



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND CITY
SERVICES**

(Reference: [Inquiry into the effectiveness of Fix My Street](#))

Members:

**MS L CASTLEY (Chair)
MR A BRADDOCK (Deputy Chair)
MR T WERNER-GIBBINGS**

PROOF TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

TUESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2025

This is a **PROOF TRANSCRIPT** that is subject to suggested corrections by members and witnesses. The **FINAL TRANSCRIPT** will replace this transcript within 20 working days from the hearing date, subject to the receipt of corrections from members and witnesses.

**Secretary to the committee:
Mr J Bunce (Ph: 620 50199)**

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.

WITNESSES

BUTLER, MR LACHLAN , Chair, Belconnen Community Council.....	17
CULLIS, MR MATTHEW , Living Streets Canberra	1
DIVERSI, MR IAN	10
IBBOTSON, MR JEFF , Pedal Power ACT	17
KING, MS GILLIAN , Convenor, Living Streets Canberra.....	1
KRISHNAMURTHY, MR RAVI , President, Australian Multicultural Action Network.....	31
MOBBS, MR CHRIS	26
SHADDOCK, MS DIANNE , Access and Advocacy Adviser, Guide Dogs NSW-ACT	1
WALLACE, MR CRAIG , Head of Policy, Advocacy for Inclusion	1
WATSON, MR MICHAEL , Pedal Power ACT	17

Privilege statement

The Assembly has authorised the recording, broadcasting and re-broadcasting of these proceedings.

All witnesses making submissions or giving evidence to committees of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT are protected by parliamentary privilege.

“Parliamentary privilege” means the special rights and immunities which belong to the Assembly, its committees and its members. These rights and immunities enable committees to operate effectively, and enable those involved in committee processes to do so without obstruction, or fear of prosecution.

Witnesses must tell the truth: giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter, and may be considered a contempt of the Assembly.

While the committee prefers to hear all evidence in public, it may take evidence in-camera if requested. Confidential evidence will be recorded and kept securely. It is within the power of the committee at a later date to publish or present all or part of that evidence to the Assembly; but any decision to publish or present in-camera evidence will not be taken without consulting with the person who gave the evidence.

Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 12.04 pm.

CULLIS, MR MATTHEW, Living Streets Canberra

KING, MS GILLIAN, Convenor, Living Streets Canberra

SHADDOCK, MS DIANNE, Access and Advocacy Adviser, Guide Dogs NSW-ACT

WALLACE, MR CRAIG, Head of Policy, Advocacy for Inclusion

THE CHAIR: Good afternoon, and welcome to this public hearing of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services for its inquiry into the effectiveness of Fix My Street. The committee will hear today from accessibility advocates, individual users and community groups. Tomorrow we will hear from Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for City and Government Services.

The committee wishes to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land that we are meeting on, the Ngunnawal people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and the region. We would also like to acknowledge and welcome any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be attending today's event.

This hearing is a legal proceeding of the Assembly and has the same standing as proceedings of the Assembly itself; therefore, today's evidence attracts parliamentary privilege. Giving false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as contempt of the Assembly.

The hearing is being recorded and transcribed by Hansard and will be published. The proceedings are also being broadcast and webstreamed live. When taking a question on notice, it will be useful if witnesses use these words, "I will take that question on notice." This will help the committee and witnesses to confirm the questions on notice from the transcript.

We welcome witnesses from Advocacy for Inclusion, Living Streets Canberra and Guide Dogs NSW-ACT. Do you have any comment to make on the capacity in which you appear?

Mr Cullis: I am part of Living Streets Canberra. I have been actively involved in it, raising different issues like the path issues and so on.

THE CHAIR: Please note that, as witnesses, you are protected by parliamentary privilege and bound by its obligations. You must tell the truth. Giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter and may be considered contempt of the Assembly.

We are short on time, so I will not ask for opening remarks. We have a lot to get through. I really appreciate you taking the time to make your submissions to this inquiry. It is so important. It has lots of support from all sides of government. I have a number of different questions, but can someone talk to me about Snap Send Solve? Who had that in their—

Ms King: We did. A whole heap of other people did, too.

THE CHAIR: Yes, that is right. Can you explain that to me?

Ms King: Yes. Snap Send Solve is a mobile app; you just open up the app, and you can either take a picture or upload a picture straightaway. You can choose which category it belongs to. It then gets sent off to the relevant agency. It might get passed from agency to agency, and you should get an email back from them. It is not perfect, but it is well known; it is used throughout Australia. It is mobile.

THE CHAIR: It clicks into any kind of government portal?

Ms King: Yes, except ACT.

THE CHAIR: It is used across Australia?

Ms King: As far as I know.

Mr Cullis: Yes, there are multiple different councils across Australia that are involved in it. “Snap Send Solve” has an integration platform that companies or local councils can directly integrate with their system. They can then have cases raised and properly managed.

THE CHAIR: Ms Shaddock, could you talk a bit about the accessibility barriers? This is for any of you—the barriers that your groups are facing with regard to the current system that we have.

Ms Shaddock: Obviously, our clients are low-vision or blind, and some of them will use what we would call assistive technology. It might be screen readers; it might be magnification tools or software. We heard from our clients during the focus group last year that footpath barriers were one of the major challenges to getting out and about in the community; also, they had challenges with reporting those barriers, because of the accessibility of the system.

Firstly, there was the user experience. It was quite complex to use, and not as intuitive as they would have liked. There were also some key accessibility barriers that prevented people using screen readers from progressing past certain stages of reporting a challenge. We heard from our clients last year, when we spoke to them, that they were feeling a little apathetic, in terms of reporting. They wanted us to prioritise working to improve Fix My Street, so that they could report and get change.

THE CHAIR: Is that across the board? Mr Wallace, do you have any further thoughts on accessibility?

Mr Wallace: The feedback that we have primarily is that the platform is not situated where people’s devices live and that there is not immediacy of reporting capability. People would prefer an option where they have the access barrier in front of them, they can see it and locate it in real time, point a device at it, take a picture of it and transmit it through, with some details. Having to go back, start up a main PC and journal the details of the access issues feels like a clunky, inefficient and time-consuming way to report matters like this.

Ms King: To report something requires effort, and that is part of the reason we have said that there needs to be more focus on maintenance, and Fix My Street or something similar being the exceptions to the rule—like what happens with road surfaces—so that we have reporting that equals effort. If you see something when you are out and about, first of all you have to have a mobile phone or the time to take a picture. Currently, you have to either go to a computer, as Craig said, or try and do it on your mobile phone through an internet browser. You can do that on a mobile phone if you have time and if you have your phone with you; otherwise you have to remember to do so when you get home.

If you have a geotag on the photo, it does not recognise it, so you need to have some other means of remembering where the issue was. If you type in “Fix My Street”, it takes you to Access Canberra, then you have to log in. I have just done it now, and I cannot actually report something; there is no ability currently to report at all.

First of all, I was not sure what to do. It had only three options, one of which was “feedback and complaints”, not “Fix My Street”. I thought, “Okay, where’s Fix My Street?” I look for that, and think, “Oh, it must be in “feedback and complaints”.” I went into “feedback and complaints” and it said, “Action needed: no outstanding action needed,” and it had my previous report. That has changed since the last time I went in there.

I was thinking, “Where do I actually report? I can’t do it. I have stuff to actually report, and I can’t do so.” There are all of these steps. When somebody is reporting, you need to reduce that effort, have a minimum number of steps and minimum friction points. And it must be available, accessible and easy to use for people of all abilities and skills. That means multiple channels, phone, and it currently says, “If you don’t want to log in, you can report it by phone,” so you have to ring up Access Canberra—which I thought was the whole reason to have Fix My Street in the first place—go online or use an app.

If you have an app, it needs to be open source or work with Snap Send Solve to improve Snap Send Solve, because Snap Send Solve itself is not perfect. In fact, it has got a little bit less user friendly in recent years; you cannot change your email because that is a whole new account, so you lose everything. You can no longer see the progress in the app. You have to go into email; so there are some issues with that. It is not perfect, but it is something. There needs to be no login. You should be able to report something without having to log in.

It needs to be intuitive. The current Fix My Street thing is not intuitive in any way. Even the reporting categories look like buttons. You press it and think, “Why isn’t it going to the next thing?” Some things are just not there at all, like illegal parking. It needs to be suitable for people who are visually impaired, as well as people who face language barriers or cognitive barriers. It needs to be in simple English. If there is a “submit” button, it needs to be on the main screen, not below the fold. Whatever it is, it needs to be designed with the users and tested by users of all those different abilities and needs.

MR BRADDOCK: Ms Shaddock, in your submission, you talk about strengthening accessibility of testing practices—moving beyond those automated accessibility testing tools and on to manual ones. Can you please explain to me how big the issue is around

those automated systems, and what additional value you get out of the manual testing?

Ms Shaddock: There are automated tools like WAVE that you could use to assess a page's accessibility. It is estimated that sometimes they do not pick up more than, say, 30 per cent of the actual accessibility barriers, which is why manual testing is so important, particularly by people with disabilities.

Automated testing will not tell you how intuitive it is. It will not give you context. It will not tell you how good your alt text is, which is how a picture is described. It will not talk about how it works with keyboard navigation. That manual testing with people with disability, and with engineers who have expertise in that space, in the rollout of an accessible platform for the community is so important.

MR BRADDOCK: Where a government or software provider says they are compliant with web content accessibility guidelines, are they able to state that when they do automated testing, or do they need to be able to do that manual testing to be able to be compliant with those guidelines?

Ms Shaddock: I am not a digital accessibility expert, so that question is probably not something I can answer in full. In terms of creating an accessible experience for someone with low vision or blindness, automated tools just do not make the cut. You need to embed that manual testing.

MR BRADDOCK: We have had a recent experience with MyWay+. Let us just say that it has a list of accessibility issues which are now requiring an accessibility audit to be undertaken. Should a similar level be done on other government platforms, such as Fix My Street?

Ms Shaddock: Absolutely. Testing in concept and design, and then updating, should be embedded across policies and procedures across the government for all systems and platforms.

MR BRADDOCK: Mr Wallace, do you hold a similar position, or do you have a different viewpoint that you might like to contribute?

Mr Wallace: The ACT government has its own framework for designing for accessibility, which covers best practice in issues like this, called Disability Confidence Canberra. It is a little bit buried and has not been updated, but it suggests that there should be consultation with lived experience groups of people, including people with cognitive and intellectual disability, who present this in quite specific, but maybe different, issues to people with visual impairment and other issues that we have talked about in the construction of these websites, and in the refurbishment and upgrade of public infrastructure.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: I have a question for Ms Shaddock. Would you be able to elaborate on—you mentioned it previously—the difficulty that some of your clients have with accessing the reporting forms? What would be examples of useful technology, solutions or alternatives to the drop-down menus that could help us to inform our recommendations?

Ms Shaddock: As part of our work around digital accessibility in general, obviously, we had that focus, throughout the ACT election campaign last year, on Fix My Street, and pushing for that to be looked at and improved. We consulted with Hassell Inclusion, a digital accessibility specialist, who did what we would call a snapshot audit of Fix My Street. The way they did that was to follow a workflow. Essentially, I gave them the task of locating where you make a complaint or you identify an issue within Fix My Street, all the way through to reporting an issue and receiving a confirmation email.

With respect to some of the things that were identified through that audit, obviously, it was challenging, it was complex and it was long. Finding where to make that complaint via the website was difficult. We did have someone accidentally report something on an alternative website that was also called Fix My Street, not knowing that they were not complaining directly to Access Canberra throughout the process.

One of the main challenges is logging in and creating an account in the first place. To log something online, you have to create an account. A lot of the people that come in and out of Canberra, our clients, are not actually ACT residents. Part of the feedback through that audit was a suggestion for removal of that need to log in, because it adds that extra complexity.

That ACT digital account is significantly more inaccessible than the front-facing Access Canberra website. There are issues like colour contrast, heading structure, unlabelled icons—a range of challenges that would make it very complex for someone to lodge an issue or a complaint. That was one of the issues, in that you have to jump between two different platforms that operate quite differently. It was a lengthy process that was not particularly intuitive. That was the main feedback that came out of that audit.

We only did a snapshot audit, which means that we sat with the auditor, and he spoke us through what he was finding as errors. There was a group of us. I was not there each time; there were other representatives from Guide Dogs there during that audit process. We were able to summarise some of those key findings and hand those over to Fix My Street themselves. We had conversations with Vicki Little from Fix My Street and identified those challenges, which she acknowledged and said she is looking into.

THE CHAIR: Do we have an understanding of why a login is required?

Mr Cullis: I think it is meant to be providing feedback. I lodged a Fix My Street a little while ago about where the bollards are on City Walk. When you lodge a Fix My Street case, it gets attached to your act.gov digital account, as a way to go and see them. You cannot do much with it, though. As I found with my case, it was closed off, and I could not even dispute it without calling up Access Canberra. Even if I emailed back, I got an automatic email saying, “Your case is closed; you need to call up.” The weirdest thing was that, when I spoke to Access Canberra, they could see that that email was sent to me, so it was somehow still tied to the case. It does get tied to your account, but you cannot really do anything with it.

Ms King: When Fix My Street began, you had the option of logging in, in order to be able to track what was happening. Now you do not.

MR EMERSON: I want to ask about the Disability Discrimination Act. It also goes to Living Streets Canberra's submission in relation to proactive work on things like footpaths, curb ramps and so on. Obviously, the act requires that public spaces do not discriminate against people with disability. Is it the panel's general sense that they do in the ACT?

Mr Wallace: Yes, it is illegal, under the Disability Discrimination Act. The DDA is currently in a reform process which is being activated by the commonwealth. In a way, the ACT's discrimination framework is possibly a bit more relevant here, because it is moving from a complaints-based model to a model where there is a proactive duty to avoid discrimination.

Our position, in terms of discrimination and public infrastructure improvement, is that the burden should not be placed on people with disability to wander around the places and spaces that they use every day, having to take photographs and provide reports on all the bits of the community that are broken, in the hope that that will somehow produce a more inclusive community over time.

That is really onerous for the individuals. It puts them in a potential series of ongoing conflicts and complaints regarding the infrastructure that is around them, if you think about things like shops as well. It also places the burden on groups of people that are not well positioned to do it. If you think about people living in aged-care retirement villages, some of the accessible infrastructure and streetscapes around where they live are most consequential to those people, but they have the least capacity to get in line and lodge complaints.

We think this needs to be someone's job, to proactively enforce the discrimination laws by conducting a rolling program of stocktake and audit, identifying those areas of access breakdown, whether it be a piece of broken street infrastructure that is adjacent to a retirement home or a central pathway with no ability to work around it in order to get to a group centre on a mobility device, it should be someone's job to fix that and to do targeted upgrades, with people with disabilities being close to that work.

We also think this would be a good use of our existing municipal governance structures, including the community councils, to do some issues identification in their own community of those barriers which are the most consequential for members of those communities and for us to target them for refurbishment and upgrade.

MR EMERSON: Ms Shaddock, if I imagine that I am a person with visual impairment and I encounter a built environment that is not really built for me, or it is damaged in a way that makes it not accessible for me, I am then expected to take a photograph of that damaged footpath; I then encounter an online system that is also not built for me. When someone gets through those steps and gets a complaint lodged with Fix My Street, and says, "I'm a person with visual impairment; this really impacts me," is there any additional consideration in the response that is received on that complaint with regard to the timeliness of actioning it, or whether or not it will be actioned, and that sort of thing?

Ms Shaddock: We are not aware of any kind of prioritisation system for vulnerable pedestrians, and that is something that we would like to suggest—barriers that are

presenting accessibility challenges for any vulnerable user. Definitely, for our clients with low vision or blindness, we would like to see that prioritised and that transparency there about how it would be prioritised.

Ms King: I am not aware of any field that says, “What sort of person are you? Are there particular issues that you confront?” Going back to what I was saying before, about all the steps that it takes, it should not be up to people who are moving around our city to be reporting absolutely everything.

Fix My Street should not take the place of maintenance or compliance, and especially for infrastructure like roads, paths, lights and traffic lights. It is not the case for road surfaces, but it is the case for paths, lights, trees and everything else. What is needed is a shift to focusing on the users and on compliance with laws and standards.

We should not be taking a risk management approach. We have seen that with things like illegal parking. If somebody is parked across a path or impeding a path, that used to be a compliance issue. I heard that there was an unwritten rule that they would only do something if the occupant of the premises was the one complaining, yet they are usually the ones that are parking. It has now taken on a risk management approach. You can have something that is parked illegally forever, and nothing will happen.

Similarly, there needs to be compliance with both the standards and the laws, and that is not happening. We are promoting in the act safe, healthy, active and inclusive streets, which all MLAs received before the election, and which I am happy to provide again to the committee, because we have updated it for the whole Assembly and for the government. There have been a few more people signing on. Other organisations are joining us all the time.

One of them is to ensure that all the systems and infrastructure for walking and public transport in particular comply with all the anti-discrimination laws and accessibility standards, with independent compliance verification. It needs to be user friendly and it needs to be transparent. We need to have a transparent status system where the system is also communicating the report and the status back to the report and to the public—perhaps through a map; we have suggested that in the past. There needs to be some sort of proof of work happening in the outcome, and the ability for whoever reported it to say whether or not that was a satisfactory outcome.

Also, the timelines need to be improved. This picks up on what Craig and Dianne were saying. It needs to be focused on quick, good-quality, customer-focused service, in terms of both the reporting and fixing it. In-house teams would help, I think; also, going back to focusing on fixing the problem in one trip, and fixing it properly.

Instead, they disappear into a black box. Something might happen at some time, and it might take weeks, months or years. Where somebody has reported something, there might be two arrows—a worn-out one and a new one. There might be three arrows. I do not know how far apart they are; we cannot tell. But a map that had where all the reports are and what is happening with them would really help.

In terms of maps, it is also about being able to actually pinpoint something on a map, if you have not geotagged your photo; that would help. We need something that is up to

date. We know that Minister Cheyne has reports on a map about where things are, but that is also not up to date. It says where things will be happening in the current week, but not what is already happening.

Fixing a path might take three weeks or more. In my experience, it is about three weeks; so that is closed, without any safe access. If you had an in-house team focused on fixing it right from the start, they would just come along and do it. Other jurisdictions do it. Why not ACT? And we are a human rights jurisdiction.

Mr Wallace: And identifying it. These kinds of tools should be available as a last resort and an exception, when the ongoing work to improve community infrastructure has failed.

My fundamental question is: why should we have to do this? Why should disabled people have to wander around the community taking photos of the highly consequential, broken pieces of streetscape that are stopping us being able to go out and do the things that others are able to do? Most of you would be able to pop down to the shops relatively unimpeded and do the things that you need to do, in your average day. For people with disabilities, suddenly, if the rain means that some roots have come through and you cannot pass down the street, you cannot get there at all. If we were to report every time that has happened, this could just become an unpaid, full-time job for people with disabilities.

We argue that there needs to be a much more systemic and better way, and that needs to respond to the fact we are actually in a changing environment. We have a lot more problems, because of a couple of years of rain. We also have an increasingly complicated bike path environment due to shared zones and the proliferation of micromobility vehicles that are putting a bit more stress on some of these pathways. This needs a different approach to the Fix My Street approach.

Ms King: What is needed is frequent audits. Other councils do it every two years. There are automated things. There are robots; you could have an app that is attached to, say, posties' vehicles, or third-party things. There is existing software that can do it, that scans as it goes along and categorises according to how urgent it is. It is my understanding that there are about four categories. It lets the government know exactly what the status of its assets is. Fix My Street or something like that should be the exception.

MR EMERSON: On that exact point, the government is appearing before the committee tomorrow. I imagine they will say that they do such audits—I have asked questions about this previously—and the frequency is between one and four years. In town centres, it would be one to two years; then, further out, in recreational areas, it might be four years. Do you have a view on whether or not that is occurring and whether or not those audits are being done in a way that is actually leading to maintenance work?

Ms King: We used to ask for regular audits. We were then informed that, yes, they were regular. Around shops, it was every four years and elsewhere it was every 10 years. We then changed it, to update the frequency. I think we were asking for it to be much more frequent.

Other councils do it every two years. That is in the suburbs. When I met with Minister Steel a few years ago, it was just after one of those Canberra newsletter things had said they had audited all the paths. That was his opening statement, that they had audited all the paths. I said, “No, you haven’t.” I can walk outside my place and I know there are no arrows. In fact, there were a couple of places where I was not reporting them, just to see how long it would take. His response was, “If you see anything, just take a photo and send it to me.” I do not have the time. As Craig said, we should not be unpaid workers when it comes to government work.

THE CHAIR: If you had the ear of the minister, what would you most like her to know?

Mr Cullis: Proactive action on paths will be really important going forward, particularly as the ACT continues to focus on mode shift, for example. We keep talking about how there is congestion. With walking—and we spoke a little bit about micromobility—it will be more of a big thing. I keep thinking about the people that Guide Dogs and Advocacy for Inclusion are representing. They are impacted the most by that lack of proactive action. It is really important that we move the ball on that.

Ms King: I would say that our infrastructure and assets need to be fit for purpose. It does not matter whether it is hard infrastructure, like roads and paths, whether it is trees, or whether it is online stuff. It needs to be fit for purpose. It needs to do what it needs to do, and it needs to be focused on the people who are using it and benefiting from it. That means regardless of ability.

Ms Shaddock: I think it would be great for Canberra to lead the way in this space. I think we have a real opportunity. We have a community that is really interested in protecting human rights. Let us use them. Let us use our passion and see how good we can make this reporting process, how we can remove that onus or responsibility on people with disability, by embedding that positive duty that is now there in the Discrimination Act in the ACT, and think about ways in which we can make this an intuitive and accessible experience. We have organisations like us; we have community members who are willing to help make this right. Let us work together and make it happen.

Mr Wallace: Fixing this is consequential for the rights, wellbeing and the balance sheet of the territory. The number of people that report that they are able to get around Canberra easily has fallen from 81 per cent in 2019 to 69 per cent in 2024. That is people with disabilities. The consequences of falls for older people travelling on bike paths that are not well tended mean those people lose quality of life, they wind up in critical circumstances in hospitals and they sometimes die. Last week’s figures reported that the ACT is now expending a sizeable amount of money defending legal cases related to poorly kept pathways and streetscapes. This is an issue that is highly consequential not only for our cohort, but also for the good governance of the territory.

THE CHAIR: We are out of time. On behalf of the committee, thank you all for attending today. I do not believe any questions have been taken on notice. Ms King, do you want to send the committee the report that you referred to?

Ms King: Yes. I can give it to you in hard copy; I can send it to you, too.

THE CHAIR: That would be wonderful; thank you.

DIVERSI, MR IAN

THE CHAIR: We welcome Ian Diversi.

Mr Diversi: I live in Belconnen and I am a Canberran. I do not represent an organisation of any type.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Please note that, as a witness, you are protected by parliamentary privilege and bound by its obligations. You must tell the truth. Giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter and may be considered contempt of the Assembly. In the interest of time, we are not taking opening statements. We will proceed straight to questions. You can provide any written statements that you have prepared. I note a stream of information has been sent through from you. Thank you very much. It was by far one of the most detailed submissions we have had. There is a lot in that. Although we are not asking for an opening statement, my first question to you is: for our record, could you give the committee a summary of what you want the committee to look at.

Mr Diversi: I will start from where we are. The ACT government is being disingenuous about Fix My Street. They pay lip service to it, but efforts are largely symbolic of tokenism. From what I have seen in my research, they do not appear to be seriously interested in getting on top of the problem. What we have instead is a minimum viable product and a minimum level of service, and for me that is not good enough. I have had my own frustrations with Fix My Street. My initial submission to the ACT Legislative Assembly's committee had information gathered from across a dozen public sources in the ACT—Reddit, Facebook and Region Canberra—between 2022 and 2025. That was after the updates to the Fix My Street platform, which I can come back to later.

In that period, the average number of days—and I note it is an average number of days—to rectify the problems jumped from about 20 to 99, which is going backwards big time. It increased by approximately a factor of five, but the actual number of gross Fix My Street requests grew by only about seven per cent per year, so it increased by far. In fact, between 2017 and 2025, the number of days to rectification increased much more rapidly after the introduction of the new system in 2021, as opposed to the period between 2017 and 2021, so it got far worse. It appears that it got a little better only last year, but, even in the last year, you still have the situation where 65 per cent were unresolved in the window where most habits remain unchanged—that is, 10 days. In other words, it has got better, but two-thirds of all registered faults on Fix My Street are not being fixed within 10 days, which means people will change their habits and they will start driving.

We have the problem where we have the exact opposite of what we want. We want a Canberra that is quite different to what Fix My Street is providing us, and there is going to be an issue in how we rectify that. We have a reactive system. We need a proactive system. The ACT government is a large organisation. It has enterprise management systems and it has a variety of systems which need to be unified and communicate with one another. I will quickly give you five examples. There is the enterprise asset management system, the customer relationship management system, enterprise resource planning, the geographic information system, and the service level agreement. These need to be integrated; otherwise, you will not get things to work. So you have a

big IT problem and you have an enterprise asset investment which will cost hundreds of millions of dollars to fix. It is a five- to 10-year project, so it is long term.

You as a committee are in a position where you are not well prepared to understand the complexity of the solutions that are required. The committee will need to be well advised on large enterprise-level IT projects and get advice from someone who has some background in these sorts of large IT projects—a consultant. If you were going to a court, you would have a lawyer. The reason you have a lawyer is that they explain the legal system and give you advice. A business consultant will do the same thing. They will explain things to you but will also give you advice on the way to do your job. There is no reason the people on the committee should be particularly well prepared for dealing with these sorts of projects.

I think the committee structure at this point in time is sadly lacking in relevant technical support. You have parliamentary support and you understand the Legislative Assembly, but what you are lacking is an understanding of enterprise management and enterprise-level IT systems, which is required to solve these problems. That means that, when the ACT government or the directorate, Digital Canberra, comes to you, you are in a position where you will really struggle to understand what they are trying to say. To be fair, there is huge scope for them to mislead, intentionally or otherwise. So it is not only a question of misunderstanding. There are conflicts of interest in the directorate and there are conflicts of interest in the government when it comes to working with the committee. It is very difficult to know precisely what the truth is when those conflicts of interest are at play. Without knowing what questions to ask and where to dig, you will struggle to come to the truth you need.

It is good that you have started. It is good that we are finally trying to fix the problem. It is good that this committee is meeting and inquiring into Fix My Street. It is good and everything is a step forward. But you are going to really struggle to understand what is going on, particularly in the back-end area, because no-one has information except people in the directorate, and they are not likely to provide you with a full picture of it. I will stop there.

THE CHAIR: I understand that the technical experience—and I do not want to talk for these two people—is lacking for me, even though I have worked in IT project management, but not to this scale. You talk about conflicts of interest within the directorate. What do you mean? Can you unpack that a little for us?

Mr Diversi: Sure. The ACT is in a very interesting position. We are a territory. We got independence quite late—in 1988. This makes it rather interesting, because, while the relationship between the states and the federal government was established long ago under the Constitution, when the territories came in they were more loosely bound to the commonwealth. That means that we are in a weak position in many ways, and we do not have the same government structures that the states have. When you do comparisons, you tend to run into problems here. I am sorry—what was your question?

THE CHAIR: It was about the conflicts of interest.

Mr Diversi: Culturally, we have a whole generation of public servants in the ACT government who can thank the ACT government, which is Labor, for their whole career.

They have never known anything else. Twenty-three years of a Labor government means that these public servants have never known anything other than the Labor way of thinking, the Labor way of doing things. When people talk about “a tired government”, they are not talking about the government being in for too long; they are talking about the symbiosis between the government and the public service. It loses its independence. In other words, the culture of the public service is now such that it is fundamentally tied with the ACT Labor agenda. Frankly, the priorities and what is important and the ways of thinking have been intertwined. The ACT Greens brought up this topic—that, when they had ministers, they could not get answers out of the public service. The reason is, of course, that the only person who counts is the main minister. The baby ministers are not so important. Who controls the money? It is the main minister.

So we have this issue: how can you get the public service to talk about these sorts of problems openly when they know it may not be in the interest of the minister to do so? This was addressed by the commissioner at Senate estimates. He said, “We have a problem in the ACT. I am a solicitor.” He said a number of things. The first thing he said was, “I am a solicitor, and the first thing I know is that written documents can be falsified.” Secondly, regarding the CIT, he said, “It is a good demonstration of when public servants can falsify information to the minister and to the public.” It is particularly about the ministers—he was referring to the minister—and they do not see a problem. They just see it as: “This is the way we do things.”

For example, in the MyWay+ scenario, Minister Steel said to the committee, multiple times, that he was not told that there was a problem. Indeed, when the committee addressed who told him that and what they had to say, one of the witnesses piped up and said, “It was me. I said that to him.” The minister in that case could write a play—he knew nothing about the problem, because he was not being told there was a problem. If you take MyWay+ as a good example, the disparity between what the public have said and what you heard in the committee is so great that it cannot be reconciled. MyWay+ is a wonderful example because the project was in everybody’s face. What we saw is that everybody was saying, “This is not working. This is no good. This is not stable. This has broken down. This is not good for old people. It is not good for disabled people,” but, when you talked to people in the organisation, they said, “It’s all good. Everything is fine. Nothing is a problem.” Is the contract late? “No. We are negotiating.” It becomes a game of semantics.

This is counterproductive to trying to understand what is going on. The question we have to ask ourselves is: why are they being so defensive? Why are they—not necessarily misleading, but why do we get information that appears to be confusing and less helpful than one would expect from witnesses to a committee? In a committee situation, we would like to get the truth; we would like to have information. MyWay+ is a good example of the way this works. They were trying to put forward the story that the government and the minister would like to hear. In other words, it is damage control. I do not believe that you, as a committee, can do your job if you are not getting the information and if you cannot have an open discussion. As a committee, you do not want the damage-control story. You want to know what the problem is—“Tell us what is going on. If it is confidential, we can make it confidential—it does not have to be public—but don’t try to pull the wool over our eyes.”

So much of what was given regarding MyWay+ was highly dubious. I remember one example where the minister said, “Oh, no. We have never thought that it was at risk,” and, if you go back to the documents in September last year, sure enough, they say it was not at risk, but it clearly was at risk. In his project plan, it says: “Not at risk.” In other words, he never identified that MyWay+ was at risk. When he came into the Legislative Assembly, he said everything was rosy. Everybody was scratching their head—“What’s going on?”

I fear that, with this Fix My Street inquiry, there will be the same whitewashing that went on with MyWay+. You will be overwhelmed with technical data and semantics, and it will all be for the same purpose: to cover the back of the ACT government and protect the minister. Does the minister ask for it? No; I do not believe so. The public service does it automatically because they know that their bread, their promotion and their future depend completely on the ACT Labor government. This is counterproductive. They have lost their independence. They are no longer serving the ACT people. They are no longer serving the Legislative Assembly. They are no longer serving the committee.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Diversi. I appreciate it. I will move on. We are here for only half an hour. I will give Mr Braddock an opportunity to ask a question. But thank you for your feedback and for drawing a comparison between the two projects.

Mr Diversi: That is my definition of a conflict of interest.

MR BRADDOCK: I have a couple of questions on potential alternatives to Fix My Street. In your submission, you talk about Brisbane City Council’s Report It and how they are retiring its use. You make the comment that the considerable expenditure and effort required to maintain dedicated a proprietary mobile application often fails to yield operational benefits. Would you say the lesson is that the ACT should not go down the proprietary software or mobile app path, or are you trying to say something different?

Mr Diversi: Mobile apps are interesting. The thing about mobile apps is that you are collecting data and you need to be able to process that data in a timely way. This is the way you can have it blowing out to 99 days. This means you will need to do the triage automatically. That also means that you will have a variety of back-end systems which integrate together. You need the right balance between a reactive and a proactive system. Fix My Street is reactive; road surfacing is proactive. Being proactive is the exception with a lot of municipal maintenance in the ACT. Footpaths are like light globes: they have a specific life expectancy and, after that time, they just blow. This is one of the reasons they replace them along a hall, not just one at a time. You know a footpath is going to break after 50 years and it will need to be fixed.

We can report breakages on Fix My Street, and Fix My Street can be a lot better, but the fact is that, if they are doing enterprise asset management properly, they will know that the footpaths are dated and will be breaking and will need to be replaced. Probably the most effective way is to replace the whole thing along the whole street, not one slab at a time—not piecemeal, not patchwork; not as a reactive process but a proactive process. In other words, in a proactive process, you budget 12 months in advance because you know how much you need to spend on fixing those assets. In a reactive process—

MR BRADDOCK: Mr Diversi, could I bring you back to the question of proprietary app development. Is that a path that you think the ACT government should follow?

Mr Diversi: What was the question again?

MR BRADDOCK: Is it worthwhile for the ACT government to explore proprietary app development for its purposes? Is that a worthwhile endeavour or is it going to be difficult for us to yield operational gains from that?

Mr Diversi: This is where you will have to get some advice. Enterprise systems are not “one size fits all”. That is the big problem with them. If you look at various things, like ITIL, one of the things they say is: “Just don’t dump everything you have and start from scratch. It may be better to develop it further.” The idea of improvement may be a more viable option than starting from scratch. When providing municipal services, you are providing the same services that are provided by every local council around Australia. There is nothing fundamentally different between the piece of concrete at the front of your house here or in Wagga or in Geelong or in Perth. It is a piece of concrete and it is done the same way everywhere, and the fact that they break and need fixing is predictable.

In other words, there is lots we can learn from jurisdictional comparisons. I think it would be necessary, when looking at the ACT, to get independent advice as to the best way forward. I do not think tossing everything out and starting from scratch is viable under any circumstances. Certainly, the question is about how to best go forward. That is a more difficult question. It would require technical expertise.

MR BRADDOCK: The ACT government, in its submission, describes some of the challenges with using third-party applications, such as the integration between those and the back-end systems, the manual processing that may be required, and the fact that missing information or security risks are associated with that. I wanted to check with you as to whether you have a view on the ACT government’s concerns about those third-party apps?

Mr Diversi: If you are talking about something you can install on a phone, there is a lot to be said for improvements in the current interface of Fix My Street. The original report that I put in said that the gathered information from a variety of sources and people’s reports were left out, including current approaches that are unwieldy and impractical. We need to improve the user interface. We need to make it simpler. There are multiple faults. My initial committee submission summarised that quite nicely. They all need to be addressed.

There needs to be a lot of work on the user interface. That is to simply make it more accessible for everybody. There are a lot of complaints. You can take two groups in particular: the disabled and the elderly. The current system is not particularly user-friendly and does not really allow them to get access or do what they want to do. Without assistance, they cannot do much. This is unacceptable for a government delivering digital services to Canberrans. It has to be something that works for everybody. We had this problem with MyWay+ as well and now it applies in the context of Fix My Street. A lot of work needs to be done on that, and a lot of best practices have

not been applied.

However, even after these systems have been fixed, you still have to deal with the back end. Now we are going from the front end to the back end. In 2017, both the front end and the back end were updated. The back end does not appear to be up to scratch either. The triage does not appear to be automated. They have a team, but there does not appear to be any automated triage. There does not appear to be any application of AI, for example, which could provide some level of assistance. Teams appear to be in silos, which means they can send out the wrong team that cannot do anything about the problem. They have the wrong tools, the wrong truck and have to come back again. There is so much at the back end which does not seem to function correctly at this point of time, according to public information—information from people who have reported faults.

The most basic of all things is knowing where it takes place. The minister herself said something like: “Forty per cent of the trucks that go out go to the wrong spot.” Wouldn’t it be a good idea if we could just click on the path or a place, such as in the middle of a forest, where the fault is or where the tree has fall down and the GPS coordinates were passed on to the people who drive the truck? They could have some sort of electronic device—they used to call them PDAs, personal digital assistants; the police carry them around too—so that they know where to go. The first problem they have is that they do not know where to go. Then you have the issue of services.

THE CHAIR: Did you say it was 2017, when the back end and the front end both had an—

Mr Diversi: Yes. It did not happen at the same time. The back end and the front end had different names. The front end was the “Fix My Street project renewal”. The back end was called “customer relationship management”, or something like that.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mr Werner-Gibblings?

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: It is all right, Chair. I was going to ask a question about a Fix My Street mapping grid, where pins are dropped. He just answered that.

THE CHAIR: There is so much here, Mr Diversi. I have picked random things. You talk about AI powered triage, automated routing and safety hazards. You have a solution: to implement a lightweight machine learning classifier to evaluate new reports against criteria. Can you explain this a little further in the few minutes that we have left?

Mr Diversi: The ACT government says that they will react when you have lodged. That is what I recall from my reading of it. The numbers are right. As to whether the context is correct could be debated. As I recall, 72 hours after you register on Fix My Street, you get an answer. If it is a safety issue, you get an answer within 24 hours. There is a safety box you can tick. It is within 24 hours if someone is likely to be injured.

What we really want is a Fix My Street which functions so well that you do not have to call 000 to get something fixed. It is still going to happen after storms. We call 000 because a tree has fallen over, but we should be able to organise our municipal services

in such a way that we do not need to call 000 because of trees falling over, which happens all the time. It is just a standard step. That is what trees do after a bit of wind. How do we do this? We need a very quick response. First of all, it needs to take no more than two minutes to lodge a request. Then it has to be sent to the people for the triage process, where all the requests go, and it needs to be rerouted to people within the organisation at the back end who are capable of judging and assigning the task. I believe that process is currently done by a team manually. That is great, but it is possible that some efficiencies are to be gained if they had support in doing this task. It would depend partly on the information they get from the user.

The back end works differently to the front end. At the back end you have specialists, concreters and road designers. You have technical people and they do certain things. There is obviously going to be a translation process between the uninformed naive user and what happens at the back end. Therefore, triage has an important role in smoothing the system. Improving the process might help. Mr Braddock asked, “What about the app?” Fixing the app is not going to necessarily fix the problem; it just means that they will get more problems being registered. A faster triage would mean that the people at the back end will get the information quicker, but it does not mean they have the tools or the staff to fix the problem.

It is a finely balanced system. You will have to scale it up so that it has the capacity to deal with the faults as they occur. That should be predicted through the asset management system. It is possible to predict when assets are going to fail. On that basis, they should be in a position, through a proactive approach, to be much better prepared. That means budgeting for systematic replacement and not using Fix My Street as the mainstay of asset management. I do not think it should be.

THE CHAIR: We are at time. On behalf of the committee, thank you, Mr Diversi, for your attendance today and, again, your very detailed submission. I do not believe any questions were taken on notice. Thank you.

Mr Diversi: Thank you very much.

Hearing suspended from 1.10 pm to 2.01 pm.

BUTLER, MR LACHLAN, Chair, Belconnen Community Council
IBBOTSON, MR JEFF, Pedal Power ACT
WATSON, MR MICHAEL, Pedal Power ACT

THE CHAIR: We welcome witnesses this afternoon from Pedal Power ACT and the Belconnen Community Council. Please note that, as witnesses, you are protected by parliamentary privilege and bound by its obligations. You must tell the truth. Giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter and may be considered contempt of the Assembly. In the interest of time, we are not taking opening statements. We will proceed straight to questions, but you can provide any written statement that you have prepared to the secretariat. Pedal Power have some specific questions that they would like us to consider before we have our hearing with the ACT government. I am happy to make that my question. Would you like to share those particular issues and, I believe, a scenario? Do you have a scenario to talk through?

Mr Watson: Yes. Prior to coming here, we ran an experiment. We put in a submission and we monitored the feedback and tried to interrogate the due process that was used to administer Fix My Street. We found that the correspondence trail is inconsistent with the findings in figure 2 of the ACT government's submission. I am happy to provide that correspondence trail to the secretariat.

THE CHAIR: That would be great. What was your scenario? Was it a footpath?

Mr Watson: There is a principal cycle route that goes from Kingston to Queanbeyan—the C2—and a side path comes in, but to get from the side path onto the main route you have to go up a vertical kerb. Under certified standards, it should be a ramp rather than a curb. It is about as wide as this. In reality, it is not of sound benefit-cost. I expect them to say no, but I want to get the rationale behind that decision.

THE CHAIR: You lodged the request through the website.

Mr Watson: Through Fix My Street towards the end of June this year.

THE CHAIR: What has happened since then?

Mr Watson: Nothing.

THE CHAIR: Did you get an email response to let you know—

Mr Watson: I was asked further questions. They were not the kinds of questions I would expect. Going through the process, the email said, "Call Access Canberra." Access Canberra said they could not help and sent me to an email address. The original email specifically said, "Don't use this email." Then I got an automated response and went around in ever-decreasing circles and nothing happened.

THE CHAIR: Is that what you have? You have that written down ready to give to us—

Mr Watson: I have a correspondence trail that I would be very happy to forward. Having subsequently seen the ACT government's submission and figure 2, I disagree with their findings in figure 2, on the basis of the correspondence trail that I shall

provide to you in the near future via the secretariat.

THE CHAIR: Further to that, are there specific questions that you think we need to keep in mind before we have the hearing with the ACT government tomorrow? Is there anything specific you would like to make us aware of?

Mr Watson: It would be beneficial for you to have had sight of what we found by going through this experimental process to assess the performance of the system.

Mr Ibbotson: I have a question as well. It is about the purpose of the system of Fix My Street, which is one of your terms of reference. Perhaps you could ask officials to elaborate on what they think the purpose is, because our perception is that they talk a lot about safety, and that is right, but they do not really talk about user-friendliness and providing something that is a public good, a public benefit or a public value. They do not talk about that at all.

It is a risk management approach—"We are here to minimise risk." Sure, you have to protect safety, but it is more than just minimising damage; it is actually about creating a benefit. So what is the benefit you are seeking to create? Try to get them to say something other than "liveability", which they put in their submission. We want to see: "What about the people? What about the citizens in the community? What benefit do you see coming to them?"—rather than those vague terms that we saw in their submission.

THE CHAIR: Do you have anything to add, Mr Butler?

Mr Butler: I would add that people have quite a variety of different experiences. We have heard from people who put in a very minor Access Canberra request and they got a very generic email four or five months later and the issue was not resolved. Some people say, "I put in an Access Canberra request last week and I got a phone call this week." Some people have really good experiences and some people have some pretty poor experiences. We need to make sure we are trying to lift up the minimum standard that people can expect from the service.

Mr Ibbotson: In their submission, they said that they looked at proprietary apps and ruled them out. They would want to create an app themselves. Ask them if they have actually evaluated Snap Send Solve, which is in one of the submissions that people have mentioned, and why it is not acceptable. They have simply evaded the answer by generalising. Snap Send Solve has been used by councils and big cities around the country. What are the specific problems with that one?

THE CHAIR: That is one of the questions I have written down from one of our previous hearings. That is very helpful.

MR BRADDOCK: Mr Watson, going back to the information you will provide about your experience versus figure 2 in the government submission, I would be particularly interested if you could address which particular columns have not been met from your example, in your eyes.

Mr Watson: Certainly.

MR BRADDOCK: Thank you for that.

Mr Watson: I will cross-reference.

MR BRADDOCK: I would like to know exactly which elements you believe were not met in that example.

Mr Watson: Sure.

MR BRADDOCK: My question is to Pedal Power. Fix My Street does not cover all possible issues, particularly for active travel. I want to check what you are currently doing to ensure that you can log them on Fix My Street. What workarounds do you have to do? What impact does this have on you trying to log jobs to improve the active travel network?

Mr Watson: Pedal Power has a bi-monthly meeting with a group called BAG, the Bicycle Advisory Group. We get direct contact with senior engineers on particular issues—for example, temporary traffic management when there are temporary roadworks that obstruct cycleways. When the signage is inadequate, I go to one particular engineer who has a bee in his bonnet about that. I email him and he solves the problem directly. It is an optimising violation of the system to make it work.

MR BRADDOCK: As someone who does not necessarily have the contacts you have, how does a person who is an active traveller meant to log jobs when it goes to shared paths, damage or missing cycling paths? What are they meant to do?

Mr Ibbotson: Besides joining Pedal Power, they do not have an alternative. They cannot log it on their phone straightaway to send something through. They can battle with Fix My Street or they can go to their local member as an alternative.

MR BRADDOCK: So we are probably looking at under-reporting of issues because of that barrier?

Mr Ibbotson: Yes.

Mr Watson: Can I offer an alternative?

MR BRADDOCK: Yes.

Mr Watson: One of our active members is a resident of Queanbeyan and commutes to the ANU. When there is a pothole in Queanbeyan, she goes to the town hall office and the receptionist will say, “All right, deary. I’ll get on to the boys,” and it is fixed in a day or two. So word of mouth works. It is much less administration. That is hearsay, but I believe her.

MR BRADDOCK: Your recommendation is that you insert specific categories to allow those active travel purposes to be caught in Fix My Street. Is that correct?

Mr Watson: Yes.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Mr Butler, during consultation with your members, has the issue come up about challenges with geolocation accuracy or the geolocation method within Fix My Street and the pinning tools?

Mr Butler: Some people have had issues with using Access Canberra, but that is not something that is been persistently raised with us.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: That is something I am particularly interested in.

Mr Butler: Some people like being able to report things anonymously, but the challenge that the government has raised is that, if someone reports something with no contact information, it becomes an unresolvable situation.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: It is very hard to tell someone that it is done as well.

Mr Butler: Yes—a hundred per cent. The Fix My Street service needs refinement, but I think they are taking some steps in the right direction. Our perspective is that the issue is not about trying to submit something; it is about what happens once you submit something. That is where we think the improvement needs to be focused.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Going back to being anonymous, you have to log in now—that is something that we heard earlier—to raise a Fix My Street request. Do you hear from many of your members that they do not need a response; they just want to lodge an issue to get it fixed? Is there a reason that you can see where the login is necessary?

Mr Butler: If you do not have enough information, I can see it being challenging for the government to actually resolve something. Having the pinned location is good. From my understanding, when we have told people who are concerned about it that they can just ring and do not have to give their information, they tend to accept that pretty quickly. I imagine that the benefit for the government is that, when they are taking a report over the phone or at Access Canberra, they can make sure they get all the information that they need.

THE CHAIR: From the Community Council's perspective, how do you find engagement with the government on issues like this? You made a pretty comprehensive report. Is being a community council any more help to you to represent your members?

Mr Butler: There are some aspects that definitely are enhanced by that—streetlights, for example. The ACT government puts information on its website about which streetlights are being looked at and which ones are not working, but, if you are just a regular citizen who says, "A streetlight is not working," when they go through the Fix My Street process, it does not prompt them to check. That website does not really have enough information to say, "That is being worked on." A couple of times we have written to ministers, not specifically about Fix My Street aspects but on the availability of information online. With the William Hovell Drive duplication, for a number of years there was not a lot of progress. There was no timestamp or anything on the website to say that the information was accurate. People would come to us and say, "Is this the

latest update? What's going on?" So we wrote to the minister about that and they put on a timestamp. I think that helped with some things.

Regarding the new north-side hospital, there was a period when the ACT Health website referred you to Infrastructure Canberra, which then referred you to the YourSay conversations website, which then referred you back to the ACT Health one. It was just a circle for more information. We spend a lot of time looking at these issues, so we know where the information is on the website, but it is definitely not intuitive.

MR BRADDOCK: I refer to the Pedal Power submission where you talk about the visibility of existing requests. I really like your idea of not just being able to see other requests in your local area or wherever you are talking about but also the ability to support or validate. Is that something you have seen successfully utilised in another jurisdiction? Where did you get that idea from?

Mr Watson: Through eBay. You get something sent to you and you get death by email: "It's posted," "It's on its way," "It's packed," "It's delivered," "It's sent." You know what is going on. Another example in the ACT is that I have been working successfully with the contractors on the massive congestion that is going on in the city centre. You will have noticed that one population group that is not complaining about the work is cyclists. We have been sending messages out every two weeks: all we know about what is good, what is bad, what is not and what is going to be fixed—providing more information than you need. The fact that cyclists are not grumbling, but car drivers are, gives an indication that providing valid feedback to the community with good and bad news works.

MR BRADDOCK: Thank you, Mr Watson. I bring you back to the question: the visibility of existing requests—the ability to look at a map that says, "Someone has already submitted a request for that." It is a great idea. I would like to check whether there are other examples that have utilised that.

Mr Watson: Sorry—I misheard your question. I cannot think of one.

MR BRADDOCK: That is alright.

Mr Butler: I can possibly give an example: Evo Energy. If there is a power outage, you go to the website and you can see a map that outlines who has been impacted, what the cause of the impact is and when it will come back online. I have experienced a few power outages in my time, but I have never had to contact Evo Energy about it, because someone else has already done it. I can see on the website that it has already been looked into. If I look at the website and see that it has been looked into, I just stay in the dark for a little bit and wait for it to be fixed.

Mr Ibbotson: I have noticed that, for example, at the Northern Beaches Council in Sydney, it is not so much about problems that need to be fixed but "This is what we are looking at. What are your views?" One example is: "Where should dogs be allowed on the northern beaches?" You can go to a map and see that somebody has reported it at a particular park, so I do not need to do it. It is a map which shows where the submissions have been coming in and what they are about. It is much easier to say, "I don't need to bother with that one because somebody has already done it." You do not actually get a

result, though. They do not say, “This is what we’re going to do with this particular park,” but they at least identified that somebody has had the same issue as you.

THE CHAIR: It is a bit like Google Maps, when you are driving along. Yesterday one popped up and said, “Something is on the road. Is it still there?” That is the sort of stuff that you are talking about.

Mr Ibbotson: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I would like to go to your submission, Mr Butler. You said it depends on three things: transparency, clarity and responsiveness. Could you expand on that for us?

Mr Butler: Yes. For us it ties into the previous question, which is visibility of a request that has already been made. People get very frustrated, not that there is a pothole or that a footpath is broken—there is some frustration, but the real frustration comes from doing the right thing and reporting it, and then not seeing that it is fixed. You do not hear back from them and you do not get an update. We think there needs to be a transparency aspect—showing it on a map, for example. That is one of the things that we put forward: noting where things are being fixed and when things will be fixed. Also transparency on the number of Fix My Street inquiries—what are the problems? We think a bit more transparency is important. We have seen some of it coming out in the Assembly because of this inquiry—the numbers that have come forward from the ACT government. When it comes to the timeliness aspect, most people could accept that the government cannot go out tomorrow and fix every issue that was reported yesterday, but, if people report something, they want to know that it is at least on the list of things to be fixed—that they are coming next month to do footpaths in Evatt; it is on the list to be considered.

THE CHAIR: Good one. I am wondering what you are hearing from your members about usability. Something we heard this morning was about drop-downs or that there are no options to choose from. Can you talk to us about that for the record? Are there any concerns from your members about using the actual tool itself?

Mr Butler: We have heard some feedback that it has been a number of years since it was revamped. The ACT government alluded to it in their submission. Some things are a bit dated. There is definitely that aspect. From our perspective, we think they should do more to guide people in the right direction. Graffiti is often talked about. It is a very common report, from what we understand. If it is graffiti on a utility pole or an Icon Water asset, that is not the ACT government’s responsibility. If it gave you a bit of information and prompted you in the right direction, then, instead of submitting a Fix My Street inquiry and, weeks later, being told, “It’s not our responsibility,” you can be told who to contact if it is an electricity pole. Instead of waiting for weeks and then being told, “It’s not our responsibility,” you can be told earlier where to go. That is where we think there is room for improvement.

MR BRADDOCK: Should it not be like a no-wrong-door approach? If a request goes to the ACT government and it is actually related to an Icon Water asset, surely they could just forward that on. We do not want to rely on the community member to be aware of whose responsibility it is. They just want to report that there is graffiti.

Mr Butler: I do not think people should be turned away. They could provide some information and inform people about how different elements of the ACT government work. You could have a little prompt and the issue could still be submitted. The ACT government probably should just forward it on to Icon Water to get it resolved. If we could have the conversation continuously about the right place to go, these things would be fixed quicker, which, at the end of the day, is a good outcome.

THE CHAIR: In your submission, you called out the National Capital Authority. Not a lot of people really clock who is responsible for what. Perhaps giving a bit of information is something we could think about as a recommendation.

MR BRADDOCK: I am interested in key performance indicators that could be utilised for Fix My Street and government performance. Can you give any recommendations as to what could be some useful key performance indicators, or what is used in other jurisdictions that we should be looking to apply in the ACT?

Mr Ibbotson: At the moment the question is, “Is it open or closed?” That is really about the end of the line, and saying, “We’ve resolved it and we’ve done this.” They should report on what they have done and, if they have not done anything, why they have not done it.

An indicator would be, “Have you explained it sufficiently to the user?” The answer would be yes or no, because the user can respond by saying, “Thank you; I understand.” There could be something on the system to give an opportunity, once the response or the final word has come through. The reporter could then click a feedback form; it could be a choice—resolved satisfactorily or not.

That is resolved satisfactorily according to the reporter or not. If there is an issue about why it has not been resolved satisfactorily, where do you go to next? The classic one is, “Well, it’s not a maintenance problem, it’s a renewal problem. It’s a capital works issue.” With a capital works issue, you need to go through this particular channel to get it fixed as a capital works matter rather than a maintenance matter.

THE CHAIR: I am looking at the Pedal Power submission—the ease of use, with people abandoning submissions as they cannot find matching categories. You touched on this briefly. How much of this are you hearing? Is it just anecdotal? “Can’t be bothered, it just doesn’t work, so I just don’t bother anymore.” Is this something that you hear a lot?

Mr Ibbotson: I would not say it is systemic; it is more the exception than the rule. That is probably the best I can do.

Mr Watson: Being mildly pedantic, I keep a log of all the Fix My Streets. Most of them are where membership says, “There’s a problem here or there.” If I talk directly to the staff, and I follow up the Fix My Streets, I have 24 issues in the past four-odd years that I have logged.

THE CHAIR: It is a lot.

Mr Watson: We are unusual because we are representing a cycling community.

Mr Butler: I think it definitely should be a business-as-usual process for someone in government to go through the requests that come through and, if there is another category that has 40 per cent about one thing, that should probably be made into a category. If there are three categories listed where no requests come through, that probably should be another category. There are probably some aspects that are done when it comes to continuous improvement, but it is not very visible—what changes are coming through. We think that, for people to have faith in the system and continue using it, and think things are going to go well, we need to hear more about that improvement.

THE CHAIR: If you had the minister's ear, what would you like the minister to know? Give me your top five, or two—whatever you can come up with.

Mr Ibbotson: It is a related matter. Unless there are the finances to fix the problem and have sufficient in the maintenance budget to be able to fix the problem quickly and effectively, what is the point of reporting it? We have noticed that the high point of maintenance funding was about three years ago, and it has been diminishing since, yet the claims against the government for injuries that have been as a result of those things have been increasing. There is no point fixing the application, the user face, if you are not actually improving the result.

MR BRADDOCK: Can I just clarify a point about the injuries? I am not sure whether you are aware of this. I have heard reports that the government is denying claims unless there has been a Fix My Street job logged for that particular fault. I want to check whether you have had any experience with that.

Mr Ibbotson: I have not heard that, no. We have just been watching the figures. There was a question on notice about the amount of compensation being paid, and we are following those figures.

THE CHAIR: Mr Watson, do you have a top idea that you would like us to—

Mr Watson: You were talking about the KPIs. Mr Ibbotson, clearly, we have been collaborating, because you were almost taking the words from my mouth. It might be worth considering, if there is a set of standard KPIs already in place, publishing them. If it takes six months for a pothole to be filled, and the KPI is six months, it means that I, as a member of the public, can say, "Could that KPI be improved?" It gives the community more confidence in how well the government thinks it is doing its job in my name.

THE CHAIR: Mr Butler?

Mr Butler: Mine is linked to that transparency aspect of KPIs—transparency as to what work is being done. I mentioned it a little bit before. A duplicate request regarding something that has already been reported and is potentially on the work list to be done later is a waste of time for whoever reported it. It is a waste of the time of some public servant to deal with a response to the request, forward the request or do whatever they have to do with that request.

PROOF

We think that whatever can be done to improve the quality of the information going to people means that they are less frustrated. You save time; people do not have to submit duplicate requests because they can see stuff has already been actioned. The public service can get on with the job of fixing stuff and not responding to the 14th Fix My Street inquiry about the same pothole. I think that a lot of focus should be put on that.

THE CHAIR: If there is nothing further, we will wrap up a little early. Thank you so much to all of you, on behalf of the committee, for your attendance today. Other than the documents that you are going to provide to us, nothing has been taken on notice. We will suspend for a short break.

Hearing suspended from 2.28 to 2.49 pm.

MOBBS, MR CHRIS

THE CHAIR: We welcome Chris Mobbs. Can you tell us about the capacity in which you are appearing today?

Mr Mobbs: I am a resident of Hackett, and I am here to answer any questions you have about my submission.

THE CHAIR: Please note that, as a witness, you are protected by parliamentary privilege and bound by its obligations. You must tell the truth. Giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter and may be considered contempt of the Assembly.

Thank you for your submission. You have made 120 requests. I also want to thank you for what you are doing for our community; that is no small task. I appreciate seeing the list of things that you have identified. Would you like to give an opening statement about what your experiences are and what you hope we get out of this inquiry?

Mr Mobbs: As you noted, I have put in 120 requests over the last five years. Generally, I have been pretty happy with Fix My Street. However, there are a few issues in terms of using the technology.

My key point is: you can have the greatest bit of technology, but what happens in the field is most important. I have some examples where I think the response has been, “We’ve sorted it; it’s not our problem,” and we move on. That is the most frustrating thing. They need to do better follow-up activities once a request comes in. I can go through examples, if you like, of those.

THE CHAIR: Yes. Also, my thought, when you said that, was: of the requests you have, do you have an idea of how many have been resolved or were ignored—that sort of thing? I am interested in your examples. Are they on the same topics? Are they the same teams? What have been your concerns around those issues?

Mr Mobbs: Overall, most of them have been fixed. But an example is my first one: who owns the rubbish bins at Holtze Close, Hackett? As I put in my submission, there are two large skip bins that have been there for many years, and there is a lot of illegal dumping. I first raised this with Minister Berry back in 2017. She advised that one was used by the SES and another by Sport and Recreation. They subsequently locked the bins back then and, from mid-2024, these two bins were not locked, leaving them open for more illegal dumping.

The SES moved out of their depot earlier this year. In December last year, I put in a request to Fix My Street saying people had dumped some bikes and various odds and sods, with photographs in my request. They came back and said, “Your request relating to litter at this location has been identified as a private bin.” Interesting. I was very surprised by this, especially that the SES had moved out. Along with Sport and Recreation, I understand that both those are government functions, not private.

I went back to Fix My Street and said, “If they are private bins, can you tell me who owns them?” I did not receive anything. I sent an email to Minister Cheyne in

mid-January asking for an explanation, but I did not receive a reply. I went back, a few weeks back, in September, saying, “Just following up, still haven’t had a reply.” Remarkably, two hours ago, I received this reply from Minister Berry, who is Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Thank you for contacting Minister Cheyne regarding the skip bins. You referred it to Minister Berry. Sport and Recreation confirms that the hopper located at the Hackett Oval is jointly owned by the State Emergency Service and ACT Sport and Recreation. The bins are not privately owned as the SES is not a private organisation.

Interestingly, on one of the bins, it said, “Public use.” They said:

This marking will be removed.

Remarkably, yesterday morning I walked by, and it still said, “Public use.” I walked by later on and someone had sprayed over it, saying, “SES use.” It is interesting that I got this response. I am thinking, “I wonder if it’s because I’m appearing before this committee today and they want to clear this up.” I think what frustrated me was the long delays, having to go backwards and forwards, backwards and forwards. One moment it is private bins; suddenly, “No, it’s SES and Sport and Recreation.” At last count, I understood they were government. Hopefully, they will be locked, and it will stop people illegally dumping stuff there.

That is an example. Maybe, behind the scenes, papers are lost. Regarding the fact that the SES has moved out, has there been good communication? I do not know.

THE CHAIR: You have raised a Fix My Street request, but this has now moved more into direct communication with the different ministers’ offices—or have you gone to them separately?

Mr Mobbs: I went first to Minister Cheyne, and she referred it on to Sport and Recreation—Minister Berry. You could say that, at last, after 10 months, we have a reply. But the next thing will be, “I wonder if they’ll put a lock on it.” If they do not put a lock on it, it is pointless. I wonder: if the SES has moved out, do they really still have that bin? I am not convinced by that. That is one example.

THE CHAIR: What about the functionality? You are obviously a seasoned user. How do you find the communication to and from, with regard to your requests, when you lodge them? With the responses that you get, how do you find that? Is it consistent?

Mr Mobbs: It is consistent and not consistent. I will give another example. Again, it is about rubbish. This was near some vacant spaces just off Antill Street, between Dickson and the Dickson ovals. I was riding my bike along there, and there was rubbish there. I think that a homeless person had been sleeping under a hedge there, plus there was some rubbish next to them. I put in a request, and they came back and said, “It’s been investigated, and it appears that the rubbish mentioned is on private property and it is the responsibility of those owners or the lessees.”

I was a bit taken back by this. I thought, “I’ll drop into the Parklands apartments,” which are behind where some of the rubbish was. I said, “Have you been told by the

government that you've got rubbish?" The person I spoke to said that she was not aware of anything. They may have spoken to someone else or sent an email.

The other block was behind the Jehovah's Witnesses church. There is a very open patch, and there is a pile of plastic there. Again, they did not tell me who owned that. I then put a request in to the Suburban Land Agency. I did go onto ACTmapi and found the block and section, but it does not tell you the name of the owners or the lessee. I went in to the Suburban Land Agency and said, "Can you tell me who are the owners of these blocks?" They came back and said that one particular block was owned by the Salvation Army in Sydney. I contacted them, and they said they had not heard anything about the rubbish, but they would get onto it. I went past about a week later, and someone had picked it up, which was great.

My main point, and my recommendation, is that you cannot expect members of the public to have to know all the nuances in terms of who owns a particular block and section—those sorts of things. The government would have that information. Instead of me having to track it down, and them saying, "It's someone else's problem, not ours," I would like the government to say, "It's private land and we have contacted them to make sure that rubbish is removed," rather than throwing it back onto members of the public.

THE CHAIR: To investigate it.

Mr Mobbs: Yes.

MR BRADDOCK: In your submission you give the example of the eroded access track to the water reservoir. Basically, the ACT government wrote back and said, "Not our responsibility," hence you, as the resident, were required to take the further action of contacting Icon in order to resolve that.

Mr Mobbs: Yes.

MR BRADDOCK: The ACT government was not taking any responsibility to pass your request on to that other entity?

Mr Mobbs: That is right. Again, that would be simple. They know the owners of all the blocks of land, roads and that sort of thing. Simply forward it on to them, rather than throwing it back to us. It is very simple, I would have thought.

MR BRADDOCK: I want to try to dig into the issue of nature reserves and the challenges you have had with utilising Fix My Street for nature reserves. Can you please articulate those challenges and what you would seek in Fix My Street to ensure that you can have a one-stop shop to report an issue to the government, whether it might be a footpath or a track in a nature reserve? Some people might not know that they have crossed into a nature reserve, for example. Are you able to take us through that?

Mr Mobbs: There is this splitting: over the fence, that is ACT Parks and Conservation Service; on this side, it is City Services, or whatever it is this month. I had an example where I went onto the website for Mount Majura reserve and it says, "To report maintenance issues, go to Access Canberra." I wanted to report an exotic shrub there.

I clicked on the link and it took me to Fix My Street. When you go onto Fix My Street, you will have “parks”, but you will not have “nature reserves”.

With these demarcations or various splitting of responsibilities, it is very hard for members of the public to understand who does what and where, and those sorts of things. I would say that they need to have a seamless transition behind it so that, if you do go to Fix My Street and click on it, there will be an opportunity to click on “nature reserves” and you could report it. It would be very simple.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Mr Mobbs, in your submission you recommend increasing the character limit for descriptions from 500 to 600 words. Why will 100 extra words make all the difference? My understanding is that a large number of requests on Fix My Street are unactionable due to it being very difficult, if not impossible, to understand what and where the issue is. Can you expand on your experience of how many characters, on average, you need, and why go from 500 to 600?

Mr Mobbs: I have found that sometimes it can be a very short, simple thing. At other times you are trying to explain a little bit more and suddenly you get to 500 characters, and you have to go back and do your editing.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Is it 500 words or 500 characters?

Mr Mobbs: No, 500 characters. The problem is that you do not know that until you have reached it. You think, “Now I’ve got to go back and shorten it.” Again, you do not want people putting in thousands and thousands of words. You could maybe expand it a little bit, to 600 characters. You want to keep it brief, but you do not want to make it so brief that people cannot get all the relevant information in there. That was a minor recommendation that I would like to see.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: For ease of use?

Mr Mobbs: Yes, ease of use. For most places that have IT systems with a character limit, you will see the number there, as you are typing away. “I’ve reached it, nearly there; I’ll finish off.” When you put in all of this information and suddenly it stops, you have to go back and do your editing. It is very frustrating.

THE CHAIR: I found your recommendations really clear. This is probably a question for the government: in your submission, you talk about the “My Access Canberra Services” and the “feedback and complaints” tab.

Mr Mobbs: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Your recommendation is to change that to “My Fix My Street submissions”. Was it always done this way?

Mr Mobbs: It still has not been done, I do not think. I think there is an opportunity to make sure it is seamless and that there are links across all these things.

THE CHAIR: The same language.

Mr Mobbs: Yes.

MR BRADDOCK: This is not about your submission, but I want to test an idea that another submission raised. It was about the visibility of others' requests in your local area. Is that something you would find useful, if you could see that someone has already logged a particular job? You might even be able to up-vote it and say, "I'm also concerned about this." Would that be useful?

Mr Mobbs: I think that would be really good. I will give you another interesting example. On Sunday, down at Phillip Avenue, someone dumped some old kitchen cupboards. I put in a request on Sunday afternoon and, lo and behold, at 9 o'clock on Monday morning, I got an email saying they have collected it. Even better, I was driving out to go down to the Dickson shops, I went around the corner and there were two men picking up the cupboards and putting them on their ute. I stopped and thanked them. I said, "This is fantastic that you've responded so quickly." They said, "We're doing a whole lot." I asked him, "Has anyone else reported this?" It becomes inefficient then. I think that is a great idea to have something that is accurate. "Yes, this rubbish here has been reported." If you go in there and see, "That's already been reported," that would be a great improvement.

THE CHAIR: Do you have any closing remarks?

Mr Mobbs: In the section, you log in and you get to "feedback and complaints". I thought, "That's interesting." The actual submissions are listed there. I think that title means it is not obvious to first-time users—even for long-time users. I put in a recommendation that that be worded "My Fix My Street submissions" or something like that, so it is very clear that this is where it is. With "feedback and complaints", what is that dealing with? A little tweaking there would help people to use the system.

MR BRADDOCK: Both open and closed ones, I assume, so that you can see which ones have been closed off or actioned?

Mr Mobbs: Yes, when you get into it, you can see all your submissions. You can go through and see what has happened to them—things like that.

THE CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, we thank you for your attendance today. There were no questions taken on notice. As I say, we really appreciated your feedback; it is very practical, and it will help us with our report. Thank you.

Mr Mobbs: Thank you very much. I look forward to seeing your report.

THE CHAIR: We will suspend the proceedings for a short break.

Hearing suspended from 3.07 to 3.35 pm.

KRISHNAMURTHY, MR RAVI, President, Australian Multicultural Action Network

THE CHAIR: We welcome the Australian Multicultural Action Network. As a witness you are protected by parliamentary privilege and bound by its obligations. You must tell the truth. Giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter and may be considered contempt of the Assembly. We are not taking opening statements today but given that it is you for this 30 minutes, I would like to reflect on your—I think you have given us seven recommendations—and obviously the ten most spoken community languages seem like a fairly obvious option. Could you talk more about what that would mean for our multicultural community and what a barrier it is at the moment?

Mr Krishnamurthy: Yes, to start with, we do have a lot of CALD members living in our own area here. We live in O'Connor, which is a lovely older suburb. To start with, footpaths in many places are broken down. My own neighbour, who is an elderly person of Polish background, not too familiar with English, is the first feedback I heard, apart from the community, that logging into the digital portal—exactly pinning where the problem is and all of that is where I think he was struggling. Obviously, English is the primary language. There is no problem with that, but people having that sort of different background, elderly and migrated very late in age into the country—we have found this is a little bit of a struggle.

With the drop-down option, there are a lot of websites that have drop-down options where you can pick which language you want to launch or to read the website contents. So that sort of thing. When you go to the Access Canberra website, the portal, and then try to click on it—I cannot see that. That is not an option at the time which is something we have found. So that is where all the problems are coming from.

THE CHAIR: We have heard that over time, obviously, systems like this get updated and changed. I wonder, has the government reached out to your multicultural groups at all for feedback when changes are applied to systems like this?

Mr Krishnamurthy: Mostly we notice that the system has changed through the media, not individually. I think the associations may receive feedback directly from the government. But from time-to-time, when we have tried to use the system, we go through and then find out, okay, so this is a little bit different than before. That is how we learn. I can see there are some parts of the system, like ACT ambulance services, constantly updating their website and there are different language options. You can choose from the top down and we can read through Vietnamese, Tamil and all sorts of different languages. We can go through the website contents, which is good. I even checked this out just before the meeting started. I do not think the Access Canberra portal is updated with that option yet.

MR BRADDOCK: Just a question about recommendation 7 in your submission where you talk about monthly two-click user satisfaction micro-surveys. If you could just give us a bit more information on what those look like and an organisation that might successfully utilise those that we could hope to emulate?

Mr Krishnamurthy: Which one is that, Andrew? Is this a multilingual interface, is that

right?

MR BRADDOCK: Monthly two-click user satisfaction micro-surveys, so it is part of the continuous improvement loops.

Mr Krishnamurthy: Let me open that. Just one sec. Just help me out a little bit more. Which one is it, the fourth one?

MR BRADDOCK: Seventh. Number seven.

Mr Krishnamurthy: Seventh, the last one, I think. Yes, yes, that is fine. There are websites in the federal agencies I do know that give that option. We have a facility where the website—we can just provide feedback. By doing that, the federal departments collect all the information. They do not make change straight away, which is okay. But then all the information they collect from different users, once the feedback is received, depending on how this can be implemented—in IT there are some changes—it is pretty hard, and there are different release processes they go through and technology limitations and manpower and all that. They do publish all the feedback received and about 20 per cent of this feedback will be taken into consideration in the next year in implementing it. That is another change. I have seen it on a lot of websites, so that is what I was mentioning in that one.

Then this Access Canberra website, which is being used by pretty much everyone in Canberra, where lots of services are moving into digital, having that sort of a feedback loop mechanism would be very, very helpful. That is what I mentioned. I did go through some of the acts and stuff, and I mentioned, I think, bits and pieces about that in my submission to you. This feedback mechanism will definitely help get the direct user perspective, what we feel about the website. So that is what I mentioned there.

MR BRADDOCK: Okay, so I am wondering just how you get sufficient information to be actionable. So it might have to be a free text field or something like that to allow the identification of what the actual issue may be. Is that possible under such an arrangement?

Mr Krishnamurthy: That would be really helpful if that can be implemented. I think that would be helpful because then we can provide a detailed description of what we are going through and we can give all the details and that can be taken into consideration as part of the feedback loop. Also, I do find there are times when we are trying to enter the street address or we are trying to pinpoint the map and it freezes. Through the mobile—sometimes when you are walking and you just notice a streetlight is not working and you try to log in there. I was even thinking, “Is this because my mobile has signal issues? Is that the reason it is not working?” But that is not the case. There are times I did notice the digital portal just freezes. So these are all technology—technical glitches—but if this can be addressed I think that would be very helpful, yes.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: I am interested in the proposal within your submission about the street ambassador model where it suggests locals could assist or would assist digitally disconnected residents. From a system perspective, how do you see this model working? And then I guess the flipside of that is, what are the barriers stopping locals from assisting digitally disconnected neighbours within the existing Fix My Street

platform at the moment?

Mr Krishnamurthy: What I found during my New Zealand trip—and that it is located in my mind because one of my friends was working in the technical side of things in New Zealand there—I asked him, because Australia and New Zealand are pretty similar, so I asked him, “So how does this work?” That is when he was mentioning about different layers and all the backend concepts of how their technology has been defined. That was very interesting to hear. I tried—obviously I do not know our technology here behind the digital portal. But back to what I was asking, that is one of the points he did mention, that having a feedback loop is something that they found useful. I am not sure how they implemented it but that was there, based on what I heard from him.

Based on the barriers, what I can mention here is we need to be more—how do I say that? Digitally we should be super good in using the system. That is one of the barriers I would say, because digital literacy is more and more promulgated everywhere, which is good. We have a lot of shopfronts. It is no longer a human interaction. Most of the time we just need to phone. Even the phone support is diminishing these days, so we are moving into more digital and that is understandable. But there is some aged population where I think the digital literacy is not super good. You know, it is not their best expertise. So obviously digital literacy is one of the key areas here.

Also, in the area where I live—and I do know that even in Gungahlin there are a lot of suburbs where we do have mobile network pockets, you know, the black spots. If you try to use any of these devices in those areas you just walk and you try to do that, I mean, you cannot even make a call. At times it is Vodafone, and I am not sure whether I can mention that here, but there are some network providers where I think their service is not that good. So what we are expecting is good digital literacy with all this device use and that sort of—pre-requirement I call it, is what I think we are looking for while using all these apps.

And also a one-to-one relationship is what I think we are looking—in the app that we use—in a lot of apps that is how I think it has been designed. I am not sure how this app is working from the mobile. If there are 10 different people in the same spot where they all want to log in to the platform and things like that, I am not sure how it is working. I have not tested myself so I do not know whether this is really a barrier in this case, but I just want to mention that for someone who is technically managing all the system to check about that.

Again as I mentioned before, feedback and tracking all different user input is missing at the moment, so that is definitely a gap. I will call it a gap, but I think it is missing, so it is a gap there. So basically, I think the digital platform should handle slightly, slightly better. It does work. What it is doing at the moment is quite helpful, there is no problem with that, but then it should help a bit better.

Apart from that, there are some cases personally I lodged in the system back at the beginning of 2024. I do not think I can see any status update there. A lot of times I think, if I remember correctly, it says “submitted” or “assigned” as one of those status but I am not receiving feedback for the footpath issues that I have raised. It is almost 18 months and I have not heard any update at all.

THE CHAIR: So it sounds like general functionality could be improved and communication back to the user is something that is top of mind?

Mr Krishnamurthy: Yes, yes.

THE CHAIR: I think we have just talked about a bit of this technical element, but a two-way API connection between the front end and TCCS asset registers for that evidence of completion photos, I guess, would close the loop in some way. Do you know much from a technical perspective what that ask looks like, how broad a piece of work that is?

Mr Krishnamurthy: I feel there is some form of an issue register or—because Fix My Street does deal with electric poles, the lights, the globes not working and all that. So I am sure I think there is a backend which has some form of an asset register. I am just guessing. So this particular idea that I proposed there, it is based on that one, because we do not know whether these inquiries are already lodged in the system. Say, for example, the footpath issue that I am talking about here. I am not sure how many can be lodged. All I can see is only what I lodged here. So if we can get some form of visibility of what the issues are that are already waiting, then we can always go back and check the register to see, okay, someone has already done that and this is the date. We do not need to know who has done that, but this issue with this number is already lodged. So we can even call in and check the status of it rather than each one of us—that we keep facing the same thing again and again. So that is fulfilling that one.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. I think that just about covers it. I really appreciate the submission. It is helpful to get a broad perspective. So on behalf of the committee, we do thank you for your attendance today, and yes, all of the witnesses, we really appreciate those who have assisted the committee with their experience and their knowledge. We also thank broadcasting and Hansard for their support. This meeting is now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 3.50 pm.