropriating?

Mr Steel: We are in sole procurement at the moment and once we can—

THE CHAIR: That is not an answer to my question. That is a pivot on your part. My question is: how is this committee expected to make a recommendation and how is the Assembly expected to agree to an appropriation when you are saying, “We are going to spend \$7 million in a three-month period on something and we cannot or will not tell you what it is”?

MS CHEYNE: In other words, how do we know that this is going to be value for money?

Mr Steel: That is the process that we are going through, and if I do announce what we are doing then there will be a risk that we do not get value for money.

THE CHAIR: But you have already said how much you are prepared to spend.

Mr Steel: In that initial phase there but the rest of it is subject to this negotiation that is currently going on.

THE CHAIR: What is the initial phase cut-off?

Mr Steel: Ms Sturman has already outlined what that infrastructure is.

THE CHAIR: You said you were buying hardware. What is the hardware that you are buying?

Mr Steel: We have already talked about that to the committee. Which bit? I could ask Ms Sturman to reiterate what she has already said.

Ms Sturman: There is a recurring cost as well as non-capital. There is vendor appointment, there is system design and there is replacement for purchasing of hardware for buses and depots, which is the capital costs.

THE CHAIR: So the capital cost is replacing current hardware, where you swipe your MyWay card on a bus. Is that what you are saying?

Ms Sturman: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Is it MyWay card compatible, or is it compatible with the—

Ms Sturman: The new system.

THE CHAIR: The new secret system. How do you know that you are buying the right thing?

Ms Sturman: Because it is through the sole supplier.

THE CHAIR: They are not signed up; you have a sole supplier who is not signed up. You cannot give the committee a guarantee that this was an open process, and, even though, with this organisation, you are not signed up to them, you are buying hardware from this organisation?

Mr Steel: We are going through the procurement process at the moment. That is the expected cost in that year for the system. We are going through the procurement process. That happens right across the board in the budget, where we have expectation of cost and we go out for procurement to deliver that project. That is exactly what we are doing here.

THE CHAIR: Is it going to be less or more? What is your expectation?

Mr Steel: That is our expectation. We put it in there, and for the future years there is an expectation as well, but we are not releasing that at this stage, while we go through the procurement process.

THE CHAIR: What is your expectation as to what you would be acquiring—not how much you will be spending, but what you will be acquiring in the outyears—to run the new ticketing system?

Mr Steel: That is subject to the procurement process that we are in right now. We are currently in negotiations about that.

THE CHAIR: Does anyone have any questions that might elicit some meaningful information about the ticketing system?

MS CHEYNE: I appreciate that this might be subject to the discussions that you are having, but there is something that has been raised with me every so often. If everybody in a family has their own MyWay card it means that there is no opportunity for a family discount. If a family—let us say there are two adults and three kids—all want to take a trip to the Multicultural Festival, that ends up being a reasonably high cost. There is no opportunity to say, “There’s a big group of people going and we’re all related.” In other circumstances—for instance, if I was buying a pass to an amusement park—I would get a discount. Is there any opportunity that can be explored with this new ticketing process where people could be linked as family members so that families regularly taking public transport can get a further discount?

Mr Steel: The current system, the MyWay system, has been in operation for some years and is now an outdated system. The problem with it is that the value is actually on the card itself. If a child loses the card, they are losing the value that is on the card as well.

We are hoping that through a new ticketing system we can have an account-based system whereby you could have multiple cards attached to one account. That would enable a parent, for example, to manage three students having separate cards but attached to the one account. It would enable them to manage the resources across the three cards. It would also provide capabilities like mobile ticketing, for example—ticketing linked to a credit card, if that is what a person wants to use as a way to tap on or tap off. That is currently available in Sydney. We are looking at what other capabilities can be provided through the new ticketing system as well. It will be much more flexible and it will enable the government to look at more flexible ways of pricing as well, which we cannot currently offer under the MyWay system.

MS CHEYNE: So the answer to my question is “maybe.”

Mr Steel: Yes, but the final capabilities will not be announced for some time, until we go through this procurement process.

THE CHAIR: I suspect that it is quite cumbersome for families to have 20 bucks on this card and 20 bucks on that card. It is actually quite an investment sometimes for families, whereas if you had something which is more like the E-tag system for your car, you have an account and it does not matter which car tags; it comes off that account.

Mr Steel: That is exactly right. Obviously, that creates its own issues as well.

THE CHAIR: You would probably have less recurrent outlay for a family, making sure that everyone is topped up to a level.

Mr Steel: Yes, potentially.

THE CHAIR: That would probably be helpful to families.

Mr Steel: It will provide better administration of public transport ticketing, particularly for students and families. It will also open up a whole range of opportunities for people to use a variety of different methods to use public transport and hopefully reduce the barriers that the ticketing system presents for people using public transport at the moment. A number of cities around the world have mobile ticketing. If you walk into the train station, you do not have to have a MyWay card that you purchased at the newsagent down the street in order to use light rail or a bus. You can simply download the app, buy a ticket on the spot, swipe on and jump on.

THE CHAIR: How do you accommodate people who would have concessions with that sort of mechanism?

Mr Steel: The concession would be linked to the account. The account would be set up, whether it is on the app or at home beforehand, and the concession would be

validated on the account.

THE CHAIR: You could not spontaneously download the app if you were a concession holder—

Mr Steel: You could probably set it up.

THE CHAIR: A pensioner or a student.

Mr Steel: Set it up.

Ms Sturman: You can set it up that way. These are the issues that we are working through.

THE CHAIR: Do you need verification if somebody says, “I’m a student,” or “I’m a pensioner”?

Mr Steel: The final detail of what we release is obviously subject to the work that is going to be needed, in terms of the development of the ticketing system, once the ticketing system has been procured. Those capabilities are available in other jurisdictions and we can look at those, as to what the opportunities are.

MS CHEYNE: But we are not fully phasing out cash?

Mr Steel: No, cash will still be available for Canberrans who use public transport.

MS CHEYNE: If Mrs Dunne wants to jump on light rail.

Mr Steel: It will provide more options for people to pay. Most people have a MyWay card, and there has been a huge increase in the number of people using a MyWay card since last year, since the free travel period in particular. People decided to get a MyWay card to get the free travel. We want to make sure that there are a range of options for people to use, just to make sure that it is as easy as possible and there are no barriers whatsoever as far as the ticketing system is concerned for someone to access public transport.

MS CODY: Therefore whatever is used on the buses will be used on light rail for a ticketing system?

Mr Steel: Yes. It is really important that the two link in together. It is not just the ticketing itself; there is also the passenger information system, journey planning and all of the back end of the system. I will hand over to Judith Sturman to talk about what the possibilities are in terms of the benefits it could provide for Transport Canberra and transport planning in particular.

Ms Sturman: At the moment we have something which involves two systems working together. One is a ticketing system; another is the positioning of vehicles. They are very separate and they do not always work as well as we anticipate they should work. In the action plan for weekends we have identified that the next ticketing system will solve that problem—that we have better transport planning or journey

planning. Our expectation is that the new system will combine those functions. That means when we have a delay or cancellation, that can be acted on much quicker from our communications centre and people can be informed much quicker. On the back end we are able to manage the operations and customers see a more seamless process.

Ms Playford: The full details are subject to the commercial negotiation, so we probably cannot go into too much detail.

MS CODY: My point was that you are not going to have to have one thing for the bus and one thing for light rail; you are going to try and make sure that they—

Ms Playford: We are looking at an integrated ticketing system.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else on ticketing?

Mr McHugh: Mrs Dunne, I can probably make a clarification regarding an earlier question taken on notice around whether it is legal to ride your bike across the light rail lines. It is the same rule, because it is a signalised crossing, as it is for cyclists at other crossing points; so it is legal to ride your bike.

THE CHAIR: It is legal, but you want to discourage people from doing so.

Mr McHugh: Yes. As long as you do it at less than 10 kilometres an hour, which is written in the road rules.

MS CODY: I have one more on transport. I have the infrastructure ones—better public transport infrastructure for Canberra, on page 77.

THE CHAIR: Go ahead.

MS CODY: Minister, I know that I was with you a little while back—I cannot remember when, but it feels like forever ago—when we were announcing, as part of the expansion of Athllon Drive, that the government was looking to expand Wanniassa park and ride. I know that the top of the Cotter Road at Weston near the new service station it is ridiculously busy. Are there plans for any of that expansion?

Mr Steel: Yes. In addition to the expansion of Wanniassa park and ride by 37 spaces, we are also, through this funding, increasing the spaces at north Weston park and ride to add 46 spaces. It is a very popular place, particularly to catch the R7 and the R10 rapid routes. With the growth of Molonglo we are expecting that to grow even further. We have the funding there to expand it and there are further improvements that are funded through this measure—wayfinding and signage improvements, particularly around Tuggeranong and Weston Creek, for public transport.

There are bus stop upgrades at Ashley Drive. We are also making improvements at Calwell, which is now a major bus hub as part of the transport network, particularly for the R5 service. There are bus-stop upgrades at Haydon Drive in Belconnen as well, and there is also funding for the upgrade of the Fraser West terminus. There are a large number of buses running through there, and it is important for drivers' comfort.

MS CODY: It is very important for drivers; that is okay. I am not really sure where Fraser west is but, sure, let us go with that. When do you see some of those upgrades coming online?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jeremy Smith to provide some further detail on the timing of the construction. We are looking forward to Wanniasa starting soon.

Mr Smith: As Minister Steel said, Wanniasa park and ride and north Weston park and ride are both in design phases at the moment. We will be looking at lodging DAs very soon for both of those. Construction of those will take us to September-October, at which point the community will start to be able to use them. We will look to accelerate those works as soon as possible, noting that both those locations are very popular at the moment. You can quite often drive past there after the am peak and see that they are full.

MS CODY: How does that then—this might be an offline conversation—tie in with the bus routes? If we are increasing the number of parking spaces, are we going to increase availability for people to get on the buses?

Mr Smith: Yes. As far as the north Weston park and ride goes, there is going to be an increase in frequency for the R10 coming out of Molonglo. Just at the start of the year we found that that is very full, which is a great problem to have.

MS CODY: Yes. Extremely full.

Mr Smith: But, again, it is a problem. We are looking at the data very closely and we will be increasing the frequency of that service come term 2, and that will be part of the timetable changes which I will be announcing around mid-March. Then in relation to Wanniasa, which has been a point for people to jump onto the R4 and R5 services, they will be able to access buses that run on Athllon Drive.

MS CODY: Okay. Thanks.

THE CHAIR: In relation to park and ride, has it ever crossed anyone's mind that there should actually be a bus stop or a tram stop in the park and ride—that it should be part of the infrastructure? It is very common in Europe, but it has never been a thing here.

Mr Steel: Yes. There are bus stops at these park and rides.

THE CHAIR: No, I mean actually in the park and ride rather than people parking their cars and trekking across the—

Mr Steel: These ones are pretty direct. Wanniasa does have a short path to the bus stop. We are looking at that in terms of the Athllon Drive duplication and the move of one of the sides of the existing bus stop as part of that work. We are also undertaking a park and ride strategy at the moment, which will be looking at all of our park and rides across the city—their locations, where they should be placed in the future if there are new park and rides, for example, and where best they are located in relation to bus stops and the like and particularly light rail, because a lot of people want to

access light rail.

Well Station Drive will have a light rail connection at the Well Station stop, very close by. Obviously, Gungahlin is fairly close to the Gungahlin terminus. We will continue to look at how we can provide park and ride facilities closer to bus stops and, yes, potentially integrate it into future light rail stops, as well.

THE CHAIR: My experience of public transport, and looking at public transport in various European cities, was that the trams, the light rail vehicles or the bus services actually went through the park and ride.

Mr Steel: Okay.

THE CHAIR: Is there anything else on better public transport infrastructure?

MS CHEYNE: No.

THE CHAIR: Okay. Kerbside bulky waste collection. Should we go to bulky waste collection? I cannot remember what page bulky waste collection is on.

MS CODY: Page 66.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. What are the criteria for bulky waste collections?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jim Corrigan to talk a little bit about what the criteria are. We are currently going through a tender process for the new kerbside bulky waste collection service.

THE CHAIR: It says “eligible households”. Will there be a subset of households which will not be eligible?

Mr Steel: I am not aware of that, but I will hand over to Jim Corrigan.

Mr Corrigan: I understand the privilege statement.

THE CHAIR: Thanks.

Mr Corrigan: Yes, the service will be available to all households who request it. We are in procurement right now, but the service we are seeking is that all households will be able to apply for a once-a-year collection of bulky waste items up to about two cubic metres—two trailer loads is the way to think about it.

The interesting part of this is how to resolve it. Single detached housing is quite straightforward; it is the multi-units that present the difficulties. That is where we are working through the models and what would be best to do. Obviously, that is part of what we are trying to work out right now, but everyone is eligible. On top of that, there is another reference. We currently already perform a bulky waste pick-up service for eligible concession card holders. We have been doing that for a number of years and that will continue. That is at no cost.

THE CHAIR: What is an eligible concession card holder?

Mr Corrigan: Someone over 70. I think it is sent to Centrelink—things like that. It is for people who have additional needs.

THE CHAIR: So elderly people on the pension?

Mr Corrigan: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Not self-funded retirees?

Mr Corrigan: Not self-funded retirees, no.

THE CHAIR: Okay. They may be earning just as little as someone on a pension.

Mr Corrigan: Sorry. We will have to come back with the precise detail.

THE CHAIR: Okay; that would be great.

Mr Corrigan: I think it is flat, at 70 and above.

THE CHAIR: Right. I can hardly wait for that. Will this be a fee for service?

Mr Corrigan: No, it is provided once a year. Everyone is entitled to that. The model we propose is an extension service. If someone who is eligible to get the service—not the concession card holder—needed to move heavy items, part of the service we are looking at is to charge a modest fee.

THE CHAIR: To push your fridge up the driveway.

Mr Corrigan: That is it exactly—or it might be inside. It is for things that people cannot move themselves—an old white good, a couch or something they need to move. So that is part of it. Obviously, we are still working through what are eligible items in the bulky waste service. Mattresses currently can be collected by Soft Landing. That is the company at Hume that recycles them. They collect for a fee, and that will continue. You can still put mattresses out, but that will attract a fee. Mattresses will not be part of the bulky waste pick-up service unless you are a concession holder.

Mr Steel: Meghan Oldfield has some detail about the current eligible customers for the kerbside bulky waste pick-up.

THE CHAIR: Thanks.

Ms Oldfield: I also acknowledge the privilege statement. I have a list of the eligible concession cards. That would include the ACTION gold concession card, the Centrelink pensioner concession card, the Department of Veterans Affairs' gold card, or the MyWay seniors card.

MS CHEYNE: If you happen to put out something that is over two cubic metres, is it

still going to be picked up?

Mr Corrigan: These are the details we will work through—whoever is in procurement now—on how to manage that. We need to be careful here. The idea is to keep it to two cubic metres. It is not just a free-for-all. There are a number of issues. One is if someone goes over the top—they decide to clear out their mother-in-law's house or something—which obviously we are not trying to encourage. But also, the model of the service is important: that it is not just everything presented on the front of the street, because everyone else just adds their stuff to it as well. We have done a lot of research around this, and that is what can happen in other places.

The answer to your question is, yes, probably. There will be a lot of education around this. No, we will not be picking additional items. But as to how we manage that, we are still working through the detail. It is going to be difficult. Obviously, once these start to run out, with the very first service people will take a lot of advantage of it. We expect that. Probably there will be a lot of garage clean-ups and things like that. We just have to be careful.

MS CHEYNE: Will you perhaps do some illustrations or something about what two cubic metres could look like for a household?

Mr Corrigan: Yes, absolutely.

MS CHEYNE: Two cubic metres could be a fridge and a bed or something.

Mr Corrigan: And be efficient about it. It might be an old washing machine. You might be able to fill the washing machine full of other stuff. Yes, things like that.

MS CHEYNE: Currently, with the concession card system in place, collections are normally provided within two weeks of a booking, subject to demand. Again, I appreciate that the procurement process is still underway, but is that still the intention for how the new system will run when it is rolled out to all of Canberra? Will it be that you make your booking and it will be within two weeks or will you try to be a bit quicker than that?

Mr Corrigan: We cannot answer at this stage, Ms Cheyne. It depends on who is successful in this process and what we put together.

MS CHEYNE: Minister, why is once a year sufficient at this stage rather than once a quarter or once every six months?

Mr Steel: We think that it is sufficient for a huge majority of people who will be using the service, but we will obviously monitor how the service rolls out. We have had the experience with the concession card holder scheme, and we think it is adequate there. But there will potentially be the opportunity for more collections to be added with the service. There are also other opportunities for Canberrans to take bulky items through to be disposed of in other ways. This is a new service that has not been there before. We think it will address a major need in the community with the once a year free bulky waste collection.

MS CHEYNE: Do we have data on the take-up in the current system? Do we know if there are people who use it once a year, as currently is available for concession card holders? Do people just use it once and that is it? Are there people who use it every single year? Do we have that level of data to go from?

Mr Corrigan: I would have to come back to you on that. I will take that on notice.

MS CHEYNE: The tender closed at the end of January. The rollout is looking to be from July. With the \$490,000 for completing the tender process, where is that money for this financial year being spent?

Mr Corrigan: There are a couple of things there. There was an extension to the tender closure, by the way; it closed on 20 February, just due to the time frames. We had a request from a number to do that.

MS CHEYNE: Yes; sensible.

Mr Corrigan: We have an officer who is leading this, who is project managing this, and then there is also the development, all the procurement and all the work that goes into the research and other bits and pieces. The \$490,000 has covered that. That was the initial amount to do what we needed to do.

MS CHEYNE: What level is the officer?

Mr Corrigan: I would have to take that on notice. It is a senior officer.

MS CHEYNE: And they are full time on this?

Mr Corrigan: I will take that on notice, because we have a small team that does a number of the waste procurements. They share the workload.

MS CHEYNE: I am just curious. It follows on from similar questions we have asked today. Is \$490,000 still a reasonable amount? I am just curious as to where else that money is being spent in this financial year for something that is not due to start until next financial year.

Mr Corrigan: The other thing the \$490,000 goes to is the booking system. ACT NoWaste will manage the booking system. We are developing the booking system; that \$490,000 has gone to that. The booking system we are developing is still in development, to be released, but it is more than just bulky waste. It will cover all services: red bin, yellow bin, green bin, bulky waste. There is a fair bit there. There is the design and development of those systems, plus our design and development of bulky waste, and the procurement of it. There is a lot in that and there is a lot to develop those systems. The \$490,000 has gone towards that.

THE CHAIR: Perhaps on notice we could have a breakdown of what the \$490,000 is.

Mr Corrigan: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Yes, together with that staffing detail.

THE CHAIR: Why is there a booking system? Lots of other municipalities just have hard waste day: you put it out on Saturday and they come along on Monday and pick it up. There is a risk that the place looks like a tip for a period of time. Why would you not just roll it out and say that for such and such a street in a particular area, even if it is once a year, it is hard waste day on the first Monday in February and so on, as it progressively rolls through?

Mr Steel: We considered the benefits and risks of both models. We have seen a number of local government jurisdictions start off with a council drop-off day model and then go to a booking system because of complaints from the public around mess, litter and the like.

THE CHAIR: It is pretty messy; there is no doubt about that.

Mr Steel: The other core consideration for us in adopting the booking system model was trying to reduce the amount of bulky waste going into landfill as much as possible. There is a benefit to the council drop-off model, in the sense that you get that recycling happening. Some people go around to the neighbours and pick out that set of drawers they always wanted, putting it to good use.

THE CHAIR: You would be surprised at the weird things that people pick up.

Mr Steel: This model will enable us to make sure that as much material as possible can actually be recycled, and, hopefully, lessen the amount going into landfill. The final model will be subject to the procurement, but potentially we may see the good stuff that can be recycled picked up first and then the other stuff picked up to go to landfill. There are a variety of different ways that it could work.

The booking model will allow people to basically ring up and book the service. They will know when they are going to come; they can leave their bulky waste out on the kerb or book the extension service to get it taken out onto the kerb. Then it will come at a particular time and it will be taken away pretty much immediately without it needing to be on the lawn for a period of time waiting for the council to come by.

THE CHAIR: Will the booking service give you the capacity to say they are putting out a fridge, a dodgy chest of drawers, et cetera, so that people know what they are going to pick up before they get there?

Mr Steel: Yes, that is right; the provider will know generally what they are picking up at the time.

THE CHAIR: Will there be performance measures for recycling?

Mr Steel: I believe there will be.

THE CHAIR: How would you report on that?

Mr Steel: I will pass over to Jim on that one.

Mr Corrigan: Because tenders have only just closed, I cannot really answer that, but in broad terms a range of KPIs will be set for whoever is successful.

Ms Oldfield: Going back to the resourcing, I have just got confirmation that the resource that we have employed for this is a SOGC full time.

THE CHAIR: That is more than \$490,000 for a quarter.

Mr Corrigan: Yes, but as I was explaining before, that person is project managing—

MS CHEYNE: You will give us the rest of that breakdown on notice.

Mr Corrigan: Yes.

MS CHEYNE: Brisbane City Council have had kerbside collection for decades, but they do it with collections on a specific week for a suburb and let people know when that is going to be occurring. You can only put out your rubbish on the Sunday of that week that the pickup is happening. If you do it outside that you will get fined for illegal dumping. I think that goes to some of the things we were talking about—not having waste just sitting around. Has there been a comparison undertaken by city services of other jurisdictions and the usefulness of this? I know you said there has been some research, but I am curious. Brisbane is a massive city council and it is still employing this service after a long period. Who exactly have you researched?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jim Corrigan. He has got some more detail.

Mr Corrigan: We can provide a list. We have looked at quite a number. We looked at it in Australia; we looked at it in New Zealand. Just looking, our conclusion was that Auckland have converted to the booking system. We consistently saw that the best one to avoid the illegal dumping and those issues was the booking system, and that is the conclusion we came to after looking. We can provide a list of the ones we looked at.

THE CHAIR: That would be great, actually. That was my next question.

Mr Corrigan: Yes, it was quite a number of local government areas.

THE CHAIR: But not Eurobodalla Shire, for instance?

Mr Corrigan: No.

THE CHAIR: The next one on the list is improving Tharwa Drive and Nudurr Drive. Has anyone got questions on Tharwa Drive and Nudurr Drive?

MS LAWDER: Is it the part between Box Hill Avenue and Woodcock Drive? Is that where you are looking at or—

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jeremy Smith to talk about the area that is in the scope, but this is an election commitment that the Labor Party brought to the last election and that we are now implementing in terms of doing a feasibility study. Duplication is just

one option that we will look at in terms of Tharwa Drive and improvements that can be made. We will look at a range of options for the best way to improve congestion through the corridor for the future. I hand over to Jeremy to provide some further detail.

Mr Smith: In response specifically to the location of the feasibility study on the duplication of Tharwa Drive, you are correct: it is Woodcock Avenue to Pockett Avenue, which will impact the suburbs of Gordon, Banks, Conder and the southern and rural sections of the ACT.

THE CHAIR: And in relation to Nudurr Drive?

Mr Steel: Nudurr Drive has been a road to nowhere for a very long time.

THE CHAIR: You are going to extend it out to Ginninderra Drive? I remember that your Labor colleagues back in a previous century were vehemently opposed to the construction of Nudurr Drive.

Mr Steel: We committed at the last election to undertake a feasibility study on this, and this is what we are delivering through this measure. A lot has changed over the years in relation to this potential road corridor and that is what we want to look at through this feasibility. There are now a number of blocks of land which are environmental offsets and the like and cannot be developed on, and that has changed the conditions around the area. Obviously residents that back onto Nudurr Drive and a potential corridor are concerned and want certainty about the future of the road, and that is why the feasibility study is going to be important to give them certainty.

Yes, I think there has been an idea in the past about an extension. At the moment there is a roundabout at Nudurr Drive and effectively one exit just stops. Basically this is an opportunity to look at what the options are, what the needs of the northern road network are into the future, with the growth of Gungahlin and given the changes that have occurred around future blocks which are no longer going to be developed as a result of environmental offsets.

THE CHAIR: There are two projects. When are they going to commence?

Mr Steel: I will hand over to Jeremy Smith to talk a bit about procurement.

THE CHAIR: Or have you started the work and you are just catching up the funding?

Mr Smith: No, we have not commenced yet. We are working through the preparations for—

THE CHAIR: I think these people might get a gold star for waiting for the appropriation.

Mr Smith: Once we get the appropriation we will then put tenders out for consultancy around those. At the moment we are working through the preparation for procurements and once we get the appropriation we will put those procurements out to run both the consultancies.

THE CHAIR: That leads me to my next question. How are you going to spend \$100,000 on these two projects before the end of the financial year?

Mr Smith: I do not know the exact date of the appropriation, but we would expect to be able to go to tender, close those tenders and undertake a number of activities for both projects, predominantly traffic modelling and road design model reviews, to allow us to spend the majority of our money before the end of the financial year as we had planned to.

THE CHAIR: If we duplicate Nudurr Drive, is it going to take as long as it has taken to duplicate Gundaroo Drive, which is a very long time?

Mr Steel: This is a feasibility study; this is not a commitment to duplicate. Certainly we are keen to get the feasibility study underway as soon as we can and finalised to provide certainty for the community about what the future options might be for both those road corridors.

MS LAWDER: The previous election commitment was a feasibility study, not a duplication?

Mr Steel: Correct.

MS LAWDER: Do you have the figures on road usage or is that part of the feasibility study? For example, you are doing from Box Hill to Woodcock, but there is a previous section from Knoke—I do not remember—further south. What is the differential in the traffic between those two?

Mr Steel: That would be part of the feasibility study and we will look at whether duplication is an option, but there may be other options that may improve the traffic.

MS LAWDER: You did not have that kind of information about the volume of traffic when you made the election promise last time?

Mr Steel: That is the whole reason that a feasibility study is so important in providing the detailed information and the traffic modelling that would enable the government to look at what to do next in terms of construction, if that is something that the feasibility study then recommends.

THE CHAIR: We will move on to improving and expanding online services. We discussed this matter this morning with Minister Orr in relation to community services, but most of the appropriation here is for TCCS. Could we have a rundown on what the \$2.9 million in this financial year is for? You can anticipate my question: are we going to spend \$2.9 million in what is left of this financial year?

Ms Playford: I will take the questions on this topic, because our COO is not available today. Yes, we are anticipating being able to spend this money. In some ways this is an extension of a continuous business improvement that TCCS has been undertaking over several years. This is another phase.

PROOF

We are looking to move 25 existing Access databases that we have over the total time for this program into a cloud-based customer-centric platform, using the single digital account that the chief digital officer would have talked to you about, and ensuring that we have that compatibility with Access Canberra as they move to cloud-based products.

With the specific ones in the next tranche; we have already had a stage of upgrades to our systems related to domestic animals. We are expecting that this year we will be able to finalise the second stage of improvements to the database related to domestic animals. That will be particularly beneficial for our field staff, who will have access on the field, with portable devices, to more up-to-date information to be able to do checking on the site.

Eventually, we will move to a more customer tracking type system, where people who put in questions will know exactly where they are up to. It will have that greater interface with the Access Canberra system as it is upgraded through the fix my street process.

The ones for this financial year in particular are the domestic animal stage, and Yarralumla Nursery and its system for managing its inventory, orders et cetera, and our trees area and maintenance area. We have a large database for the 700,000 trees, the various inspections that are done and the care and maintenance that is done for various trees. There are also customer inquiries around various trees and the links to the tree protection legislation.

Those are probably the big things that we will be working on in the first tranche. There are also playground inspections. I can provide, on notice, the list of all 25 business areas that we will be covering over time.

THE CHAIR: That would be great. Thank you, Ms Playford.

MS LAWDER: Ms Cheyne probably has a better recollection of this. Many committees that I have been on over the years have talked about closing the feedback loop regarding fix my street. Is this part of that?

Ms Playford: Yes, that is absolutely what this is about. What we will end up with is a system that is probably more comparable to when you buy stuff online; you will be able to track exactly where you are up to, where your issue is, and have that kind of access. Initially, it will ensure better feedback through fix my street, but, as that system is upgraded, it will allow us to enhance the capability of what we push out. Eventually, we will be able to get potentially to SMS-type notifications, those sorts of capabilities, as we move to a cloud-based platform.

MS LAWDER: When will all of the work be finished and individual parts of that feedback loop be closed between the systems? How long is this project?

Ms Playford: The bulk of this project is—

MS LAWDER: Twenty-five databases or—

PROOF

Ms Playford: anticipated to be completed over this financial year and next financial year—by the end of June 2021. No, June 2022; sorry.

MS CHEYNE: With these 25 systems, will the upgrades be occurring in a priority fashion?

Ms Playford: Yes. We are just working through that.

MS CHEYNE: What is the highest priority?

Ms Playford: At the moment it is the domestic animals one, because we have already started that one. It is basically a second stage. The next is trees. We have just set up project governance across the directorate and we are working through the various priorities and finalising that.

MS CHEYNE: Ms Lawder and I say that fix my street should be in your top one.

Ms Playford: Fix my street is actually with Access Canberra. We are trying to make sure—

MS CHEYNE: Access Canberra have told us repeatedly in annual report hearings that it is with you.

Ms Playford: We are absolutely making sure that the systems are compatible so that when the information comes in it goes through and goes back. That is exactly what these upgrades do. They ensure that we are using one single platform.

MS CHEYNE: These 25 systems—

Ms Playford: At the moment they are databases, essentially.

MS CHEYNE: Are they all databases or are some of them hard-copy files?

Ms Playford: My understanding is that they are all Access databases—digital systems.

MS CHEYNE: Why has it taken us so long to move away from Microsoft Access?

Ms Playford: Getting funding has been one of the issues. We have been working across government to ensure that we can work towards what is the best single platform to use across government, and we are at that stage now. The chief digital officer is driving that work.

MS LAWDER: Will people still be able to phone in and report? They will not have to go online themselves?

Ms Playford: Yes.

MS LAWDER: Maybe my original question was a bit muddled. Do you expect it all to be completed by the end of June 2022?

Ms Playford: The bulk—

MS LAWDER: Will there be some available earlier?

Ms Playford: Yes, absolutely. We are doing them in tranches and we have the first few already. With some of them we have done stage 1 and this is the next stage. The domestic animal service is a good example of that. We are just working through it at the moment. We have the first few priorities off the line. The trees database is definitely a high priority for us, and playground inspections are up there as a priority for us. We are working through exactly what the priorities should be and what the timings will look like.

MS LAWDER: Public toilets: is that up there?

Ms Playford: Public toilets will be one of the systems, as will road maintenance. There are a whole range of systems.

MS CHEYNE: Will you let us know what these 25 systems are?

Ms Playford: Yes. I am happy to take that on notice and provide a list.

MS LAWDER: In the order in which they will be done?

Ms Playford: We are still working through exactly what the order will be, but we can provide you perhaps with some groupings.

MS CHEYNE: Yes; to the extent to which you know at this stage some of the time frames.

Ms Playford: Yes. We are certainly looking at what we see as high priority, medium priority and the next lot. Within those priorities, with high priorities, we are very much trying to time them out.

MS LAWDER: It says it is “improving and expanding” online services. What is the “expanding” part?

Ms Playford: The expanding part will be the better information and better customer interface through the—

MS LAWDER: Not any new thing that—

Ms Playford: Not at this stage. At this stage it is around ensuring better access to customer interface, feedback, better information for our field officers, better capacity for them to do some of their work out on the field rather than having to come back to the office, and better evidence for us about what we might need to continue to improve into the future.

MS LAWDER: For how long has that project been underway so far?

Ms Playford: I would have to take that on notice. Certainly, with the domestic

animals component, it was since before I commenced.

MS CHEYNE: Does TCCS have a directorate-wide risk register?

Ms Playford: Yes, we do.

MS CHEYNE: Has the use of Microsoft Access been listed on the risk register?

Ms Playford: We have a strategic risk register and each business unit has a risk register. It is probably on some of the business unit risk registers and then rolled up in a strategic risk register in terms of providing service.

MS CHEYNE: It probably is or it is?

Ms Playford: We have a strategic risk around customer service. Access database is a tool by which we mitigate those. I can take the detail on notice.

MS CHEYNE: Yes, thank you.

THE CHAIR: Are there any summarising questions that people may have that we may not have touched on? The supplementary budget paper, on page 171, talks about revised outputs. There is a \$10 million variation in Transport Canberra between the original budget and the revised budget, in the total costs. What does that cover?

Ms Playford: I will ask Andrew Pederson, our chief finance officer, to explain that one.

THE CHAIR: It is table 137, revised output classes.

Mr Pedersen: Yes.

THE CHAIR: In output class 1, Transport Canberra operations, there is a \$10 million increase in the budget from the original budget to the revised budget. What is the \$10 million?

Mr Pedersen: There are numerous factors there. We have got some additional funding associated with the additional drivers in the budget review, which is \$1.4 million. We have got an increase in depreciation, and that is moving it from the broader directorate into TCO. It is just shuffling it between the two agencies. This is a separate agency, the TCO component. That is \$3½ million.

THE CHAIR: That \$3½ million would appear somewhere else as a—

Mr Pedersen: Yes, it will be a decrease in the broader directorate's depreciation. It is just shuffling across. There is accelerated depreciation for the ticketing system.

THE CHAIR: Which we have not bought yet?

Mr Pedersen: This is accelerating the old MyWay system. We know we have got a new system coming on in a couple years. We are just accelerating depreciation of

existing MyWay hardware. I can provide a further breakdown.

THE CHAIR: That would be great if you could provide us with a breakdown. But can I go back to the question about the smart ticketing system. When will the smart ticketing system come into operation?

Mr Steel: Again, that is subject to the procurement process which is underway at the moment. I am looking forward to announcing that—

THE CHAIR: Mr Pedersen seems to indicate it might be a couple of years.

Mr Steel: That is right. There will be some development phase for the new ticketing system, we expect, and that will be outlined in the costs of the project, which are not for publication at this stage.

MS LAWDER: There is some money coming out of the library budget. What is it that will not be done as a result? Where does that money come from in the library budget?

Mr Pedersen: Sorry, the page number there?

MS LAWDER: I am looking at the supplementary budget papers, page 153, table 125.

Mr Pedersen: That \$160,000 is a minor adjustment just to do with an overhead allocation from the broader directorate.

MS LAWDER: Sorry, what is an overhead allocation?

Mr Pedersen: When Major Projects left TCCS we had to rejig the way we shared the overhead allocation. The finance time, HR time and so on gets spread across the outputs. This is just a minor adjustment to that allocation.

THE CHAIR: To the library?

MS LAWDER: How come all the others did not have a similar—

Mr Pedersen: They do. They just have other movements in them as well. This one was more just for the library.

MS LAWDER: But Capital Linen does not appear to have any adjustment.

Mr Pedersen: No. And we do not normally allocate overheads to Capital Linen from this perspective.

MS LAWDER: Everything should be proceeding for the library services as usual?

Mr Pedersen: There is no reduction in services associated with the midyear review budget.

THE CHAIR: I think we might pull stumps. Thank you very much, minister and

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officials. There is a lot of stuff that has been taken on notice. You will receive an uncorrected proof *Hansard* in the next day or so and we ask that answers to questions on notice be provided within five days of the provision of the draft uncorrected proof, day one being the day after the provision of the uncorrected draft proof. Thank you everybody.

The committee adjourned at 3.37 pm.