



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2014-2015

(Reference: [Appropriation Bill 2014-2015 and Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2014-2015](#))

Members:

MR B SMYTH (Chair)
MS M PORTER (Deputy Chair)
MRS G JONES
MS Y BERRY

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

WEDNESDAY, 25 JUNE 2014

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

By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

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

APPEARANCES

Capital Metro Agency.....	1027
Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate.....	1027
Territory and Municipal Services Directorate.....	939

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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 9.31 am.

Appearances:

Rattenbury, Mr Shane, Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Minister for Corrections, Minister for Housing, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs and Minister for Ageing

Territory and Municipal Services Directorate

Byles, Mr Gary, Director-General

Peters, Mr Paul, Executive Director, Roads and Public Transport Division

Cloos, Mr Karl, Senior Manager, Strategic Planning and Development, Roads ACT

McHugh, Mr Ben, Project Officer, Major Capital Works, Roads ACT

Roncon, Mr James, Director, Public Transport, Roads and Public Transport Division

Perram, Mr Phillip, Executive Director, Business Enterprise Division

Roberts, Mr David, Acting Director, ACT NOWaste, Business Enterprise Division

Bailey, Mr Daniel, Director, ACT Property Group, Business Enterprise Division

Trushell, Mr Michael, General Manager, Capital Linen Service, Business Enterprise Division

Steward, Ms Fay, Executive Director, Parks and City Services Division

Little, Ms Vanessa, Director, Libraries ACT, Parks and City Services Division

Flannery, Ms Fleur, Director, City Services, Parks and City Services Division

Iglesias, Mr Daniel, Director, Parks and Conservation, Parks and City Services Division

Kargas, Ms Diane, Chair, ACT Public Cemeteries Authority

Home, Mr Hamish, Chief Executive Officer, Canberra Cemeteries, Business Enterprise Division

THE CHAIR: Welcome members, and welcome minister and staff of the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate to day 10 of the estimates process. Where has the time gone? Today we are looking at all of the municipal services output classes—1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5—output class 2, enterprise services, ACTION, cemeteries, and the Capital Metro Agency. Who could want more?

I remind everyone that the proceedings are being not only broadcast but transcribed. So there will be a *Hansard* which will be forwarded to you for corrections or for any inclusions you would like to make. Those appearing should familiarise themselves with the privilege statement, the pink card, that offers obligations and protections. Could you all acknowledge that you have read it and understand it? Acknowledgement; thank you very much.

When a question is taken on notice, it would be useful if witnesses could use words like “I will take that question on notice” so that we can track it in the *Hansard* and make sure that we get answers. For questions taken on notice, we would ask that answers arrive within five working days. If people want to put questions on notice after the event, you have three days from the arrival of the transcript.

The committee now welcomes the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services and his officers. Minister, would you like to make a brief opening statement, given most of your colleagues do not understand the meaning of the word “brief”?

Mr Rattenbury: Thank you for that clarification. I was not planning to, but there is one matter. We would like to make a correction to the budget papers.

Mr Byles: Can I draw the committee’s attention to budget paper 3, page 148? The top initiative there is headed “ramp metering on Cotter Road”, and refers to the capital funded initiative of ramp metering on Cotter Road. The associated text mentions that the commonwealth government is contributing \$0.4 million towards the initiative under the nation building program. However, the correct position is that the commonwealth is contributing \$0.3 million and the ACT government is contributing \$0.4 million. I apologise for that error; it is a typographical error.

THE CHAIR: These things happen. Thank you for that correction. We will go straight to questions. Minister, last year TAMS introduced an application fee for a tree assessment involving a tree damaging activity. How much revenue has been raised from this and has there been any decrease in the average number of applications received?

Mr Rattenbury: Just before I come to that, Mr Smyth, do you want to go through it output class by output class or do you want to generally move through TAMS today?

THE CHAIR: The committee has adopted a wide-ranging process. If you can keep members in an output class, I have been unable to do so.

Mr Rattenbury: I do not mind; it is just having regard to the breadth of TAMS and the allocation of staff time.

THE CHAIR: Who have you got here this morning?

Mr Rattenbury: We were expecting to go through it in numerical order. We have the libraries and the like ready to go. I do not want to be too picky about it; I just want to get a sense of it.

THE CHAIR: It is meant to be that way, but people have often taken a broad approach, which I do not have a problem with. Things like infrastructure will often go across various areas. So a broad approach has been taken. Members, before morning tea we need to deal with 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 if we can.

Mr Rattenbury: Is that all right?

THE CHAIR: Yes, that is fine. I do not mind.

Mr Rattenbury: It means we can let some staff go at the morning tea break.

THE CHAIR: Yes, and we will endeavour to do the same again. We probably would not let too many go before lunch but we will do what we can. Going to information

services, what initiatives are there in the budget this year for library services and what discussion is there of the provision of new libraries into the future?

Mr Rattenbury: There is no provision of new libraries at this point in time. The ACT is very well serviced for libraries. We are more heavily provided for libraries than in comparable jurisdictions or cities. We have a good, strong borrowing rate here in the territory. So in that sense we have no need to increase the number of libraries in the territory.

In terms of initiatives in the budget, the key one has been the increase in security. Members will be aware of some unfortunate recent incidents at the library, and that has given us cause to make some changes to the security arrangements, in order to improve that situation, which is essentially the upgrading of CCTV capacity in the libraries and the removal of some cubicles in the library, just to improve visibility across the physical space.

MRS JONES: I have a supplementary on libraries. There has been a mobile library service—it has recently stopped, I believe—to Weston Creek, Cooleman Court. Can you explain the rationale for ceasing that when there is not a library service, minister, in that part of the city?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, I can. The mobile library service has been closed completely, not just for Weston Creek. The entire service is ending. It ceases on Monday, 30 June so it is just about to cease. This decision was taken because of the cost of the mobile library service and the limited number of borrowings that were taking place.

MRS JONES: What was the cost, minister?

Mr Rattenbury: The actual cost? The saving is about \$250,000 a year.

MRS JONES: \$250,000 per year?

Mr Rattenbury: Correct. In terms of the number of borrowings, we found there was an average of about 150 people using the mobile library service each fortnight, with an average total of 500 loans each fortnight. By way of comparison, to give that some context, there are around 3,000 visits per fortnight to the Kingston library and Woden library has about 13,000 visits per fortnight. So essentially there was a very low usage rate.

We also found there was some duplication. Some people who were using the mobile library service were also going to the district libraries. We were actually seeing people using both services. In order to replace that service the home library service is on offer. That essentially involves people choosing their materials and they get delivered to the home by volunteers.

MRS JONES: Is that online—both?

Mr Rattenbury: Both. People can either come into the library, make their selection and then have the books delivered if they are not able to carry them themselves or they can order online and the books will get delivered.

MRS JONES: Is there a phone option as well at this stage? Can you maybe consider a phone option? If we are talking about elderly residents or disabled residents who have been using the mobile library service and they are not online—we do have a fairly high online capacity in our community, but for those who are not—to just complete that service, having a phone option as well, perhaps with even a limited number of books, might be really helpful. Then we are not actually cutting off that group who have been visiting the shopping centre.

Ms Little: We have a home library service where people can provide us with a profile of their interests and the authors that they like. We actually do select on their behalf and then they are delivered by volunteers. So there are several ways that people can access the service. We can select for them. We found a number of the people who were using the mobile were people who were actually physically unable to get onto the mobile but still liked that interaction and were still able to get out. We are arranging for each of them to find a way in to the library, whether that is with a residential care bus or a community bus.

MRS JONES: To fill out the profile?

Ms Little: In order for them to do their own selection. For those people who are very housebound and cannot get out much at all, we do the full service for them, including selection. For those people who can still get out but the problem is they cannot carry heavy things, they can come in, select what they want, leave it with us, we process it and have a volunteer deliver it. Alternatively, they can order online. We are looking at a trial with some of our home service clients around eBooks. Rather than our volunteers carrying heavy material to people, we are looking at a trial where we will teach the clients how to use eBooks on an iPad or a device and then—

MRS JONES: If they have got one.

Ms Little: Yes. We will probably seek some sponsorship to acquire some and then lend them out to people and see how they go. The advantage of that, of course, is that they can make the text bigger, so we are not limited to large print books for them.

MRS JONES: Do you have a brochure or a flyer about the current state of non-library attendance options?

Ms Little: We have prepared a flyer for people who have been using the mobile library for the last bit. Each person has been given a flyer with their options.

MRS JONES: Could we be provided with some copies of that?

Ms Little: Yes.

Mr Rattenbury: We will take that on notice. The bottom line is that we are working very hard to deliver the service more efficiently to save some money but in a way that ensures people who may have struggled with access to the library can get access.

MRS JONES: I can see from your perspective that is the way to do it.

THE CHAIR: Ms Porter then Ms Berry.

MS PORTER: There are no more libraries planned at the moment. Given there is not a physical library at Weston Creek and we have new and growing suburbs out at Molonglo, what are the plans into the future for servicing that area? It will be an important area in the very near future.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes. This is something we will need to keep monitoring. As more and more of Molonglo comes on stream, as has been the case with Gungahlin, we will need to monitor the provision of services and look to invest in certain things. For example, there is already the promise to build an aquatic facility in that area in the coming years. The tension if I am honest—and members will perhaps know this—is whether things should be placed in Molonglo or Weston Creek. There is a neighbourhood dispute about where things should go.

MRS JONES: If there were good buses, it probably would not matter.

Mr Rattenbury: My feedback is that that is not quite the case.

MS PORTER: Regardless of the in-fighting between who wants it at Molonglo and who wants it at Weston, you are taking on board the fact that you need to look further into the future as to servicing that area as the population grows?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry has a supplementary and then Mr Coe has a new question on libraries.

MS BERRY: You talked about how the library service operates for home libraries. Is that the same way that it operates in nursing homes?

Ms Little: We have a mixture of services we provide to nursing homes. Some people in the nursing homes receive the one-on-one home library service. We have a profile for them and a volunteer delivers material. Some nursing homes prefer to have a small collection, so we take a three-month loan of what we call a bulk loan of material to that nursing home and the residents use that and then we come and refresh it. In other nursing homes we provide them with material we have deleted from our collection and we give them that and they can keep it. It is a good way of recycling things that come off our shelves.

MS BERRY: The Belconnen Library is quite a fair distance from the bus interchange and is quite inaccessible. Are there are plans to move it closer to public transport.

Ms Little: Certainly it is under consideration. There is no short-term plan but certainly it is under consideration.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe had a question on libraries.

MR COE: Minister, about three months ago I wrote to you and you responded with

regard to having to change PINs for library access. Could you talk me through what happened there. Your letter said that only 35 members were identified as having a PIN, however, I understand that more were notified to change their PIN, is that right?

Ms Little: That is correct, Mr Coe. There was a security breach that we investigated. There is apparently a cohort of people who like to test government systems and then tell you when they find problems, so it was very kind of them. We asked everybody to change their PIN as a responsible security measure.

MR COE: But a PIN has to be changed in a library, is that correct?

Ms Little: It does, yes. I would not want anybody ringing up CanberraConnect and saying, "I'm Mary Porter and I want to change my PIN," so you have to do it in person and you bring identification with you to prove who you are.

MR COE: Did everybody have to change their PIN or was everybody given an option to change?

Ms Little: Everybody was asked to change their PIN and given a period of time to do so. After that period, anyone who had not changed their PIN, their membership was marked so that when they came to use their card in the library they were asked to do it.

MR COE: How many people have not sought to update their PIN and, either knowingly or unknowingly, no longer have access to what they did before?

Ms Little: They will know that they do not have access because if they use their card they will receive a message. I will have to take that on notice about how many that is, but certainly a lot of people have changed. We have also commissioned our software supplier to rewrite some of the software to plug the hole, if you like.

MR COE: If you would take on notice the total number of users and the number of people who have updated their PIN and those who are still pending.

Ms Little: Yes.

MR COE: What proportion of the membership use online services?

Ms Little: Again, I would have to take that on notice because it is hard to know. People come onto the website and sometimes we do not know whether they have extended the item by phone. I can certainly take that on notice and see what data I can get for you.

MR COE: If it is too onerous and requires a lot of analysis do not worry about it, but a ballpark figure would be interesting.

Ms Little: I will see what I can put together for you.

MR COE: Certainly with regard to funding and resource allocation for the future as to what is electronic as opposed to physical.

Mr Rattenbury: I think it would be fair to say that an increasing number of members use online services, as is the trend in most other areas.

Ms Little: We are seeing a particular increase in the number of people requesting items online and then collecting them from the library. It seems as if Canberrans are busy people but they still want to read. About 20 per cent of our loans are people requesting something specific online and then picking it up.

MR COE: Minister, on a totally different note, how many times would a book be recycled before it gets discharged?

Ms Little: Before it is deleted from the system?

MR COE: Retired, yes.

Ms Little: That, of course, depends on what the title is. If it is a best seller and it is looking pretty horrible because it has been borrowed many times over, we delete it. We might hold that book for two or three years. Some classic material we keep a lot longer. It is usually not so much on the time of the loans but the time we have had it. We also get rid of material that is out of date. If we receive the latest version of Microsoft Windows, we will delete some of the old ones.

THE CHAIR: Any other questions for information services, which includes CanberraConnect?

MS PORTER: I have one on CanberraConnect. Budget paper 3, page 109, talks about a new service in Gungahlin. In a time when we are going to more online services as far as paying bills and getting information and using the telephone a lot et cetera, et cetera, how necessary is the establishment of a new CanberraConnect shopfront in Gungahlin, and what other services would be delivered from this outlet?

Mr Rattenbury: I think it is still essential for the government to have that physical presence. The unit cost, if you like to call it that, of an online transaction is much lower than somebody coming into CanberraConnect. CanberraConnect is working hard to provide those services for people, and we see a strong preference for that online interaction for basic bill paying and the like.

Where the shopfronts are important—and we will increasingly put emphasis on this—is with more complicated transactions that require some discussion or some level of in-depth conversation. If we can push more people to using the online services by making it attractive and easy, that means the physical shopfronts are targeted at those particular needs.

The Gungahlin shopfront will be cashless. We are changing the operating model, so that will reduce the operating cost of having the shopfront through not having cash on the premises, but there will still be cash options for people in the area if they still want to pay that way.

MS PORTER: I must say, I like dealing with human beings rather than remote.

Mr Rattenbury: There are some demographic preferences. Some of the older members of our community prefer that whereas younger members will just jump online and pay their bills very comfortably.

MS PORTER: Is there anything different about that shopfront to other shopfronts that already exist?

Mr Rattenbury: The key difference is that it will be a cashless model, which also changes the physical environment of the shopfront because it means we do not have to have the security measures one needs if there is cash on premises. As you will have noticed in places like Medicare or at Nature Conservation House where Housing ACT has a shopfront, you can have a more open style environment without the security arrangements. There is a greater informality to it and it is a more welcoming environment than if there is cash on premises.

MS PORTER: We do not have to have the screens and things like that, is that what you are saying?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, that is right.

MS PORTER: Do all the shopfronts currently offer the full suite services or are some restricted in the services they offer?

Mr Rattenbury: At the moment the Civic shopfront I think is the only one with limited services. That provides the basic drivers licence service.

MS PORTER: Given that it is in Civic, are there any plans to offer additional services, because people come to work and are in Civic.

Mr Rattenbury: There is some consideration. The government is currently reviewing a range of service provision in the city, and that is part of the equation.

THE CHAIR: All right. Ms Berry had a supplementary?

MS BERRY: We asked this question of Minister Barr—around whether or not people in libraries could be trained up, or extra staff put on or something, to provide support for people who come into the library who need to do government shopfront work on the internet but do not know how to do it. They might not have the skills or the knowledge to use a computer. These are older people. I am thinking about western Belconnen, because it is a growing area and there are lots of old people around that shopping centre but there is no shopfront. They could use the library's internet services if they knew how or if they had somebody there to support them.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, certainly. Again, that goes to the question by Ms Porter that I just answered. In terms of looking at the Civic model, there is some consideration of that style of operating and including the capacity for people to be able to electronically interact with Canberra Connect staff from government shopfronts. They are looking at new technological innovations to improve service delivery. Certainly with the libraries there is already a level of internet training for people. There are "how to use the internet" courses essentially provided through the libraries. I am sure

that, through that, people could be given explanations of how to use the Canberra Connect website and the like. I am sure that is part of the curriculum for those courses.

MS BERRY: Okay; I will check that out. And I have just one more question regarding the libraries. I have had some issues raised with me around people using the wi-fi access in the libraries but there not being sufficient power for people to be able to charge their devices, not enough power sockets.

Mr Rattenbury: Ms Little can answer that.

Ms Little: We are aware of that problem, and in any new work we are doing in the libraries we are building as much power in as possible. We are also aware that people are commenting on the strength of the wi-fi, and we are working with Shared Services ICT to improve that as well.

MS BERRY: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: We might leave information services there; there is much to get through today. We will move to roads and sustainable transport. Ms Berry, you have got the next new question.

MS BERRY: I have a couple of questions about some specific roads in Belconnen, but before I ask those I want to ask about the plans to meet the growing demands in west Belconnen—what sort of scoping studies are being done around the volumes of current and expected traffic, and what community consultation is occurring about existing problems.

Mr Rattenbury: I will start, and Mr Peters might add some detail if I forget some of them. There are two primary things in mind. One is that, as part of the proposed Riverview development, there is obviously a requirement for traffic studies to be done. TAMS is participating in the working groups around the development of Riverview and other proposals in that area. The second thing is—you may have seen it recently, Ms Berry—moves to improve the bus movements along Southern Cross Drive.

MS BERRY: Yes.

Mr Rattenbury: That was about both improving the stops on Southern Cross Drive itself and also ensuring adequate priority for the buses down Southern Cross Drive to get good access to west Belconnen. There have certainly been some issues with bus services into west Macgregor. You have written to me about that, and that is something I am still looking for some answers on. I am not satisfied with where we have got to on that yet, which is why I think I have not written back in response to your latest letter on that.

MS BERRY: That is okay.

Mr Rattenbury: Anything else, Paul?

Mr Peters: The overall strategy for planning for transport demand in Canberra is outlined in *Transport for Canberra*. That document basically outlines the future

development of the road and public transport network. That document is available online. It outlines investment across public transport, roads and active transport—walking and cycling—to try and meet travel demand in the future. The immediate things are the introduction of the NXTBUS network, which looks to improve bus services across that area. And you would be aware that we have recently done improvements on Barry Drive and College Street to improve both traffic and bus flow through that area, introducing park and ride in that part of the world, which is one of the main traffic routes from Belconnen into Civic. But the overall strategy is in *Transport for Canberra*, and the specifics come up in the budget each year.

MS BERRY: On the park and ride, I think there was a park and ride announced for Kippax. Where is that up to?

Mr Peters: I might need to take that one on notice.

MS BERRY: Okay. There are a couple of local traffic issues that I want to raise as well. There is the intersection between Kuringa Drive and Owen Dixon Drive, and the intersection at Kingsford Smith Drive and—and I have forgotten their names—the streets into Higgins and out of Scullin. There have been a couple of quite severe accidents along there in the last couple of months, on Kingsford Smith Drive, and I am often getting people talking to me about the problems and experiencing them myself.

THE CHAIR: I think it is Wirraway Crescent in Higgins or into Scullin.

MS BERRY: There are a couple. Anyway, if you look at it, you will see what the issue is with those intersections. The increased traffic means that the traffic from the lights is banked up and people are trying to get across. There are big accidents, and it is not good. I just wanted to ask if you were aware of those two intersections that I have noticed have been quite troublesome, with quite severe accidents. It has been brought to my attention by people who live in those communities.

Mr Peters: I guess we can outline the generic process that we use for assessing intersections, which is basically to look at their crash rates—once they are raised with us, go out on site, look at the issues at peak or whenever the problems particularly occur, and then come back and do an assessment on those.

Mr Cloos: As Paul mentioned, we have a warrant system in our traffic management safety area that makes an assessment of the speed, volume and land use adjacent to a particular roadway, as well as the accidents. We use that warrant system to rank and prioritise—

MS BERRY: With accidents, do you work with ACT Policing on knowing when the accidents occur? Do they feed that information to you?

Mr Cloos: ACT Policing provides that information to us. We extract some of that information that the ACT police provide to us and use that in our database through determining the type of severity of the accident, whether it is injury or property, and whether or not there was death. These statistics are then used in our warrant system to identify and prioritise the intersections through our total Canberra network. Those

intersections are then brought forward through programs that are federally funded, like the black spot program, or our own capital works program projects.

MS BERRY: Have those intersections that I have mentioned to you been brought to your attention? Do you know?

Mr Peters: We will have to take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe had a supplementary and then Mrs Jones.

MR COE: With regard to the *Transport for Canberra* document that you referred to, I was wondering when that was going to be updated and where it sits in the hierarchy, especially given all the documents that capital metro is working on.

Mr Rattenbury: ESDD has the lead on the *Transport for Canberra* policy; TAMS is the implementer on that. Minister Corbell would be taking a decision on that.

MR COE: But as the agency that in effect implements the vast majority of that document, to what extent are you working off *Transport for Canberra*, which I think was released in 2012, with a draft in 2011, which was in effect what the final version was?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MR COE: To what extent is that document still current, especially given the extensive work that has been done on the master plan, which is really looking at all the public transport corridors in Canberra?

Mr Peters: Obviously the introduction of capital metro could be incorporated into that document, but the overall strategy around what the mature road network was going to look like for Canberra in 2031, for instance, has not really changed much. With that road network, we will still need to basically look at that. And the program of improvements that are outlined in there to get us to that point is still very relevant. In terms of the frequent public transport network that is identified in that document, that is still very relevant as well. I think the overall strategy is still very relevant and does essentially drive our program development every year.

MR COE: All the work that capital metro are doing with regard to the projections spruik the many benefits of light rail—the cars it is going to take off the road, the lack of congestion et cetera. I am just wondering how that information gets fed into TAMS—as to how you go about your general operations and decision-making.

Mr Rattenbury: I think you are right to identify that this will need to be a live and ongoing process.

MR COE: Are there plans that you are aware of to update the *Transport for Canberra* document?

Mr Rattenbury: At the moment, capital metro, as you know, is undertaking a study on the network for capital metro. Once that work is done, the government will need to

look at how we respond to that.

MR COE: With regard to those studies, what information is TAMS providing?

Mr Peters: We liaise very closely with capital metro. For instance, one of the key traffic signal people is working in that office giving them advice around traffic signals—how they work and how they need to be programmed in future. I sit on one of the working groups, as do some of my staff, so we are very aware of the planning and of potential issues with integration with what we might have planned. Where we identify integration issues, we take account of those and wait until we have got the final planning for that so that we can make sure that we do not cross over each other moving forward.

THE CHAIR: Mrs Jones has a supp.

MRS JONES: I want to ask: we were talking about the latest update on the intersection of Hinder and Hibberson streets and what has been done there. I understand there has been a bit of action since the last time we spoke officially about it. Also I have had a letter back from you, minister, that there are some assessments going on or some thought going on about Gundaroo and Horse Park drives. Gundaroo Drive, in particular, has for over a decade been gridlocked for the best part of half of the day. People are very frustrated with that road. Is there any more hope for Gungahlin residents than “we are thinking about it”?

Mr Rattenbury: In your comments about Gundaroo Drive, do you mean the whole of Gundaroo Drive or do you mean specifically that intersection?

MRS JONES: No, I mean the section between the bottom of the lake and the club, between Gungahlin Drive and the second roundabout, Mirrabei Drive.

Mr Rattenbury: In terms of Gundaroo Drive, the primary focus in that broad area—for the moment I will start broadly and we will come to the specifics—is to upgrade the intersection of William Slim Drive, Gundaroo Drive and the Barton Highway. That is the number one intersection in the ACT at the moment with traffic lights that has problems, both in terms of the number of accidents and also in the congestion issues that it raises.

Roads has done a number of things. There has been a design study for the duplication of Gundaroo Drive, knowing that will need to ultimately be done. But in the first instance dealing with that intersection has been identified as the priority. If we were to duplicate Gundaroo Drive and then just dump all that traffic into an inadequate intersection, the problem would not be solved. That is the bigger picture answer.

MRS JONES: But I guess people would expect that there is a timeline for fixing Gundaroo Drive in that two-block section, because it is a massive problem, and not just, “We are going to fix the intersection and then we will think about Gundaroo Drive.” It is a very big problem. Also coming out of that intersection, where you have two lanes merging into one as you drive north, that is really dangerous. The road cannot handle two lanes. Presumably duplicating that road will be a part of solving your intersection problem?

Mr Rattenbury: The design work for Gundaroo Drive has been done and now the work is underway on the William Slim Drive intersection. Progress is being made.

MRS JONES: Do you hope to have that done by the next election?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not think in those sorts of benchmark timelines.

MRS JONES: I understand that but I am trying to be realistic here. I am not saying are you going to have it done tomorrow. I am trying to put some—

Mr Rattenbury: Its design will go forward in future budget considerations.

MRS JONES: If you need any help lobbying for money let me know.

THE CHAIR: The outbreak of bipartisanship is fantastic.

MRS JONES: It is really important.

Mr Peters: We have done the investigation on Hinder and Hibberson streets and ultimately we would like to see that intersection signalised down the track, which will probably address most of the issues. In the interim we have got the stop sign.

MRS JONES: The issue in particular is people being unable to see traffic that is coming up the main road, up Hibberson Street, because they cannot see through cars.

Mr Peters: In the interim there are some immediate works. The line working and signage for the road network is to identify the priority and make it easier for the residents to understand who has priority at that intersection. The longer term will be, with the introduction of the light rail, signalisation at that intersection.

MRS JONES: We are looking at?

Mr Rattenbury: A couple of years.

MRS JONES: Can mirrors be put on the corners so that we can see what is coming up and down Hibberson Street?

Mr Cloos: No. Mirrors are not preferred by any road authority in Australia because they give you a false sense of size.

MRS JONES: The trouble at the moment is that there is no sense of anything because you cannot see through parked cars. When you are approaching from Hibberson Street you cannot see.

MS PORTER: No parking perhaps along there.

MRS JONES: That is a terrible option because there is so little parking on Hibberson Street as it is.

THE CHAIR: A supplementary on roads from Ms Porter and then Ms Berry has a final question.

MS PORTER: Minister, are there any plans in the future to do something about the entrance and exit into and out of Crace? Numbers of people are saying that there is only one way in and out of Crace. That is my first question. My next is just a comment about when road works are being undertaken. Could there be a large sign on the road which tells you what is happening rather than just “road works”? That may be distracting to drivers who want to read it. If there is a notice going to be delivered to residents along that route it would be very handy for people who use that road all the time.

I am thinking of Belconnen Way at the moment with those road works that are happening there near Springvale Drive and up to Coulter Drive. There is a big sign but it does not tell you what is happening. You would need to have very good eyesight to read it in any case. My husband assures me he has read it numbers of times. It does not tell you what is happening. About a fortnight after the work started, residents along Belconnen Way got a letter in their mail to tell them what was happening. It was a fortnight after and they got a bit frustrated about the fact that something was happening. If we could just get that communication going a little earlier, it would be really good. That is just a request. If you could go back to Crace?

Mr Peters: I can declare that I live in Crace and I am pretty well aware of it. I guess the works that the minister referred to earlier at the Barton Highway roundabout will essentially duplicate that section of Gundaroo Drive from the roundabout back to the other roundabout so that you can equalise the traffic queues at that roundabout. If you see what happens there in the morning, you have a whole heap of traffic coming inbound from the Hall direction and then the traffic coming from Gungahlin through to Belconnen essentially does not get much of a go because that traffic is continuously streaming through. Traffic lights will stop that traffic and give Gundaroo Drive more of a go. Plus two lanes on the approach to that set of signals should balance that out. That should really address that issue on Gundaroo Drive.

The other planning is basically the link out the back. I cannot think of the name, off the top of my head. It starts with N.

Mr Cloos: Nudurr.

Mr Peters: Nudurr Drive, which we are thinking about extending through at a future time.

MS PORTER: There will be another entrance or exit?

Mr Peters: There is an exit out the top onto Nudurr Drive at the moment but that featured—

MS PORTER: It is on Nudurr Drive?

Mr Peters: Yes, but that featured back to Gundaroo Road essentially.

MS BERRY: I think the problem with that entrance into Crace from that roundabout is that little driveway coming out from the doctors. You cannot see people that fly in from the roundabout. There are bushes and things there. It is a really narrow little road. You just cannot see. That is the issue that has been drawn to my attention anyway.

Mr Peters: We can certainly take that on notice and I can have a look at it on the way home.

THE CHAIR: The final part to Ms Berry's question and then a substantive question from Mrs Jones.

MS BERRY: I want to ask a question about everybody's favourite, car parking. There are two things I want to ask about parking. In a submission from the Property Council they suggested that the government could put the price of public parking up to force people onto public transport and to artificially create a market for high-rise parking. Obviously this is fairly controversial. I was wondering what your thoughts were on that. I know Mrs Jones just mentioned parking in Gungahlin and the same sorts of issues that people in the town centre in Belconnen are experiencing. I want to know what the government is doing to balance the need of residents and visitors and access to parking around their homes with their need also to provide sufficient parking for the town centre.

Mr Rattenbury: Where was that quote from?

MS BERRY: Which work?

Mr Rattenbury: You said there was a report of such and such.

MS BERRY: I am sorry, it was a submission from the Property Council to estimates.

Mr Rattenbury: I think the issue of parking is one that requires, obviously, careful consideration. Certainly Canberra's parking prices are far cheaper than those in other cities, both capital cities around the country and I think even some of the regional cities. Parking continues to be pretty cheap in this city. There is certainly a question there: does it provide an appropriate set of incentives? The Property Council have said to me in the past that government needs to lift its parking rates in order to make it viable for private operators to come into the space. At the moment government parking is too cheap for it to be a viable economic model for somebody to provide private parking. I think that is an interesting position that has been put on the table.

MS BERRY: Yes, but it is not surprising though.

Mr Rattenbury: They are making the case that if you want more parking provided there is an economic cost. To make that stack up for somebody to build a car park, at the moment the economic incentives are not there to provide more parking. This goes more to Minister Corbell's area but I am certainly aware that ESDD does parking surveys. They generally show, for most of the town centres, that there are still vacancy rates at times throughout the day in a range of parking options. That points to the fact that at the moment we are probably not short of parking.

That said, there are always specific areas where issues arise. Certainly Roads ACT gets representations at various times from either members or constituents and there is always that process of going out, having a look and making an assessment if we are going to make a change to parking arrangements. Particularly in residential areas there will be consultation with the residents and sometimes proposals to make changes get abandoned because residents come back and say, "We do not want that." That is often around restrictions. I guess it is an ongoing piece of work in that broad sense.

THE CHAIR: A new question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: If we can just go to BP3, page 145, the Civic-to-Gungahlin corridor improvements. In the third table there, page 145, there is \$8 million in the coming financial year and \$12 million in the following year. Can you explain what specific projects the money will be for? I think we all understand the intent, but how will that be rolled out?

Mr Rattenbury: Certainly. Those works are intended to be complementary to capital metro, but they are also improvements in their own right.

MRS JONES: Will the lights be synced on Northbourne Avenue in the meantime?

Mr Rattenbury: That is another whole conversation which I am happy to go to, if you like. We could spend hours on the syncing of the lights on Northbourne Avenue.

MRS JONES: I just find it amazing, having grown up in the grand country town of Hobart, where we have synced all the lights through the city, that Northbourne Avenue still has not been synced, but anyway.

Mr Rattenbury: Do you want us to go to Northbourne syncing quickly?

MRS JONES: Yes, if you can do it very quickly.

Mr Peters: Very quickly: essentially, the flows on Northbourne Avenue in the peak basically almost balance both ways. You get traffic coming in and traffic coming out down the city end. You can only coordinate the lights one way. We are trying to coordinate them—for instance, inbound to Civic in the morning, which means that the outbound traffic may not necessarily be synchronised.

MRS JONES: Yes, but travelling at the speed limit you never get from one end of Northbourne Avenue to the other without having to stop. That means they are not actually synced in either direction; they are actually not.

Mr Peters: I think you will find that they will be synced as well. A lot of them will be synced.

MR COE: Yes, the last four.

Mr Peters: Yes.

MRS JONES: They are not synced.

Mr Peters: It really is very difficult. The ideal spacing would be about 600 metres between traffic lights down that bottom end, but they are much closer than that. We can never actually get it so that it works exactly as you would like it.

MRS JONES: Maybe you need to get someone from Hobart town to come and tell you about it, but anyway. If we go to the projects that are specifically funded?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes. As I was saying, they are designed to be complementary to capital metro. Also, some of them will be improvements in their own right. Basically, the projects are likely to include road works on Flemington Road, priority peripheral works, shared cycle and pedestrian paths, modifications to utility services and intersection works that will allow the management of traffic and transport during construction, as well as support the operation of light rail overall.

MRS JONES: Shared cycling and pedestrian paths; off-road cycling as—

Mr Rattenbury: It has not been designed yet, but certainly that is what I would like to see.

MRS JONES: I saw some great examples in Stockholm of off-road shared cycling.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MRS JONES: You do have to be careful where you are walking. It is a bit of a culture shift, but it can work.

Mr Rattenbury: It is, and we have seen that with the city cycle loop. In the very early days of that there was some uncertainty. We are now seeing people getting used to it.

MRS JONES: Put a bell on your bike.

Mr Rattenbury: I would support that, yes.

MRS JONES: Which intersection works and alignment preparation will the money fund?

Mr Rattenbury: That has not been decided yet. The works will be finalised in partnership between the capital metro team and the TAMS team.

MRS JONES: Given that you have got an exact dollar figure here and it is increasing, how come you have not made the decisions yet?

Mr Rattenbury: Because those design works are still underway.

MRS JONES: Will the \$8 million be spent then in that year?

Mr Rattenbury: We believe so.

MRS JONES: I hope so. What works will be completed this coming financial year?

Mr Rattenbury: I am not in a position to answer that at this point in time.

MRS JONES: No idea? Okay.

MR COE: It is just a broad envelope, is it? Is it just a bucket of money that you will spend, or is it actually linked to specific outcomes?

Mr Rattenbury: No. I have outlined the projects that are intended. I listed them before.

THE CHAIR: But there is a rule. The committee has got to make a recommendation on this line and there is this wish list of things that may or may not happen inside an \$8 million envelope. You must have some certainty as to which projects will be carried out, surely.

Mr Rattenbury: I indicated the projects that are being signed and worked on at the moment, and it is being done in partnership with capital metro.

MRS JONES: So it is a little bit grey about when it will be delivered and how, who will do it and when it will be contracted and all that sort of thing. I would have thought we would have a forward plan of works that are being rolled out in this zone, but there just is not.

Mr Rattenbury: As I said, they are being developed. I will be able to provide, perhaps in annual reports—

THE CHAIR: But if they are being developed, how do you know it is \$8 million this year, the coming year, and \$12 million the following year?

MRS JONES: It is just a good guess, Brendan.

Mr Rattenbury: The details will be decided through the governance process between TAMS and the capital metro board. There is a very clear line of governance there to ensure rigour in the spending of the capital.

THE CHAIR: So capital metro will determine what projects TAMS will carry out; is that what you are saying?

Mr Rattenbury: No, I am saying it is a partnership. There is a range of works that TAMS wants to do in this corridor anyway. As I said, the improvements stand in their own right, but they must obviously also in that corridor be complementary to capital metro. We do not want to be doing some works now and then either ripping them up or duplicating them or re-doing them in two or three years time. That is where capital metro will play a part in the allocation and design of the works.

MRS JONES: If you get to a point where you are wringing your hands because you are sitting down with capital metro and they are saying, “But, but, we’re not sure, maybe, when, how, why,” will you go ahead with some of these works and just get them done in that period? Who is the final arbiter and who will be deciding?

Mr Peters: As the minister said, we expect that we will be finalising that package of works towards the end of this year.

MRS JONES: This calendar year?

Mr Peters: This calendar year. We would undertake the works in TAMS, the delivery area, and Roads ACT would undertake those works. As the minister said, those works are essentially works that make sense anyway—some improvements on Flemington Road, for instance, and perhaps even the intersection of Hibberson Street. We might look at things like that, which are obviously a part of the future picture, and look to put those together in a sensible—

MRS JONES: Who will make the ultimate decision about timing, if there is a slowness in the decision making at capital metro, for example?

Mr Rattenbury: The money is allocated to TAMS, so TAMS has—

MRS JONES: Yes, so you will decide.

Mr Rattenbury: TAMS has the expenditure of those funds but, as I have indicated, it will be done in close partnership with capital metro.

THE CHAIR: A supplementary?

MR COE: Is this in the \$614 million-plus CPI cost of capital metro? Is it included or is it separate?

Mr Rattenbury: The government has not made any final announcements about the cost of the project.

MR COE: The Chief Minister said it would not go over \$614 million, plus CPI.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, she did.

MR COE: Is this \$20 million on the way to that or not?

Mr Peters: This is a separate allocation in this year's—

MR COE: So it is in addition to that?

Mr Peters: Yes, it is a new allocation in this year's program.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe, a new question on output class 1.2.

MR COE: With regard to the William Slim-Barton Highway upgrade—you have already mentioned it—is it going to be a signalised roundabout or are you going to level the centre of the roundabout and create an at-grade intersection?

Mr Peters: No, the example comes from England.

MR COE: A signalised roundabout?

Mr Peters: A signalised roundabout, so basically the approaches. The William Slim and Barton Highway approaches would be signalised and Gundaroo Drive would be signalised, so essentially four sets of signals.

MR COE: If it is, in effect, just signalisation, why is it \$10 million? I can understand if you were levelling the central hill in the middle of the roundabout, but \$10 million is a huge amount just for signals.

Mr Cloos: It is not purely signalisation. At the approaches to each of the roundabout there are three lanes. One is going to be a bus priority lane to allow buses to jump through and have priority.

MR COE: This is north-south?

Mr Cloos: It is east-west, so it is the Gungahlin to Belconnen routes. As well as that, three traffic lanes will be circulating the roundabouts, so an additional lane will be provided. The bus lane located on the kerbside lanes set back from the traffic signals will be on the William Slim-Gundaroo approaches. We have got also provision for on-road cycling lanes for all the movements with the exception of the Barton Highway southbound approach.

We have to construct a new shared path bridge adjacent to the existing bridge to connect to the existing systems, connect to the paths and allow traffic and off-road cyclists through that intersection area. We are converting the existing bridge from two to three lanes, so the existing bridge over Ginninderra Creek has to be upgraded. That is the most costly part of the approach.

MR COE: Two to three lanes in both directions?

Mr Cloos: Yes.

MR COE: If I am not mistaken, I think there is a separate allocation for bridge strengthening, is that correct?

Mr Cloos: There is bridge strengthening along Barton Highway but not that particular bridge; it is other bridges along the Barton Highway. As part of the national heavy vehicle route system we have to upgrade all our bridge network on heavy vehicle routes to SM1600 loading, which is a loading provided by Austroads and the federal government for heavy vehicles. Our bridges in the ACT are classified as including culverts. Where you have a span of greater than 1.8 metres, they are classified as bridges that come under our strengthening program.

MR COE: Where is the other bridge culvert or box culvert or whatever other type of culvert on the Barton Highway in the ACT?

Mr Cloos: There are a number of culverts underneath the Barton Highway.

MR COE: Near Ellenborough?

Mr Cloos: There is stormwater going across Gungaherra Creek, which goes towards Kaleen, so those culverts.

MR COE: They are more than a metre and a half?

Mr Cloos: Yes.

MRS JONES: How many lights will this entail? How many sets of three lights are going to be put up?

Mr Peters: Four; one on each approach.

MR COE: With regard to the management of traffic during the construction, what plans are in place?

Mr Cloos: It will be up to the contractor to make sure he can accommodate safe traffic flows during peak periods. That would be one of the things we will assess.

MR COE: Going to what Ms Berry said earlier, I would imagine this will put a lot of pressure on Kuringa as people going down Clarrie Hermes or going through Curran opt to go through Belconnen either on Kuringa and Owen Dixon or Kuringa and Kingsford Smith. Has any traffic modelling been done to gauge what the impact will be?

Mr Cloos: As part of any traditional capital works and road works we look at the traffic management. Traffic management plans are put together by the consultants to provide an indication and guide to contractors as to how they should manage traffic flow through their work sites. There will be consultation. We will be using variable message boards and signs to assist the public to navigate their way through these intersections during the construction works. Yes, there will be some minor issues regarding congestion at those locations, and we would encourage the community to travel through these sections at 40 kilometres an hour.

MR COE: Temporary traffic management plans are not usually made public. For this one, if it could be published for consultation I think that would be very useful.

Mr Rattenbury: I will take that on board, Mr Coe, but I am not sure if publishing temporary traffic management plans is the answer. If you take a look at Majura parkway where there are regular ads now in the newspaper, the key issue is providing the travelling public with information. I am not sure they need a temporary traffic management plan; they need clear information. I certainly undertake that we will be doing that.

MR COE: With something as major as this where the economic impact of delays and the potential cost to contractors is potentially very high, you could potentially benefit a great deal from people being able to peruse what is proposed in terms of traffic management beforehand so the government could get some input. It might simply help with the PR side of things as well.

Mr Peters: Just to set the committee's mind at rest, in our contract documents we specify that a certain level of service must be maintained by the contractor for traffic flow. At the end of the day, RoadsACT approve the contractor's traffic management, so he has to prove he can meet that level of service. As the minister said, that is the approach that was used on the Majura parkway where the contractor has to guarantee a certain number of lanes are open at critical times and that the traffic never gets worse than a certain level of service, which is a technical term.

We find the most effective ways of doing this stuff is using VMS to give advance notice to people who travel on the road every day so they know what is coming up and are aware of changes. We publish that information in other ways. But any ways that we can get better information out to the public that minimises the impact of road works on them we are always happy to look at.

MR COE: Given the traffic will be pretty chaotic for a year or so with bridge works and additional lanes and roundabouts et cetera, the more involvement you get from residents the smoother it will be.

MS BERRY: When is that going to start?

Mr Cloos: The work is planned for the 2014-15 financial year, so we will be commencing works then.

MS BERRY: By the end of the year it will start?

Mr Peters: Probably early next year, something like that.

THE CHAIR: Output class 1.2, Mr Doszpot, a question?

MR DOSZPOT: Not on roads.

THE CHAIR: Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: Minister, I would like an update on the progress of the proposed car park for the median strip in Nellie Hamilton Avenue in Gungahlin please.

Mr Rattenbury: That was not funded in this year's budget, Dr Bourke.

DR BOURKE: When will it be funded?

Mr Rattenbury: It will go forward as a bid in future budgets. That is the best answer I can give you.

DR BOURKE: You have already done the consultation work?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, and the design work.

DR BOURKE: What is the overall cost of that car park?

Mr Rattenbury: I will have to take that on notice.

DR BOURKE: What sort of design is there for the car park? Do you have some scheme that can be seen?

Mr Rattenbury: Just bear with us and we will bring forward the appropriate staff member.

Mr McHugh: Design is complete and it has been presented to members of the community. There has been general acceptance of the design. We will pursue funding in the future budget. It is indented parking into the median, angle parking to maximise the number of spaces.

MRS JONES: Ninety degree angle?

Mr McHugh: It is a 45-degree angle.

DR BOURKE: So are those drawings on your website?

Mr McHugh: They are not currently available on the website, but we can make them available.

Mr Rattenbury: We will provide them to the committee and have them put on the website as well.

DR BOURKE: I have also had complaints about speed humps around the Belconnen centre. The Belconnen Community Council was particularly asking the other night why those nasty rubber ones are in there when they could be having those nice ones that they have already got down on Emu Bank, which could incorporate a pedestrian crossing.

Mr COE: The raised crossings?

MRS JONES: The raised crossings, yes.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, I think the answer to that is that there is a range of treatments that are available. Obviously those ones went into support the 40 kilometres-an-hour speed limits in the town centre. The rationale for having those sorts of devices is that they provide a 24-hour enforcement, if you like, in a way in which police presence cannot. That is the question that I often get asked: "Why don't you just get the police to come down more often?" The reality is that you obviously cannot have that all of the time.

In terms of the style of the traffic calming device, it is a matter of both engineering consideration and also cost. Those larger raised speed humps come in at \$100,000 as a ballpark figure whereas the sets of rubber speed humps are in the order of \$15,000. So it is a weigh up of cost and how much can be rolled out for an available budget.

DR BOURKE: Was there any evidence that these measures were necessary when the 40 kilometre zones were declared?

Mr Cloos: There would have been a traffic management study. As a result of the trial, and something to quickly reinforce that the trial of the 40 kilometre an hour is in place in Belconnen, they would have put the rubber speed cushions in to try and reduce the speed visually as well because not every time would a motorist take notice of a speed regulation sign.

DR BOURKE: So what you are saying is that when the signs were put up, an assessment was done of the speeds that people were doing in—

Mr Cloos: Prior to the works. Prior to the works there is an assessment done.

DR BOURKE: When the zones are declared and then the speeds are assessed after the zones were declared. You thought people were going too fast; is that correct?

Mr Cloos: Prior to an assessment of the location of these cushions, there are speed and volume measurements taken. When they looked at the 85th percentile, it was above the speed that you would expect and above the speed that we were trying to implement, the 40 kilometres an hour. The speed cushions would have been put in as part of that treatment to try and reduce further the speed that we are trying to encourage the motorists to follow.

DR BOURKE: What you are saying is that people were not actually complying with the signs and something else was actually necessary?

Mr Cloos: The signs were not in place at that time. It was trying to reinforce the speed, because at that time there would have been 50 or 60 as the normal speed through that environment. To try and bring that speed environment down further, we would have put the regulatory signage up, as well as the speed cushions, to reduce that 85th percentile speed.

DR BOURKE: But do I understand that you did not check the speed after the signs went in before you put the speed humps in?

Mr Rattenbury: No, they were done as part of a single package.

DR BOURKE: If you do it as part of a single package, how do you know whether people are going to comply with the signs without the need for the speed humps to tell them to do something?

Mr Rattenbury: Based on previous experience; I might give a free lecture on speed humps at this point. I know they are contentious—

THE CHAIR: A brief free lecture.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, it will be. I know they are contentious in the community. I get a lot of letters in both directions. We all see letters in the newspaper about speed humps. I also know that every member sitting around this table has written to me asking for traffic calming in some part of Canberra in the last 12 months. I think we are all caught in a difficult place where we need to both provide safety to our community but

also minimise the inconvenience. That is the balance that Roads is constantly trying to draw. And it was brief, Mr Smyth.

Mr COE: On those sets that Dr Bourke is talking about in Belconnen, on Cohen Street, you have got, I think, a very dangerous intersection with the bus station at Westfield. Then you have got, in fact, a single directional intersection there. Then you have got two sets of speed humps leading up to a stop sign. I raised this in the vulnerable road users inquiry. Mr Gill said that something was going to happen with those. I was wondering where that is all up to because that set in particular, I think, really adds to the danger of that stop sign and that bus station.

Mr McHugh: We did complete an investigation into that particular intersection. We have been provided with a range of improvement options. We are working with ACTION at the moment to determine which is the most safe option given that they are the predominant user and currently have priority through that intersection and given that any changes would have an impact on ACTION's operation and services. So we are working with ACTION to improve the safety of that intersection.

Mr COE: In the meantime, I think it is just so dangerous. If it has not happened already, the chances of a car being T-boned by a bus there after negotiating two speed humps, a stop sign and fences either side—it would be amazing if it has not happened already. I urge you to resolve that as quickly as possible.

DR BOURKE: Minister, just going back to your previous answer, you mentioned past experience. What was that past experience?

Mr Rattenbury: What I was referring to there, of course, is that Roads has put the 40 kilometre speed limits in other town centres. Then I also was referring to general road engineering knowledge and expertise of other jurisdictions, studies—those sorts of things.

DR BOURKE: Do speed humps assist compliance with 40 kilometre signs in other town centres?

Mr Peters: I guess the experience from elsewhere is that signs do not necessarily achieve a change in behaviour. Usually speed limit reductions down to the sort of levels that are safe for vulnerable users—the 30 to 40 kilometre-type level—requires some sort of physical enforcement, assuming that you cannot have police out there all the time enforcing the speed limit.

Where we did these treatments in the centres and looked at those results, we did get reductions of between one and 20 kilometres per hour in those centres, which are significant reductions but do improve safety for the travelling public and the people that use our transport system. On that basis, yes, we are looking to roll that 40 kilometre centres strategy out to other centres in the territory.

DR BOURKE: Yes, I am not disputing the value of the 40 kilometre zones. What I am inquiring—

THE CHAIR: We are going to have to move on. Could this be the last

comment/question? We are not here for a debate.

DR BOURKE: What I am trying to hone in on here is: what is the evidence that people do not comply with 40 kilometre signs in Canberra that necessitates the provision of speed humps to further reinforce that speed limit?

MR COE: In which case why are they not in every school zone?

Mr Peters: The evidence is garnered by speed surveys. We actually do physical surveys.

THE CHAIR: Mr Peters, perhaps you could take that on notice and give us a summary of the speed surveys that indicate that you are right and that perhaps somebody else is not, or vice versa. Mr Doszpot had a supplementary to this area but he had better be quick because we need to move on to waste management.

MR DOSZPOT: I note that the minister and I have spoken quite a few times in the Assembly about footpaths and the damage caused to footpaths in the older suburbs. There is the ageing process. That is natural. They are older suburbs; so infrastructure does need to be updated. But there is an additional problem there in that there is a lot of development going on. Trucks are going over the kerbs and breaking the kerbs. There is a lot of damage in three suburbs in particular: Deakin, Hughes and Yarralumla. Has any attention been drawn by anyone to the fact that this is happening? Is there any follow up on the people who cause the damage or has it become your responsibility to fix that?

Mr Rattenbury: In terms of those three suburbs you mentioned, as I have written to you this year, Mr Doszpot, certainly Deakin this year has been fully assessed for the state of its footpaths. I think I have written to you before that all suburbs are on a rolling program to have their footpaths assessed so that there is a constant ongoing maintenance program. In terms of damage caused by contractors on a development site, they would be expected to make good the footpaths if there is damage.

MR DOSZPOT: Does anyone check that? Is there any follow up to the damage that is caused?

Mr Cloos: If it has been reported through Canberra Connect, through fix my street or directly through the minister's office, we would undertake to send an officer out there to inspect and assess the damage. If it can be determined that the damage is not just normal wear and tear and it has been caused by any builder or constructor in the street, we would take that to the building controller to assist us to approach the builder to make good. Otherwise, if it is assessed as normal wear and tear, it is placed on our maintenance program to be repaired or replaced.

MR DOSZPOT: But I have got no evidence that it is caused by the builders. The projects are underway but there is certainly damage on a consistent level to the kerbs themselves. It is not just the footpaths but the kerbs are damaged. We will send you the details.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, send me the details. We will get that specifically checked.

MR DOSZPOT: We have, I think. Anyway, it is something that needs to—

THE CHAIR: The minister has agreed to take it on notice and check. We will cut that off there. Ms Berry has a very quick supplementary.

MS BERRY: How can the government involve more people in the community to provide feedback on where there are problems like cracks to footpaths?

Mr Rattenbury: I think there is a range of mechanisms. We have, of course, Canberra Connect. There is both the phone version—I am trying to get that number more widely known—and also now we have the fix my street online application. That is now available for mobile devices as well, which is a particularly attractive option because people can actually take a photo with their phone on the spot which also records GPS coordinates. That makes it easier for TAMS to go and find the spot, whether it is a fallen tree, a cracked footpath, a pothole or whatever. Many members also approach me with things. They all get followed up by TAMS as well.

MS BERRY: Do you keep figures on how many people report on fix my street? How many people have been into it?

Mr Rattenbury: We do. I just do not have them to hand.

MS BERRY: No, that is okay. Take it on notice.

THE CHAIR: Just to close this area, let me clarify something. In the Civic to Gungahlin corridor, all of the \$20 million which is to be appropriated if the budget passes is for works that TAMS need to do for their responsibilities?

Mr Peters: They are TAMS assets at the end of the day, so the—

THE CHAIR: Yes, but if capital metro did not go ahead, this is all work that TAMS would have to do to maintain those assets and improve traffic flows, for instance, or Civic amenity.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes. As I have indicated, the works are projects that stand in their own right.

THE CHAIR: The last line on the reference—

Mr Rattenbury: Just on that—Mr Coe before started to draw a conclusion that somehow this was therefore \$20 million that would go on the top of the cost of capital metro. I am not sure that that is a fair assumption to be drawn. I think that if these works are being done, as I have said, they are TAMS projects in their own right. If they then are things that capital metro does not have to do, that may well reduce the cost of capital metro down the line. These works are still being done; I do not think the assumption that it is \$20 million on top of some other figure is an accurate approach.

THE CHAIR: But from Mr Peters it is all work TAMS would do for their assets

irrespective of capital metro.

Mr Peters: We will work the projects up with capital metro. There will be a range of projects—say, for instance, intersection treatments along the corridor, which will be needed for the future anyway on places like Flemington Road, Well Station Drive or Hibberson Street. Those intersection improvements will be needed in future. They would be the types of things that we would be looking at. And whilst we deliver those, that would also facilitate easier construction.

THE CHAIR: The last three or four words in the reference on page 145 says “as well as alignment preparation”. What alignment preparation is envisaged, and what are you aligning?

Mr Peters: Again, the exact package of works will be finalised later this year, but that could be things like a footpath. We would look at services at various locations along the corridor which essentially facilitate easier construction of capital metro.

THE CHAIR: So they are not just for TAMS initiatives? That is preparatory work for capital metro—alignment preparation?

Mr Peters: It is not so much that they are preparatory works; they facilitate easier construction. If we move services around at a particular intersection, that would make it easier for a contractor to come around down the track, but we would probably need to move those services anyway to improve the intersection.

THE CHAIR: Anyway? You would do them anyway? Or you will do them because of capital metro?

Mr Peters: If we are looking at a particular intersection to upgrade, then most of the time we do need to move services around, because we are changing the road boundaries.

MR COE: Looking at that, you mentioned the Flemington Road intersection—I imagine Flemington Road with Northbourne or it might even be Federal Highway at that point. I imagine that intersection has to be widened for light rail, and you have a fall away on the southern side going towards the Kamberra wine centre there. You have got a big fall away, so you are looking at probably some form of bridge work there or a culvert of some sort to get the tram around. If you are doing work there before you are laying tracks, isn't that potentially just redundant?

Mr Rattenbury: The suggestions you have just made are speculative, but it goes to the very point which I guess is the essence of this whole discussion—that works will be done that will make improvements, and the intent is to make sure they are compatible with light rail so that money is not being wasted. We do not want to be doing things that are not compatible with the introduction of light rail.

MR COE: Given that it is highly likely that significant services will have to be relocated down the median at Northbourne, how will you be able to undertake these works?

Mr Rattenbury: I thought the model was that we were doing it on either edge, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Sorry?

Mr Rattenbury: I thought the model was either edge. That is the modelling that you did.

MR COE: Who knows? They have not told us the alignment. That is the problem.

Mr Rattenbury: It is going to public consultation.

MR COE: Public consultation? All right. You have got this bucket of money for intersection works, and now you are saying you have not got an alignment for light rail.

Mr Rattenbury: No. Actually—

THE CHAIR: We are going to have to wrap this up.

Mr Rattenbury: The bottom line is that you are going to be sceptical and I am going to make the case. We can just go to morning tea.

THE CHAIR: If you want to reflect and put something on notice, minister, that would be appreciated.

MRS JONES: The bottom line is that there is a lot of work to do.

THE CHAIR: We will move to output class 1.3, waste and recycling. Minister, last year one of the priorities was the implementation of the Parkwood estate and management plan. Has that occurred?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

THE CHAIR: And has it worked?

Mr Rattenbury: I will just get you a formal update on that. Yes; a lot of work has been going on in Parkwood. The Auditor-General undertook the report, as you know, and TAMS has been working to implement those recommendations. We are making progress on them. We have got a range of stakeholders at Parkwood. Some of them are very easy to work with; some of them are less easy to work with. So the actual state of affairs is that we are making, I guess, varied progress out there.

Mr Perram: Sorry, what was the question?

THE CHAIR: One of the priorities from last year was the implementation of the Parkwood management plan. Has it been implemented, has it been implemented in full, and is it working?

Mr Perram: The Parkwood management plan comes under the ACT Property Group

as opposed to waste. It applies to the subdivision at that location. As the minister said, yes, the plan has been implemented. Yes, those processes have been done. And in recent time we have advised the auditor on where the audit was conducted and where we are up to with those processes.

THE CHAIR: How are the stockpiling issues at the estate being managed?

Mr Perram: They are being managed on an ongoing basis. I would need the ACT Property Group director, who is coming. I could grab Daniel now.

THE CHAIR: There is that crossover.

Mr Perram: Yes, sure.

THE CHAIR: It is hard to know where some of these are these days.

Mr Perram: Yes.

Mr Bailey: We are managing the estate in close management with the EPA and the ESA in terms of stockpile limits, but unfortunately the licence agreements that the majority of the tenants are on out there do not actually set a limit. Those licence agreements are quite old. The new licence agreements that we are transitioning to have strict stockpile limits, but in saying that, there are a couple of tenants out there that we are working with closely, to reduce the stockpiles.

THE CHAIR: Are the stockpiles being inspected regularly?

Mr Bailey: Yes, they are. We have one particular tenant where we have an aerial drone that flies over quarterly. There is another one happening this weekend.

THE CHAIR: That is a drone?

Mr Bailey: That is a drone. The survey quality is quite good. You cannot do traditional surveys on some of these properties because it would be quite cost prohibitive and also potentially dangerous.

MRS JONES: Did the drone check pick up dumping at the end of Hindmarsh Drive?

MS BERRY: No; this was just down at Parkwood.

MRS JONES: Just down at Parkwood?

Mr Bailey: That one, no.

Mr Perram: No, it was more a survey drone rather than—

MRS JONES: Sorry?

Mr Perram: It is a survey drone, so it works on a height differential. But the reason we are using drones is that it is about 10 per cent of the cost of a survey.

MR COE: I can in part understand how they are using drones, because that part of the stockpile is enormous. It is absolutely enormous. For those who have not seen it, it is quite extraordinary. How does it get to that point? When it was half that height, wasn't it already too high? And then at three-quarters of the current height, wasn't it too high? The sky is the limit, I guess.

Mr Perram: Without going to the particular matters of the actual person themselves, suffice it to say that it is a matter between the GSO and the tenants at this time, and serious notices have been served in respect of this matter.

THE CHAIR: But if there are no limits in the agreements, how could you be served a notice?

Mr Perram: It still has safety requirements with respect to the operation of the site. As we said, we are working with the EPA in respect of the materials on the site and how it is being treated.

MR COE: There seems to be an issue with the business model that the government has set up. The receipt of funds comes from the deposit, not from the processing, and therefore there is a huge incentive just to keep on taking material and not actually process it. We have already had one or two other operators there cost the territory a lot of money. They have got their argument as well, which I have some sympathy for as well, but the business model out there, for some of these entities, seems to be seriously flawed. What changes are happening?

Mr Rattenbury: You have identified the exact historical legacy we are trying to deal with.

MR COE: What is the response?

Mr Bailey: Where appropriate, we refer them so they can get some business advice, but I agree that a lot of these businesses out there were set up initially just sort of to be incubators, to then go on. They have not gone on. A lot of those businesses, yes, are challenged in the current environment. Again, without getting specific on the tenant, the product that they do is quite good; the EPA think what they are doing is quite a good outcome. If that business was not there, that would be dumped completely into landfill, so the actual products that they make from recycling these goods is quite good.

MR COE: There might be a bit of confusion with what I said. My issue is not with the business model of the actual businesses; it is the business model established in effect by the government in terms of the payment, which facilitates the payment on deposit rather than processing. Some of these guys are, I am sure, making reasonable sums of money. But it is not linked to the actual output which the territory is requiring and for which the territory is giving them often concessional leases.

Mr Perram: Yes. Certainly over many years—you would perhaps know better than we do—the subdivision has gone from a light industrial-style subdivision to a recycling subdivision, over probably the last two or three decades. And we have that

legacy of those licences coming through. Yes, you are correct in the sense that a rebate is provided for recyclers on the site. There is a proposal that, under the change in management, we are looking at Parkwood for a change of that licensing requirement where it is a rebate at the end of the year with substantiation of recycling as opposed to during the process. That is one of the changes we are looking at.

THE CHAIR: We might cut that one off there. A new question from Ms Porter and then Ms Berry.

MS PORTER: Minister, on page 6 of the budget statement it shows the increased expenditure for waste and recycling. Whilst I know this will go to the provision of domestic waste and recycling services, will there be any additional initiatives funded by this increase? Can I also ask about the targets on page 4 about achieving the amount of resource recovery by 2024-25? How will this target be met in the future, and how will the government reduce waste going to landfill over time?

Mr Rattenbury: As to the first part of your question around increased cost on page 6, this is not about new initiatives. This reflects the increasing cost of landfill and the increasing cost of the new waste contract for domestic collection. As you know from some of the interruptions we had to the service, we have moved to a new contract. It is a 10-year contract. We are at one of those step points where the contract has been in place for 10 years and has now stepped up to a new price that reflects that. Those costs are built into this year for the first time.

In terms of the issue of getting to the waste targets, you will see that there is a plateau there for a number of years. That is because the proposed mixed recycling facility, the MRF, is not going ahead at this time. The commercial contractors for that do not believe that it is economic to do it at the moment. That is what sees the pause in that figure there at the 75 per cent mark and why this year's strategic indicator is stuck at 75 per cent.

In terms of increasing it over the coming years, what will need to be done is identify the sources of waste that are going to landfill and the steps that can be put in place to address that. For example, one of the things we have done is create space for recyclers at our Hume industrial estate for people to come in and put proposals on how to tackle some of those elements of the waste stream.

We have just put in place new e-waste contractors around Mitchell. That is one example of some of the waste that has been taken out of the stream. As Mr Smyth would well know, we are down to the hard parts of the waste stream. It is a matter of literally trying to target each type of waste now and find a way to deal with them. That is where that improvement will come in coming years.

MS PORTER: Minister Corbell mentioned yesterday some thought had been given to separating some of the other products that people put in their small green bin and being able to sort those in some way.

MRS JONES: Dirty waste sorting.

MS PORTER: Are you able to give us any more information about that?

MS BERRY: Is it household organic waste?

MS PORTER: Yes, household organic waste—whether or not that householder will be expected to put that in some kind of container before they put it in the green bin, whether or not there will be other options in regard to educating people about composting et cetera, or whether—this is going to be in addition to that education about composting—this would be done separately when the waste is then brought along to the MRF or whatever it is?

Mr Perram: I think there are multiple levels here. We have got our recycling MRF that is coming out of the recycling bins of households and businesses now and out of the yard docks where we collect from. What we are looking at at the moment is a combination of a tender for that as well as the development of a new facility for commercial and industrial recycling. Hopefully that will be done in the next 12 months and will assist this increase. That should hopefully lift that side of things.

Where Mr Corbell is coming from, as I understand it, is that ESD are developing that organic waste and separation of other products at this time as part of a consideration of getting the carbon out of the system and not into landfill. My understanding is that that will be captured separately if it goes that way or into recycling for chooks or worm farms and so on.

Mr Roberts: If I could step in there? The sorting out of the green bin, the garbage bin, will probably be done within what is called a “dirty” MRF, for obvious reasons. What is not reusable will then be sent to an energy from waste plant and the organic component will usually form part of that. Any recyclables, we will send into the recycling stream. Residents will probably not be required to sort the organics themselves.

MS PORTER: There are some fantastic examples in your different forms of this. I am sure Mr Corbell will—

Mr Perram: There are some very sophisticated and very efficient MRFs around the world. That certainly would be great for us. Size is an issue for us of course.

MS PORTER: There are both incentives and sanctions for residents in Europe who do and do not carry out all these things that they are supposed to.

Mr Roberts: You also mentioned composting. That will be a separate education component.

MS PORTER: There will be an education component on composting. Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: We need to press on because it has just been pointed out to me that I am overtime. A couple of quick questions and we will go to morning tea at a quarter past.

MS BERRY: I have two things. Has there ever been consideration by the ACT

government of an e-waste collection site in west Belconnen? I have another around hard waste collection. People see lots of hard waste being dumped on the roadsides, such as Hindmarsh Drive, or around charity bins. Has there ever been an investigation into what the cost would be of a hard waste pickup?

Mr Perram: The commonwealth government stewardship program is the program that has been adopted for the collection of e-waste. That is in two locations now. We have located DHL at Mugga to facilitate that. As the minister said, we have got TechCollect located now at Mitchell. It was very difficult to get those tenders renewed because it is a resource for them to be able to do that. So I think we are very lucky to have two sites within the ACT for those collections.

I think we will see an expansion into other areas like Dick Smith's and those collecting computers in their own right. I think in many ways that is how the stewardship program will go in the future. But our main goal until now has been to ensure there is a general public facility available for e-waste in at least two locations throughout the city.

Mr Roberts: It is important to have the e-waste collection sites monitored, otherwise you do get all sorts of waste just turning up there. There are limited sites where it is wise to do that.

MS BERRY: I have just one more question, on second-hand Sundays. Many years ago you used to be able to put your stuff on the kerb. I know lots of councils around the region do it as well. It used to happen here in Canberra a long time ago. Has that ever been a consideration by the government for the ACT into the future?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, it is certainly something I have been giving some thought to and am seeking some advice on because it goes to your earlier question about hard waste and whether we could combine the two in some quite cost-effective way. That is certainly a model that I am giving some thought to at the moment.

MRS JONES: We will all be keen for an update on that.

Mr Perram: Just in respect of the bulky waste, I am not sure of any studies that have been done in the ACT but in my past experience in two of the regional cities we used to put that program on. It literally cost millions each year.

MS BERRY: Yes, I bet. Maybe the second-hand Sunday is the option.

Mr Perram: I think so. We also have a promotion where we support—is it the New South Wales garage sale?—the garage sale trail as part of that second-hand reused material as well.

Mr Roberts: There was a study into the bulky waste trial which concluded that rolling it out across Canberra would be prohibitively expensive. It is also very inequitable.

MRS JONES: I have one comment about the bulky waste trial and the fact that it was not taken up. I think most of us accept that if you are going to get take-up there has to

be a regular program for people to get used to it.

Mr Roberts: The take-up has increased quite significantly over the number of years. We expect it to continue to increase and then plateau.

MRS JONES: The right people get to know it and know that it is on at a certain time. Can I just foreshadow two questions on notice. One, which I have been asking of all departments, is about bullying and the rates of bullying in the department. The other one is around contracting and contracts that have been let to ACT businesses versus interstate businesses. I will put them on notice.

I want to go to playgrounds and the playground safety program which I am a big fan of, as you know. We have got \$500,000 on BP page 347 to improve safety of playgrounds. I am just interested in, for a start, Oxley playground. It has got a notice up at the moment that it is going to be removed and also—

Mr Rattenbury: Sorry, I got distracted there.

MRS JONES: Oxley playground has a notice up saying it will be removed. Will it be replaced?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, we are undertaking work at the moment to provide play activities at Oxley.

MRS JONES: So the equipment will be replaced?

Mr Rattenbury: Not necessarily the exact same equipment, no, but we are putting something in place.

MRS JONES: But there will be a playground?

Mr Rattenbury: We are looking at some options at the moment.

MRS JONES: Will there be a playground there or will it be empty space?

Mr Rattenbury: There will be play activities.

MRS JONES: Will there be equipment there?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not know yet.

MRS JONES: I understand that it is an expensive program and I understand that you have got to maintain a lot of sites and so on. But if we have got an established playground, are we making it bare?

Mr Rattenbury: We do not have a final decision on Oxley yet. I am looking at a range of options. The main problem we have is that the inspector went out—and there is a good program of inspection—and basically found that the foundations were rotten. That is why it had to be fenced off, from a safety perspective.

MRS JONES: I will put a plug in that I hope it will be replaced; otherwise I am sure there will be a furore somewhere if it does not get replaced.

Mr Rattenbury: Just a clarification, only one piece of equipment at Oxley is problematic.

MRS JONES: Is being removed?

Mr Rattenbury: There are two other pieces that will remain and are quite safe.

MRS JONES: Maybe you can take on notice—

Mr Rattenbury: Before you create the furore, we are working on it.

MRS JONES: No, we are not creating it yet. I am just putting it to you. It is not my electorate. I will let the furore be created by somebody else.

Mr Rattenbury: I am imaging a mailbox drop will go round in the next few days.

MRS JONES: I do not represent Oxley, but I am sure someone will. I am just wanting to know—and maybe you can take it on notice—the nature of the improvements that the \$500,000 is going to achieve and why the program is only funded for one year. Has the money already been allocated to specific playgrounds or is it a generic bucket of money? Will there be any fencing of any playgrounds in the next financial year? I have continually requested that one in each zone of the city get a small fence, not for the purposes of the government babysitting our children but for the purposes of people who have multiple children or who are breastfeeding or who have children who are runners so that they are able to go to the park and have a time which is mental health positive for them.

Mr Rattenbury: Sorry, did you mean you want us to put up a fence so that people can go running? Is that what you just said?

MRS JONES: No. Those of us with children know what runners are. Kids who are runners are the ones who do not like to stay still. They bolt.

Mr Rattenbury: They will not run far if their kids are just inside the fence.

THE CHAIR: Given it is a quarter past, I am assuming you are either going to take that on notice, minister, or at half past come back and give us an answer.

Mr Rattenbury: Sure.

THE CHAIR: We will suspend there. We will return for output class 1.4 afterwards. Staff for 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 will now leave us. I have a final question. Tony Gill has appeared at every estimates I have been at, the last 17. Other members have asked: where is Mr Gill?

Mr Rattenbury: He is in Brazil. He is at the world cup.

Sitting suspended from 11.13 to 11.29 am.

THE CHAIR: The committee will now resume. We are dealing with output classes 1.4, 1.5 and enterprise services, which we will deal with between now and 12.30. Mrs Jones, have you finished with your questions on parks?

MRS JONES: Minister, would you like to tell me about parks? I am giving you the free option to take it on notice, if you like. What would you prefer?

Mr Rattenbury: No, that is fine. I can probably clarify a few things now which will help you to clarify what you want to ask on notice. With respect to the \$500,000 this year, you asked why there is only funding for one year. The key reason is that we are undertaking some strategic work to identify how to deal with playgrounds in the best way going forward. I do not have a definitive position on that but the intent is to do that work this year and then go forward with a capital bid next year as required. I can assure you that maintenance will continue and all of those safety checks and everything will continue as normal, full speed, this year. There is no dropping off in that space.

MRS JONES: But in the meantime, if you have something like the Oxley issue, you still may have the option to put a new piece of equipment in there even without this grand strategic plan being sorted out?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MRS JONES: Can I make a bid that in your planning you consider a fenced park in each zone of the city—not every park but maybe three or four that are properly fenced, including a gate that shuts by itself and where you have to lift the top for an adult to let the child out? We have fenced dog parks in the ACT but no fenced kids' parks.

Mr Rattenbury: I will ask Ms Flannery to speak to the rationale around the fencing issue.

Ms Flannery: In the ACT we generally do not promote fencing of play spaces. There are some play spaces that do have fences.

MRS JONES: Partial fences.

Ms Flannery: The principle behind that is we look to the siting of those play areas. There is also some research that has been done about kids being able to move in and out of spaces so that they do not feel that they are hemmed in. It is certainly something that we would look at as part of our overall strategy but at the moment there is no view as to whether all play spaces need fences.

MRS JONES: Nobody is arguing that all play spaces need to be fenced. However, I have been presented with this view about kids' freedom and safety many times by the Chief Minister and by others. The simple fact is that I am a very experienced mother of four small children and there are plenty of mums who I run into in the community who do not understand why there is not a single fenced kids' park that they can plan to go to if they happen to have a child who is more of a runner or if they are

breastfeeding at that time.

The stress that is caused to children by having a fence is nothing on the stress that is caused for a breastfeeding mother when her child is trying to run off on her. No matter what academic reason you want to put behind it, there is a desire in the community. If the minister would like I am more than happy to get thousands and thousands of signatures of mothers to ask for a fenced park. But I do not think we need to go down that route. I come from a different theoretical perspective—that we have to look after the mental health of carers as well as the freedom of children. That is the position I am coming from.

THE CHAIR: It was beginning to become a speech. A new question, Ms Berry?

MS BERRY: Yes, I do have a new question. We are doing land management; is that right?

THE CHAIR: Land management, output class 1.4, for the next 30 to 35 minutes.

MS BERRY: Minister, how much land does the ACT government have in parkland and our open space system combined? If you do not have it, that is okay.

Mr Rattenbury: We might take that one on notice. Just so that I am clear, Ms Berry, do you mean urban parks and playgrounds or do you include the nature reserves?

MS BERRY: Yes, nature reserves and open space areas.

THE CHAIR: That is easy—82 per cent.

Mr Rattenbury: Of the ACT.

THE CHAIR: Yes, of the entire ACT.

MS BERRY: How much does it cost for the upkeep of that land? I suppose it varies for nature parks but what about for open space like turned off ovals and places like that?

Mr Rattenbury: The cost varies in the sense that, for the nature parks, a range of funding goes in for pest animal management, weed management, fire trial maintenance and fuel management. These are spread across different budgets; it is just the way government is organised. As you will see in the budget papers, there is specific money this year for, for example, bushfire preparedness. That is spent in the parks as well as what might be considered the more environmental works that are undertaken in parks.

MS PORTER: It says \$15.2 million in the budget papers.

Mr Rattenbury: That is for parks and city services.

MS PORTER: It is for “maintaining national parks and reserves, maintaining car parks, urban parks, trees, shopping centres and other community areas”.

THE CHAIR: The minister can leave and the committee can have a conversation with itself. We are so full of answers this morning!

MS PORTER: Sorry, Mr Smyth. It is just that it is staring me in the face.

MS BERRY: Thanks. I was leading up to ask: how much of that money goes on the upkeep of local parks like ovals? Is it broken down or is it just that that is how much it costs?

Ms Flannery: We do not break it down specifically to the amount spent on local parks because it is broken up between litter picking, mowing, shrub bed maintenance and trees.

MS BERRY: So it is broken down?

Ms Flannery: It is not broken down. We could make a cumulative total and take it on notice.

MS BERRY: Good.

Mr Rattenbury: Ms Berry, just to be clear on that, it is done by function rather than by space. So you get multiple functions in a space—mowing, litter picking—

MS BERRY: Is there a breakdown of the functions?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

Ms Flannery: Yes, by function but not necessarily by area. For example, the litter picking program goes across the whole of Canberra. We would then have to divide it by area. So it would be more general than specific.

MS BERRY: Okay.

THE CHAIR: Are you going to take that on notice and give us a breakdown?

Ms Flannery: We will.

MS BERRY: Has the government thought about encouraging and formalising the way that communities can get involved in the upkeep of their local parks? You will know of the Holt community park carers and the work that they do in Holt in looking after the little park near the old school—my old school, actually. I always feel that when community groups want to get involved, want to take some ownership or do some work around a park there is a problem around insurance, whose responsibility it is or liabilities. I just think there has to be a way around that so that communities can have some ownership of their park.

Mr Rattenbury: I think it is a really good point. I would like to expand that space as much as we can. We have obviously got ParkCare groups at the moment and some Lakecare groups, so there are groups operating. They have not tended to operate so

much for the formal urban parks. Lots of people just do stuff informally. They go and mow bits and they litter pick, and that is great. The question is: can we make that more formal, and what government support needs to go behind that? For example, we have two dedicated rangers just to support the ParkCare groups. That is a good investment because it leverages a whole lot of community effort. It is just a matter of working through those and how it plugs in to the paid regular government services and find the right balance there. One of the key issues would be liability as well, and how you get that system to work.

MS BERRY: How does that work with the catchment group people, the park carers and the people that go and do the work and plantings around the creeks, waterways and bushland? Are they covered by any liability?

Ms Steward: We would see the model that we use for our ParkCare groups being able to be applied across our park areas in the city as well. With any group that is formed, they come under the umbrella of the government insurance. As part of that, each person who volunteers needs to sign up to acknowledge the purpose of why they are there and what their role is. There are a few protocols—observance of safety and the like which you would normally expect when you have a group of people on site doing what is often weed management and the like. So we are really happy to look at that model to see if we can apply it to other urban parks, where there is community interest, and engage with them in a similar way.

MS BERRY: Is it something that you are looking at now and wanting to progress? I am happy to commit to pushing you on that, if that works.

Mr Rattenbury: That would be fine, thank you.

MS BERRY: Okay, I will do that then.

Ms Steward: Community gardens are one that has been there for some time now and where there is increasing community interest, which we support. We would like to work with those groups to assist them in that way.

MS BERRY: That is good.

Mr Rattenbury: One of the other tricks is for government to make sure it does not get in the way. One that is on the go at the moment is called the Lyneham commons, where people want to plant an orchard in a piece of open public space. I am working with TAMS to make sure we have a model where people can just get on with it. One of the things was, “You need a fence.” They said, “No, we don’t need a fence because it’s meant to be an open public thing.” So it is about trying to make sure we do not interfere too much.

MS BERRY: Overcomplicate it and make it more complex than it is.

Mr Rattenbury: Exactly.

MRS JONES: Community gardens as well, potentially.

Mr Rattenbury: Fetherston Gardens being a good example.

THE CHAIR: And then a supplementary from Mr Doszpot.

MS PORTER: Thank you for linking up that group with the Ginninderra Catchment Group. Holt has worked really well. In relation to the list of things that you talked about as being costs or activities that you did with that money that we talked about before, you mentioned bushfire work, bushfire management activities. Are you anticipating that these are going to become more expensive? Are you having to use different kinds of approaches in relation to our changing climate?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, certainly. As Mr Smyth knows very well, the ACT's bushfire preparedness is shaped by the strategic bushfire management plan, of which bushfire operational plans are the annual rollouts. In the last few days, Minister Corbell announced the consultations for the next one of those.

THE CHAIR: The draft of the third SBMP is now out.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes. That will shape some of those questions. But certainly all of the forecasts, all of the modelling by CSIRO and the like, indicate that we are heading into an era where the bushfire risk will be enhanced by drier, hotter weather.

MS PORTER: "Enhanced"? Is that the word?

THE CHAIR: Increased.

Mr Rattenbury: Increased. Did I say enhanced?

THE CHAIR: You did say it just then.

Mr Rattenbury: Thank you.

MS PORTER: As somebody who also is part of a community fire unit, I do not like the fact that they are going to be enhanced.

Mr Rattenbury: No; "enhanced" is totally the wrong word, and I thank you for picking me up on it.

MS PORTER: Can I ask my substantive question now?

THE CHAIR: Mr Doszpot had a supplementary too.

MR DOSZPOT: Minister, my question is further to park care, sportsground care. How many grounds are marked in diesel?

Mr Rattenbury: We do not do sportsgrounds. They are done by sport and rec.

MR DOSZPOT: We seem to be getting pushed from pillar to post here. I am trying to find out—

MS PORTER: Yes, sport and rec.

Mr Rattenbury: I am sorry; I do not want to contribute to that, but TAMS does not do maintenance of sportsgrounds. That is done by the Economic Development Directorate.

MR DOSZPOT: So all of the people employed are employed within the Economic Development Directorate?

Mr Rattenbury: I will just double-check that so there is no pushing around. I can confirm that we do not have any staff who do sportsgrounds.

MR DOSZPOT: What about parking issues around sports ovals?

Mr Rattenbury: That would be TAMS. Yes, that would be us.

MR DOSZPOT: Woden oval was closed to football usage for the 2014 season to allow developments to take place for an elite athletics facility. When it is completed, it will host major athletics carnivals. Currently, there are football clubs playing there and Little Athletics is taking place. If you get people with 100 cars trying to park in the Woden oval area, there is no other parking space left; 100 cars is about the maximum you can fit in. Little Athletics will probably bring around 3,000 people. The reason for the redevelopment was to allow for the increase to take place. Has there been any discussion on what is going to happen when, instead of 100 cars, there may be a minimum of around 1,000 cars by the time you add in all the parents and that? It is a huge difference, and it is going to cause huge problems. I am just wondering what planning has been done for it.

Mr Rattenbury: I will have to take that on notice, Mr Doszpot. I do not have the roads team here anymore. They will have done that work and been involved in those discussions. I will take that on notice and provide you with a response.

MR DOSZPOT: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: A substantive question from Ms Porter? And then Mr Coe.

MS PORTER: On budget paper 3, page 110, it talks about money towards the maintenance of the infrastructure at the National Arboretum. What is included in this plan of works? Is shade for the pod playground part of that money or is that additional?

THE CHAIR: With great delight, Madam Deputy Chair, I am going to rule you out of order. That was handled under the Chief Minister's portfolio.

MS PORTER: So it was. Can I ask another one, then?

THE CHAIR: All right. Knock yourself out.

MS PORTER: I remember now. Gee, that short-term memory loss!

THE CHAIR: Don't even go there.

MS PORTER: It is quite normal for ordinary human beings; you do not have to be nearly 72 to suffer from it. Can I go to another one? I hope you are not going to rule this one out of order too. On page 110 and also 114, it talks about the kangaroo population. This is budget paper 3.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MS PORTER: And the research that has been mooted. Mr Corbell did in fact discuss it with us, and he discussed the difficulty the methodology currently imposes, the methodology that they are discussing—that the fertility control trial currently poses difficulties. If this trial proves to be too expensive, what further measures may be employed? Is TAMS involved in that discussion about what else might be considered?

MRS JONES: We are going to get a kangaroo-proof fence.

MS PORTER: Instead of the cull, obviously, because that is what we are trying to avoid.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes. There are a number of things going on. Minister Corbell has spoken about the work being undertaken by ESDD and the team in the research division there. In addition to that, as the Minister for TAMS, I have been approached by an NGO which have put a proposal to me that they can undertake fertility control, and I have indicated my willingness to look at that proposal. That has now been provided to TAMS as a formal proposal; we are considering that and looking at the merits of it in terms of both scientific rigour and animal welfare considerations. Clearly, the government has taken a view that the kangaroo population management is necessary, and those reasons have been canvassed. I am happy to go to them, but I do not think you need me to.

MS PORTER: No, I do not think we need to. I do not have to be convinced of that.

Mr Rattenbury: If we could find a way that involves a non-lethal alternative, that would be desirable, but there are question marks about the ability to deliver that, in the short term in particular. But that is why we are open to receiving proposals, and I am taking an open approach to that. It does not mean they will necessarily work, but we should be willing to trial things as long as we can both meet those scientifically rigorous guidelines and deal with ethical and animal welfare considerations as part of any trial.

MS PORTER: Thank you very much.

MS BERRY: Can I have a supplementary?

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Just before I ask a supplementary, I want to make mention of Mr Iglesias and his handling of this very sensitive issue. Every time you have responded to the community about this I think you have responded in a way that is sensitive to

people's concerns. I just wanted to acknowledge you for that. The complication around kangaroos—it is probably Captain Obvious stuff—is that they jump around. There is a fertility control program with bison on some island, but of course they can round them up and inject them, and it works quite well, apparently. The bison are not supposed to be there; they are not native. Anyway, that is another story. Isn't the complication really—

Mr Rattenbury: There is no doubt that fertility drugs are available and they are effective. The drugs are fine. It is the delivery to wild populations that has proved to be the obstacle to this point in time.

MRS JONES: Yes, we discussed that yesterday.

MS BERRY: Just on our kangaroos, why can we not eat them?

Mr Rattenbury: So far the government has not gone down the path of going to any commercial processing of the kangaroos that are killed during the cull because, essentially, the numbers are quite small from a commercial perspective. I certainly have a reluctance to move down a path of doing that. There are two issues. One is that the number we cull at the moment would not be economic. To be economic, you would need to cull more kangaroos. I am reluctant to move down the path of trying to set up a commercial operation because then you get, essentially, a demand for an increased number of carcasses, which we do not want to entertain.

MR COE: Have you had any abattoirs approach you or any people in that space?

Mr Rattenbury: No, we have not, but members may be aware that TAMS has started to use some of the carcasses now as baits as part of its feral trapping program. I think one of the key community concerns is the waste of the carcasses. We are using a proportion as baits, but unfortunately some carcasses are buried.

MR COE: In other jurisdictions when such culls take place and it is commercially viable I understand they are tagged—is that right?—and then often collected later on rather than collected as they go. Is that correct?

Mr Iglesias: There is tagging of individual animals, yes, and it is a very structured process given that these animals are potentially used for human consumption. It involves, as you describe, tagging, and it involves transportation and mobile chillers all working. It is effectively an industry in itself—2½ million in the south-eastern part of New South Wales alone. So that puts into perspective what the minister was saying. Our contribution, relatively, is extremely low.

MR COE: You said 2½ million?

Mr Iglesias: Two and a half million in New South Wales as part of the mitigation kangaroo cull authorised.

MR COE: So 2½ million animals—

Mr Iglesias: Authorised—2½ million animals.

MR COE: that have been killed?

Mr Iglesias: Yes.

MS BERRY: There are also farms around that do their own culling as well—

Mr Iglesias: That is right.

MS BERRY: which is also thousands of kangaroos, and many more than we would.

Mr Iglesias: That is right.

MR COE: Can you refresh us on the numbers that are planned here in the ACT?

Mr Iglesias: Are we referring to the conservation cull?

MS BERRY: Yes.

Mr Iglesias: We are licensed to cull 1,606 this year. If you are talking about the conservation cull, that is what the ACT government is doing in protected areas—1,606 animals.

THE CHAIR: And how many tags issued to farmers?

Mr Iglesias: That is a different process. It is a rural cull and, from memory, it would be around the 19,000 mark.

MR COE: Do you know whether in those rural areas the farmers are using any commercial markets to sell their carcasses?

Mr Iglesias: Not in the ACT.

MR COE: It is not prohibited; it is just not viable?

Mr Iglesias: No, we do not have a commercial industry in the ACT at all. There are chillers in New South Wales but, again, when you consider the numbers involved, New South Wales has got a very good supply. That is not to say that it would not be possible, but it would be difficult and I do not know whether the commercial imperative is there.

Ms Steward: Could I add something? When we looked at this probably two years ago we had a really close look at what was necessary to make it a commercially viable proposition to put to government. The fundamental prohibitive costs were associated with having to have chilling and refrigeration facilities close by. There previously had been in the past, there was not now, and it was the cost of transportation, but more so the refrigeration. It really meant that unless you have the infrastructure in place it is very hard to attract the industry to even contemplate the numbers that we have. It really came down to the economics.

MR COE: What was the total cost of the legal action and associated matters to the territory?

Mr Iglesias: I would have to get back to you, Mr Coe, as to what that was.

MR COE: If you could; thank you.

Mr Rattenbury: Did you mean for the one we have just gone through?

MR COE: This year and last year.

Mr Rattenbury: That is fine.

THE CHAIR: A new question to Mr Coe and then to Mr Doszpot. We are on land management, output class 1.4, but we have also got to get through 1.5, regulatory services, and output class 2, enterprise services, by 12.30.

MRS JONES: I have a question on this subject matter when we get to it.

MR COE: With regard to the overall budget being down by \$1½ million, I gather—

Mr Rattenbury: The overall budget of?

MR COE: Of land management.

Mr Rattenbury: Just remind me where you have picked that from, Mr Coe. I am not disputing it; I am just—

MR COE: Output 1.4. If you go to the middle of the page and table 6, you have got 94,292 down to 89,812. There is depreciation et cetera, but—

MRS JONES: Of the portfolio statement on page 6?

MR COE: There is depreciation et cetera, but that is usually the case. I am wondering what the rationale is for that output class going down.

Mr Rattenbury: This is output 1.4, table 6?

MR COE: That is right.

Mr Rattenbury: Why do we not take it on notice and give you a detailed response?

MR COE: Sure.

THE CHAIR: Could that reconciliation contain the ins and outs—so any programs that have ended and any new starts so that we work out what the disparity is?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MR COE: And also the FTE that is included in that, perhaps before and after. Further to that, but on a similar note, the budget includes \$15.2 million for maintaining amenity. Have other services been cut to compensate for that \$15 million or is that a usual allocation?

Mr Rattenbury: This is \$15 million additional over four years. This comes about as a result of the government-commissioned review of parks and city services. You will recall from last year's budget that the government commissioned a number of reviews. Parks and city services is one of them, ACTION is another and the AMC is another. So there are a few across government.

Basically, they sat down and went through parks and city services with a fine-tooth comb and looked at services and options for efficiencies. If I may put it quite simply, the finding was that parks and city services was very efficient. There were some savings that were identified, but overall the finding was that more money was required to maintain the city to an acceptable standard. The budget process has actually allocated more money out of the overall ACT budget to this part of TAMS.

MR COE: Of the total output class, what portion, roughly, might be outsourced or directed to contractors as opposed to in-house? Are we looking at something like 10 or 20 per cent or are we looking at 70 or 80 per cent?

Ms Steward: There is not a particular target that we are trying to achieve. In terms of the review, we looked at what was the best delivery model given that, in terms of a lot of the land management work that we do, sometimes it can be seasonal. There are times when we need to upscale or downscale, and sometimes there are efficiencies to government by having that flexibility to be able to do so through outsourcing some of those contracts. It is not that we are setting a particular target we want to achieve that is fixed; it is really responding to what those market opportunities are, combined with the most efficient way to deliver services.

MR COE: We have been talking recently about the mowing contracts and changing the structure et cetera. How is it all going now?

Ms Steward: I will invite Fleur Flannery to give you more detail on that.

Ms Flannery: In terms of what we are doing in-house and what we are contracting out—

MR COE: How has that changed over the last year or two?

Ms Flannery: We have spent about a year trying to clarify what we mow, where we mow, how fast we mow and what we need to mow. We have redesigned all our mowing maps and have used the latest technology to make sure we mow areas at the right time. We are putting out a major contract for the arterial road mowing and we have also clarified which parts of the ACT our in-house crews mow.

Most recently we have taken back the maintenance of the Woden-Weston and inner north areas, so we have additional government staff mowing those areas. As you

would be aware, it is not a peak time for mowing at the moment, but we are doing our normal sportsgrounds mowing and things like that.

MR COE: In the past one of the reasons put to this committee and to the planning committee has been that because it is cyclical having staff on the books all year round can be very expensive, especially at times like this when there is not going to be significant growth. With the government taking on more of that work in-house do you have a lot of down time in quiet periods or in winter?

Ms Flannery: No. We are trying to clarify what we need as a core group of people who mow and do litter picking, lake maintenance work and so on. We certainly do not have down time; there are many jobs in municipal areas so we get people who are on mowers to do other types of work.

MR COE: Why were the three districts chosen to be done in-house as opposed to other areas in Canberra?

Ms Flannery: Our maintenance programs were based regionally, and because of the cessation of the contracts, we have been able to take all that work back in-house and allocate it according to asset type and specialisation. In respect of those areas—

MR COE: Is it Woden, Weston and the inner north?

Ms Flannery: Woden-Weston is one region and the inner north. They were previously contracted out.

MR COE: What is different about Woden-Weston compared to Belconnen or Tuggeranong?

Mr Rattenbury: I think the answer is that those other areas were already in-house.

Ms Flannery: Yes.

Mr Rattenbury: The two Ms Flannery mentioned had been outsourced while the others had not, and they have now been brought back in.

MRS JONES: They are basically doing it all in-house now?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MR COE: Arterial roads are being done by contractors?

Ms Flannery: Yes. We have changed the way we deliver services across Canberra. Previously it was done on a regional basis, and now we are managing the assets across the city holistically. The outcome is that our arterial road mowing will be contracted out. Previously some of it may have been done by the people that looked after Woden-Weston and—

MR COE: To sum up, what assets are being mown by contractors in Canberra?

Ms Flannery: The large contracting work will be used in the arterial road mowing packages.

MRS JONES: But at the moment?

Ms Flannery: There are others. I can take that on notice and give you a breakdown.

MR COE: Yes, if you could. It is an issue that is raised with local members perhaps more than any other. Later this year I am sure the letters will be coming thick and fast from all directions. It would be handy to give them a bit more background on who is delivering the service.

Mr Rattenbury: Do you find the online provision of the mowing schedule is useful to your constituents?

MR COE: Yes and no. What usually happens is that laneways get forgotten for one reason or another—steep paths or trees encroaching or whatever, and there is usually a good reason—but the outcome is the same from a constituent’s point of view—that is, the grass is not mown. And maintaining the accuracy of the schedule is important.

THE CHAIR: We have to move on. A question from Mr Doszpot. Mrs Jones wants another question on this output and then we will go to Ms Berry for output 1.5.

MR DOSZPOT: Mr Chair, I also have a brief supplementary to Mr Coe’s question.

THE CHAIR: Very brief.

MR DOSZPOT: Is the mowing of ovals done by your contractors?

Ms Flannery: It is done by city services staff.

MR DOSZPOT: Is that your staff?

Ms Flannery: That is my staff.

MR DOSZPOT: What about the maintenance of those grounds from the environmental perspective? Is that an issue you take up or is that an issue for sport and rec?

Ms Flannery: That is Sport and Recreational Services.

MR DOSZPOT: Degradation of grounds, land use, land management, you do not do that?

Ms Flannery: We have a service-level agreement with Sport and Recreational Services where we provide some services such as mowing, so we mow their sportsgrounds.

MR DOSZPOT: Dressing sheds, toilets, seating, fencing, that is all under sport and rec?

Ms Flannery: We maintain some of the sporting pavilions as well under that package.

MR COE: Irrigation?

Ms Flannery: Irrigation is Sport and Recreational Services.

MRS JONES: Are we able to get a copy of the agreement between sport and rec and TAMS?

MR DOSZPOT: We would not be troubling you with questions that are not yours then.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, we will provide that.

Ms Steward: We are a service provider to that extent. They work out what package they want. They do their asset planning and what they need to do and then we provide a quotation in the normal way.

MR COE: Which minister should people be contacting if they have a concern about an oval?

Mr Rattenbury: The honest answer would be to contact Canberra Connect in the first instance because it is more efficient than writing to the minister, because stuff gets fixed. If they are absolutely determined to get in touch with their elected representative, go with intuition and if it goes to the wrong minister he will pass it to the right minister. We do not expect people to necessarily understand the intricacies of government. If they wrote to Mr Barr and it is a TAMS thing, he would just pass it on to me and vice versa.

MR DOSZPOT: The Narrabundah Ballpark has experienced increased usage and patronage. A lot more people are watching baseball than used to be and there are huge issues with regard to parking and traffic management in that area. What is being done to address those issues?

Mr Rattenbury: I might put that in the same category, Mr Doszpot, as the issue you were asking about the Woden athletics car parking. I will ask the same team to give some information and provide you that on notice.

MR DOSZPOT: The Equestrian Association of the ACT have signed an MOU with the ACT government for a more integrated approach to managing existing and future equestrian facilities; that is the plan. Was that signed with TAMS or sport?

Mr Rattenbury: It was driven by EDD, although I signed it because Mr Barr was not available. But it is a whole-of-government approach. EDD took the lead on it, but what it endeavours to do is work with the equestrians to get a whole-of-government response.

MR DOSZPOT: Can I ask you questions on that?

Mr Rattenbury: Try me, yes. I will see how I go.

MR DOSZPOT: Does the MOU include current and future areas for horse-holding facilities?

Mr Rattenbury: I think the MOU is publicly available. Just bear with me.

Mr Iglesias: It includes a commitment by government to look at the strategic position as it relates to horse-holding paddocks. In other words, it is a commitment to sit down with the equestrians and understand what their requirements are and try to form a position as to how those might be met without being predisposed to anything. So let us understand what is needed looking forward and that will be something government will consider.

MR DOSZPOT: I believe the prospect of a levy on equestrian users to assist with the maintaining of horse trailers was raised. Has such a levy been considered or discussed with ACTEA?

Mr Rattenbury: We are not aware of anything, no.

MRS JONES: My supplementary question goes to that. Some paddocks have been lost due to the Majura parkway. Will any paddocks be retained after the highway is completed?

Mr Iglesias: What we have tried to do in instances where paddocks have been lost to development is to work with the equestrians to find an alternative. A good example is the Mugga Lane site where we have looked to find—

MRS JONES: That is behind Macarthur, isn't it?

Mr Iglesias: That is right. Where there is an impact on the actual facility we will do our level best to find an alternative. In that particular case, in relation to the Majura flyway, that would impact on the Duntroon paddocks?

MRS JONES: Yes, I think so.

Mr Iglesias: I would have to check for you. My understanding was that the same principle would be there. We would do our best to find an alternative.

MRS JONES: Do you tend to achieve that outcome?

Mr Iglesias: Our intention is to do our best.

MRS JONES: Has it happened in the past?

Mr Iglesias: You would have to be more specific.

Mr Rattenbury: Do you mean for the Majura one?

MRS JONES: In previous such negotiations have they been maintained like for like

or not?

Mr Iglesias: In my time there has been one incident where we have lost horse paddocks. That is the Mugga Lane example that I gave you. That was resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

MRS JONES: There is a current, I believe, Mugga Lane issue for some horse paddocks that are behind Macarthur, to do with the solar farm that is being constructed.

Mr Rattenbury: That is the one he is referring to.

MRS JONES: That has been resolved?

Mr Iglesias: Yes.

MRS JONES: And they have been given alternative space?

Mr Iglesias: Yes.

MRS JONES: Is it like for like size?

Mr Iglesias: Yes, it is. The commitment was that we would find alternatives for all the horses, and that is what we did.

MRS JONES: Can you, perhaps on notice, give us an update on what is happening, what the outcomes are and where you are at with negotiations around the Majura parkway? And I believe there are some facilities in Curtin that are potentially under threat?

Mr Iglesias: I can check and report back on both.

MRS JONES: Is there a waiting list for agistment in the ACT?

Mr Iglesias: Horse agistment is contracted to a private operator. That would be something I would have to check with the private operator.

MRS JONES: Will the new Molonglo suburbs have any horse agistment available?

Mr Iglesias: From my understanding, there is not any planning that would see horse agistment around Molonglo. That would be a planning issue.

MRS JONES: Will the horse trails be maintained through Molonglo as part of development, so that people can still get through?

Mr Iglesias: Yes. As part of the planning that we are currently undertaking for the Molonglo River park, we are taking that into account.

MRS JONES: Perhaps on notice you could give us a statement about your intent with horse agistment as development changes in the ACT.

Mr Rattenbury: I am not sure we can provide anything other than what we have said today.

MRS JONES: Your current policy position on what you hope to be able to provide.

Mr Rattenbury: We have stated it.

MRS JONES: Yes, it has been stated here, but are there any guarantees?

Mr Rattenbury: This goes to the very heart of the MOU which we have just signed.

MRS JONES: I am not an expert on that, Mr Rattenbury.

Mr Rattenbury: I am just not sure I can provide anything additional, but we will see what we can do.

MRS JONES: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: We will move to output 1.5. Ms Berry?

MS BERRY: I have been watching all of the great work that has been done with rehoming dogs who end up at the pound. Could you provide the committee with information about how many of the dogs that turn up at the pound are lost or strays and how many are relinquished by their owners?

Mr Rattenbury: We will have to take that one on notice. I do not have those figures, unfortunately.

MS BERRY: What sort of work is being done to improve the factors that lead dogs to end up needing to be rehomed? What sort of education in the community are we doing?

Ms Flannery: We have been doing a lot of work promoting responsible dog ownership. We have been working with the RSPCA to get information out about microchipping, dog registration. We are currently updating and improving all our communication products. We are undertaking a significant review of dog exercise areas, and in that consultation process we are also providing information about what it means to be a responsible dog owner. If you look at the number of dogs that have been collected by the domestic animal facilities, you will see that the indicator has actually dropped. That reflects some of the policy around having a dog microchipped and registered.

MS BERRY: There are lots of different community groups. Facebook pages have been set up; “Canberra lost dogs” and people like that do a lot of work. They find dogs and then they find homes for them because people are connected to that site. How many rangers are there for dog-specific enforcement, or are they more general?

Ms Flannery: We have domestic animal specific rangers. There are 10 of those rangers. We also have a kennel master and deputy registrar role that supports the

activities of the Domestic Animal Services rangers.

MS BERRY: How do the rangers work around the suburbs? If they are coming from DAS, and if somebody has a problem dog or something is happening in the suburbs, obviously it is a bit like with the police. I am probably asking a question that cannot be answered. You ring up a ranger and say, “There’s this vicious dog on the loose,” and the ranger has to travel over. If there is a dog that is behaving badly, it is loose, chasing people or whatever, how do they get in touch with the ranger, and how does that get managed? Or is that a police matter? Should they call the police or should they call a ranger?

Ms Flannery: Depending on the severity of the circumstances, if someone is being aggressively attacked, call the police. If the situation looks to be one where someone is obviously in danger, our Domestic Animal Services rangers are not armed. But the other number to always have handy is the Canberra Connect number. In terms of how the work is allocated, the domestic animal rangers work in regions as well, so they are not sitting at the facility all day waiting for a call to come in.

MS BERRY: No, I would not have thought so.

Ms Flannery: They go out and do patrols. They are also connected in to a radio network. So information can be passed to them pretty quickly, and they can also link in and ask for support without having to phone back to base. It is something that has been introduced in the last year.

MS BERRY: Do the Queanbeyan pound and the Canberra Domestic Animal Services work together?

Ms Flannery: They do not directly work together in terms of operational efforts. Certainly, there are volunteers that work across both organisations. I know that, in promoting dogs that can be rehomed, we have posters up within the Macarthur House area, and we do try to cross-promote each others’ dogs.

THE CHAIR: A supplementary, and then a new question from Ms Porter.

MR COE: About Lola?

MS PORTER: No, not about Lola. Lola came from the RSPCA. My question is—

MS BERRY: Cassie came from Queanbeyan pound.

MR COE: Johan came from the pound.

MRS JONES: And I have never lost my pet.

THE CHAIR: Members!

MS PORTER: We could talk about dogs all day.

THE CHAIR: But we will not.

MS PORTER: I have two questions. First of all, what is happening with the latest code that you are looking at, which is the breeding code, I believe? How are we progressing with that? The other one is: reference was made to cross-border relationships with Queanbeyan. What about the work that we are doing with the RSPCA? How is that going with respect to the joint relationship between DAS and RSPCA?

Mr Rattenbury: I will start with the RSPCA, and Fleur can talk about the code. With RSPCA, the discussions are continuing. As you know, the proposal is for DAS and the RSPCA to merge into a single facility. The RSPCA, of course, have had a bit change in recent times, so there has been a little bit of a slowdown there. But we certainly continue to have meetings with them and progress the design, the operating model. All of those are quite detailed questions, but the in-principle decision is taken now. It is a matter of working through all of those very important details.

Ms Flannery: In terms of the breeding code, the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee presented their draft code to government. Government has subsequently provided comments back. The AWAC is now considering those comments and they should re-present the code to us later in the year.

MS PORTER: You will recall that with the sales code there was some public consultation in relation to that. About two or three different groups in different areas met at different times of the day. Is there any possibility that that will happen with the breeding code as well?

Ms Flannery: Yes. All codes go out for consultation in one form or another. With the breeding code that you are referring to, we did have some focus groups that were held in different target areas, particularly with rural leaseholders and dog breeders associations. This was preliminary consultation about the first draft. When we get the comments back and when the code is more developed, we will go to public consultation.

MS BERRY: Can I ask a supplementary?

THE CHAIR: You may.

MS BERRY: My question is on the breeding codes. I know that this question gets asked and that the feel is that there are no breeding farms in the ACT for puppies, no puppy farms. And I know that that is the reason why decisions are not being made about making laws around banning puppy farms in the ACT: the view is that there are not any here, so that is not a problem. But is that something that the government is considering doing?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes; we are considering legislation.

MS BERRY: Are you? Good. Then I did not need to ask that very long question.

MR COE: Is that legislation with regard to the breeding or is it with regard to the sale of animals?

Mr Rattenbury: It is in relation to breeding.

MR COE: A few years ago, there was some talk about restricting the sale of animals, especially at pet stores.

MS PORTER: We have a sales code now.

MR COE: A voluntary sales code—

MS PORTER: No; it is mandatory.

MR COE: As with all regulation, often the good guys comply and the bad guys still do not comply, so you end up targeting the wrong end of the market. Can you assure us that there will not be any restrictions on the current sale of animals at pet stores?

Mr Rattenbury: We actually do now have a sales code in place. It has some mandatory elements; they go to the way animals should be treated—how they are fed, exercised, watered and all of those things.—

MR COE: That went through AWAC as well, I think?

Mr Rattenbury: It did, yes, and that is now in place.

MR COE: You are not proposing to change that through legislation?

Mr Rattenbury: No; the legislation only looks at breeding.

MR COE: Thank you.

MS BERRY: One more thing: I congratulate the ACT government on the lights in the dog parks and pass on Cassie Cupcake's thanks for that. The other thing was just to bring—

THE CHAIR: Cassie Cupcake?

MS BERRY: Cassie Cupcake, canine campaigner.

MRS JONES: That is her dog.

MS BERRY: With the signage at the Belconnen dog park, the signage is behind trees and out of the way. When people want to read about how their dogs are to behave in the dog park, it is out of the way. You cannot see it. One is actually behind a tree.

Mr Rattenbury: We will have a look at that.

MS BERRY: I do not know how you would move them, because they are clunky signs, but they are really out of the way and they are hard to see.

THE CHAIR: Members, we are running out of time. We can have a quick new

question from Ms Porter, and then one from Mrs Jones. That will see us out.

MS PORTER: I want to go to page 6, under regulatory services. This may just be because something is happening that I do not understand, but there seems to be a reduction in the total cost in the provision of regulatory services. Could you explain? Is that some form of adjustment or something? It is at page 6, down at the bottom, table 7.

Mr Rattenbury: We will take that one on notice as well. We will add it to Mr Coe's earlier one about land management and provide those breakdowns.

THE CHAIR: Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: I want to go to accountability indicator c., removal of abandoned vehicles on unleased land within nine calendar days. You have got a target of 100 per cent. Thank you very much for a 100 per cent target; it is good to finally see that in some government documents. The outcome is 96 per cent. How many abandoned vehicles have been reported in the last year?

Mr Rattenbury: Bear with us a moment.

MRS JONES: Why did we not get to the 100 per cent?

Ms Flannery: I can respond to the second part of your question about why we did not get to the 100 per cent. The price of the scrap metal market reduced, firstly. The second thing is that there were quite a lot of cars abandoned because people did not take them to places where they could get money for them. We get a contract service with a tow truck to pick up the abandoned cars. Because there were a lot more left around because there was no real market for them, the indicator reduced. It was a short four per cent reduction.

MRS JONES: So it was because of an increase in demand that was unexpected?

Ms Flannery: Yes.

MRS JONES: What is the longest that a vehicle has remained abandoned on unleased land?

Ms Flannery: I would have to take that one on notice, along with the numbers of vehicles.

MRS JONES: Finally, what do you believe to be the risks to the community if a vehicle remains abandoned on unleased land? What is your definition or concern around that area that drives the process?

Ms Flannery: If there is an immediate safety issue, we work very closely with the police to get the car removed. There are provisions for that. This indicator is looking at cars that are abandoned but do not pose an immediate safety issue.

MRS JONES: Perhaps you could also get back to us on those that have had an

immediate issue and have been dealt with—how many and what the time frames were for them.

MR COE: Do you keep records as to how many are located on the nature strip of people's houses, as opposed to being abandoned on the side of the road? Do you get many that are reported as being an eyesore rather than abandoned, if that makes sense?

Ms Flannery: They are all abandoned in one way or another, but there are some left on nature strips, and they do get reported as abandoned, particularly by neighbours.

MRS JONES: Do you break the numbers down when you record them?

Ms Flannery: We always record the location of them, so we can provide that information.

MR COE: For instance, if somebody has a prize possession in their front yard which they are going to do up, and they have been planning on doing it on the next weekend for the last 10 years—

Mr Rattenbury: There are a few of those around.

MR COE: That is right, and often it is with good intentions. If they are out the front, do they just get dragged three metres to the other side of the nature strip, the other side of the letter box, and all is well?

Ms Flannery: I am hoping not. No; they get impounded and taken to a facility. They are kept at what was previously Quamby.

MR COE: You have got the nine days, so once the sticker goes on the owner does have the opportunity to move it. Going back to that number, could you take on notice how many actually get hauled away by the owner after you put the sticker on.

Ms Flannery: Sure.

THE CHAIR: We have got three minutes left. Mr Coe, you are next in line, with a question on enterprise services.

MR COE: It is a similar line of questioning to what I have always asked, about the future of the linen service. I know that the number of tonnes of laundry is increasing. It went from 5,300 to 5,400. The real question is: why is the government in this business still, given that there are private operators who can and do do this work? Does the government have any plans to change this, especially in light of the commonwealth government's incentive to recycle assets? Does that present an opportunity for the Totalcare facility in Mitchell and other facilities currently utilised by the linen service and other enterprise services?

Mr Rattenbury: The reason that the government still operates this service is that there are no competitors in Canberra or in the immediate region, as I understand it.

MS BERRY: So there is no intention to privatise that service?

Mr Rattenbury: No, not at this point. It is not being considered.

MR COE: I have asked ministers in the past, and some ministers have said that yes, they are considering it, contemplating it or whatever—that it is in the back of their minds sort of thing. It is obviously an area that industry can and does do, perhaps not to a large scale in the ACT, but it does still happen in the ACT. Perhaps nobody set up because the government is in this space. Anyway, what is the future, especially in light of the commonwealth government's incentives?

Mr Trushell: In responding, it is probably important to understand the market within the ACT. Yes, there are other small operators within Canberra. These small operators are generally hotel-owned laundries, which service the needs of the hotels. You are talking very small scale. There are no other laundries within our region. For example, we compete against a laundry from Albury and laundries from Sydney. Not all those laundries are capable of delivering the public health linen service. That operates as a different type of service subject to certain standards—the level of investment and the level of capability and scale that you want in order to have a linen service that can provide a sustainable long-term service for your public health system.

One of the reasons why you probably do not see this issue appear on the front pages of the *Canberra Times* as it has in other states is that Capital Linen Service and Totalcare previously have been able to provide that reliable, sustainable service to our health sector. When that fails, your health system fails; you then start to run into issues around service delivery. It is something where a decision around Capital Linen Service's future is a decision around your service delivery to your public health sector.

MR COE: But it has gone out to tender, has it not? Both Calvary and Canberra hospitals do put it out to tender, from what I gather, and I think there have been other bids. So it is not to say that Capital Linen Service is the only player interested in this space.

Mr Trushell: Calvary hospital went through a tender in, I think, about 2009. There were only two tenderers—ourselves and Spotless. Spotless were running a laundry in Canberra at that stage. They then closed that laundry, and they transferred the work up to Sydney. That is much smaller than the Canberra Hospital. In Canberra Hospital the volumes have more than doubled over the last five years. So you have got to make sure you are building something that has got the capability to provide that level of service, the level of growth. Capital Linen Service is really no different from the other service delivery within the ACT, like food services, cleaning and the sterilised instrument warehouse. If we were in New South Wales, we would be part of the health system over there as part of HealthShare NSW. In terms of the—

MR COE: They do not operate laundries, though, do they?

Mr Trushell: I beg your pardon?

MR COE: The other states do not operate laundries.

Mr Trushell: New South Wales run a public laundry. For their system, they operate eight laundries across New South Wales.

MR COE: For all their public hospitals?

Mr Trushell: Yes. Queensland still does as well. There has been evidence of market failure in other jurisdictions—for example, South Australia, where Spotless essentially ended up with a monopoly providing to the public health system there. The public health system essentially became captive to a private sector monopolist. And Canberra is a much smaller region than South Australia.

It is certainly something that could be looked at. We often look at the pros and cons, and the obstacles around selling it off. Some of the obstacles include transmission of business. The perceived benefit is generally lower cost. You would transfer that business to a private provider. One of the values of that business is not so much in the assets but more in the revenue stream. Half of that revenue stream is from public health. So essentially you would almost be in a situation where the value of the business is really selling it to somebody who then locks you into dealing just with them, as opposed to being able to run a competitive process where you might try and access the range of suppliers within Sydney.

MR COE: Mr Byles, has the directorate looked at those assets, even if it is on a lease back or something like that, especially in light of the commonwealth government's incentives?

Mr Byles: Not in any great detail. I am conscious of your comments, Mr Coe, but as the minister has explained, there is no intention to sell Capital Linen Service at this stage. Mr Trushell has outlined the reasoning behind that.

MR COE: Sure, but if not the business, what about the actual assets?

Mr Byles: Perhaps that is something I can take on notice.

THE CHAIR: We might conclude there. Minister, we will be back this afternoon for ACTION, output class 1, public transport and public cemeteries, which I assume people have questions on.

MR COE: I am happy to leave it.

THE CHAIR: We do have one question, so perhaps we can have cemeteries here by 3 o'clock. We will take a break and be back at 1.45, members.

Sitting suspended from 12.32 to 1.48 pm.

THE CHAIR: We will commence the afternoon's session of the estimates committee into the 2014-15 budget. We will change the proceedings slightly and go to the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority. With that, I will go through the whole rigmarole. If members who have not appeared before could acknowledge that they have read the privileges statement and understand its obligations and protections? They all have. Thank you very much for that. The hearings this afternoon are being broadcast as well

as transcribed. When we have got a transcript we will provide that for you. If there are any corrections or alterations you wish to make, please contact the secretariat.

With that, minister, would you like to make a short opening statement about the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority?

Mr Rattenbury: No, I am happy to go straight to questions.

THE CHAIR: On page 49 of the budget portfolio statement, there is, at the third dot point, a priority, “expand and innovate Authority service offerings in accordance with contemporary community needs”. Can you just run through that, particularly with a view to what is happening with the—I assume the southern memorial park is the Tuggeranong cemetery?

Mr Rattenbury: It is, yes.

Mr Horne: A bunch of work has been done in relation to the southern memorial park, and that includes the master plan and a whole range of reports—heritage, environmental and other—and a significant amount of work in developing a business plan and funding options. At this point in time, all that material is essentially waiting, if you like, for the next step or decision to be taken by government.

THE CHAIR: If there is such a need for the southern memorial park, minister, why are we not constructing it now?

Mr Rattenbury: At this stage the advice I have been given is that we are still operating in a time frame that will allow for the park to be built in time for the need.

THE CHAIR: So when is that?

Mr Rattenbury: I cannot remember the exact date, but the last update I had was that options have been brought forward to me. There was discussion about those and they went back for further work. I have not received another brief since.

THE CHAIR: The work has been done now for four, five, six years?

Mr Horne: No, not that long. The master plan was completed in 2012.

THE CHAIR: But there was talk of it before that?

Mr Horne: There has been talk about it for a long time.

THE CHAIR: So when is the likely opening date?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not have one at this stage.

Mr Perram: Through you, minister, if I could provide a bit of background information on that?

Mr Rattenbury: Thank you.

Mr Perram: What has happened there is that the first priority that we have asked for is the dedication of land for the cemetery and then the planning will come off that. The preliminary master plan, as the authority has said, has been completed, and that has been referred to us at TAMS and the minister. Where it is at now is the dedication of the land.

THE CHAIR: It says “scope a new memorial hall facility to handle larger funerals and memorial events”. How much larger is required and where is it likely to be? Is that Gungahlin or Woden, or do we have to wait until Tuggeranong is built?

Mr Horne: We are doing a small post-funeral hall as a part of an extension to our current administration facility. We expect that to be completed by the end of this year or early next year. If you like, that is a way of putting our toe in the water just to see what the demand will be for that sort of facility. It is a little hard to judge. Most of the funeral directors in Canberra, for instance, have their own facilities and many people use normal function facilities spread across the city.

THE CHAIR: So that is at Gungahlin?

Mr Horne: Gungahlin, yes.

THE CHAIR: And the dot point above is “extend the Christ the Redeemer Mausoleum at Woden Cemetery”. What is the Christ the Redeemer mausoleum and why does it need extension?

Mr Horne: A mausoleum is a building that has, in the wall, stacked crypts above ground. The current facility there is fully subscribed. So we are essentially doing an extension which will nearly double the size.

MRS JONES: Are they full-person sized crypts or are they for smaller sized remains?

Mr Horne: The current ones are all for a full-sized coffin. In the new facility we will have a limited number of what we call columbarium niches which are for the internment of ashes or urns.

MRS JONES: I know in European cemeteries they sometimes downsize the remains into a smaller facility after a period. We do not have that opportunity?

Mr Horne: Not at this point. The difference between our situation and Europe is that we have unlimited tenure, perpetual tenure, here. The law says at the moment that once you have interred somebody, it is forever. In Europe, you literally get a couple of years and then you are required to—

MS BERRY: You are moved on.

Mr Horne: You are moved on, yes.

THE CHAIR: Yes, moved to another place.

MRS JONES: If there is enough space.

MS BERRY: What do they do to them?

MRS JONES: You can have the remains—

Mr Horne: It is a fairly involved process. This probably is not the place for it.

MS BERRY: I will talk to you later.

THE CHAIR: The Christ the Redeemer mausoleum has capacity for how many coffins?

Mr Horne: The current one has 304.

MR COE: Not quite Melbourne general?

Mr Horne: No, indeed.

THE CHAIR: And the extension will have—

Mr Horne: A further 272.

THE CHAIR: For coffins, or—

Mr Horne: For coffins, plus—

THE CHAIR: And how many urns?

Mr Horne: Plus about 60 urn spaces.

THE CHAIR: Thanks for that. Ms Berry, a question on the cemeteries trust.

MS BERRY: I have a question about how cemeteries work with different religious requirements for different groups. But is there anything other than cremation or burial available as an option?

Mr Horne: Not at this point in time.

MS BERRY: Is it something that is being considered, do you know?

Mr Horne: There are a couple of new technologies that are just becoming available but none of them are widespread, shall we say, at this point.

Mr Rattenbury: The other option I would note is that I believe it is the intent to have a natural burial option at the southern cemetery.

MS BERRY: What does a natural cemetery burial look like?

Mr Rattenbury: Essentially it involves—

MS BERRY: You do not need to describe it to me.

Mr Rattenbury: Essentially it involves people being put in the ground without a coffin and with a tree planted over them, at its simplest.

MR COE: And often vertically?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

THE CHAIR: What are the new technologies that are coming online?

Mr Horne: There are two, principally. One is called alkaline hydrolysis and the other one is trademarked promession. That is a freeze-drying process.

THE CHAIR: Not cryogenics, though?

Mr Horne: No.

THE CHAIR: And what do you do with somebody who is freeze-dried?

Mr Horne: Their remains are interred, buried.

MS BERRY: Regarding that question I asked about how you are managing different religious requirements, we did not get there.

Mr Horne: Essentially across our cemeteries we have a range of areas that have been set aside for specific denominations. In simple terms, the leaders of those denominational groups have some control over those spaces. Generally they take care of themselves. In other words, generally people do not ask to go in spaces that are not of their particular belief.

THE CHAIR: And are the different faiths still represented on the board or is there a faith representative?

Ms Kargas: The way that the board is now, you need a range of skills. We have community members on the board but not necessarily from a particular religion.

MS BERRY: Regarding the natural burials, there will be a limited number of spaces, I guess, will there? Are a certain number of spaces going to be available or is that just an idea at the moment?

Ms Kargas: The southern memorial park is a beautiful space. There is a whole hill. There would be enough room for natural burials pretty much forever. It is a lovely space.

THE CHAIR: Mrs Jones?

MRS JONES: Perhaps we have touched on this. I believe that the statement of intent states that we are looking at innovative solutions to reduce the cost of maintenance.

What does that involve?

Mr Horne: A range of options: new technology in terms of machinery. We are converting as much of our current cool season grasses over to warm season grasses, which require less water and less maintenance generally. There is a constant review of how we prepare our burial grounds, how we set them up. The planning that goes into them now really looks in a lot of detail at exactly how we are going to maintain them, and the cost of that for the future.

MR COE: I have a final question for today, chair. In table 4 on page 52, current assets are shown as \$8.8 million in cash and cash equivalent, going down to \$6.1 million. That reflects an investment that you making into capital works. That is in the notes. But that is actually still a fair bit of money in terms of the employee expenses of \$1.7 million going down to \$1.3 million. Has that traditionally been the case, that the authority has had fairly good reserves? Is there a particular reason why four times the annual employee expense is required?

Mr Horne: No, we have been gradually building up our reserves, but from time to time, as we are this year, we are spending more than \$3 million this financial year. We expect to do more than has been the case in the last seven or eight years in the near future. Certainly once southern memorial park gets underway, we expect to eat into that a little bit more.

MR COE: Why is there a requirement to build up the reserves as opposed to just putting in a cabinet submission for capital and actually using those cash reserves in other areas of government?

Mr Horne: A lot of those reserves actually are accumulated by prepayments for burial options. The money is actually on both sides of the balance sheet. There is a liability there as well.

MR COE: Sure.

Mr Rattenbury: Chair, are there any other questions?

THE CHAIR: I am just checking with Ms Porter. Any questions?

MS PORTER: No, minister.

THE CHAIR: If there are no other questions for cemeteries, I note that a transcript will be provided. Can you answer any questions that you have taken on notice within five days? Additional questions can be asked three days after the presentation of the transcript. We hope to hear from you in the future.

Minister, we will now move to public transport and that also includes ACTION. Members, this is output class 1, public transport, ACTION, 1.1. Minister, what will the effect of the capital metro be on ACTION as an organisation?

Mr Rattenbury: I think there is a range of likely effects there. As I have said to this committee before, clearly we will need to review the bus network and seek to align

services to integrate with capital metro both in terms of the physical lining up of services. We would be intending to have a single ticket system so that people are able to move from one mode to the other on the same ticket. I guess there are a range of other possible impacts but they would be the main ones. That is it.

THE CHAIR: That is it? Do you expect less people to use the buses when capital metro commences or more, or will it remain the same?

Mr Peters: The light rail running from Gungahlin to Civic basically replaces a section of the red rapid bus route which does obviously carry a number of passengers. However, depending on the ultimate service model that is decided upon, we would expect to be running more frequent services into the stations and the stops and be delivering more patronage to that facility; so there would be some trade off.

THE CHAIR: And on page 37 of the portfolio statement there is a dot point there that states:

continue to work with Capital Metro Agency to integrate future bus and light rail networks

How are you working with capital metro to achieve that?

Mr Peters: That is the fourth dot point on page 37. There is a strong governance arrangement around capital metro involving obviously the board. Then there is a working group and various project groups that are established underneath that in the public transport space. For instance, we share our patronage and any sort of modelling data that we have with that group and look at impacts in that way. We try to establish the correct service model, as I said before, around which services run to the station and how that might look as a sort of hub and spoke arrangement that you would see with a rail network anywhere else—where the rail line runs and the bus services more or less delivers into the stops and rail performs the mass haul function.

As I mentioned this morning, there is a traffic signal engineer who is essentially working with that group on the traffic light phasings to make sure that they are integrated and established appropriately. We talk to them about our systems—for instance, having an integrated ticketing system.

Our system is MyWay, of course. We are making sure that we integrate any arrangements with the real-time passenger information system that we are currently rolling out. We touch base very regularly both formally and informally to make sure that we are integrating what we do with the future plan for it.

THE CHAIR: You mentioned this morning that there is a traffic light officer working with capital metro. Is there somebody from ACTION seconded into capital metro or is there somebody on the board or the working group?

Mr Peters: In terms of the board, Gary sits on the capital metro board as the DG of TAMS. We do not have a dedicated person from ACTION down there although we have got a guy that used to do our network scheduling a year or so ago who is now down there driving all that service planning for them. But he is actually down at that

agency. The planners and the schedulers that we have in public transport at the moment work very closely with him and with the Capital Metro Agency in developing plans and options for future service options.

MS BERRY: Can I have a supplementary?

THE CHAIR: You certainly may.

MS BERRY: Minister, will capital metro and ACTION both be publicly operated services working together as a public transport service?

Mr Rattenbury: They will certainly be working together. The exact ownership model and financing model for capital metro are yet to be finalised.

THE CHAIR: Supplementary, Mr Coe?

MR COE: With regard to the hub and spoke that you spoke about, you mentioned that often railway stations around the world will have a hub and spoke type set up. Are there any places that you can think of whereby there is a hub and spoke feeding into an at-grade light rail system? For instance, in Melbourne they run parallel to buses. They do not feed in. Buses run parallel to trams. They do not feed into trams. They actually go where trams do not go and the buses will feed into the train stations because a train is much faster. Do you know of many places whereby buses actually feed into a tram that is, in effect, going the same speed that a bus would go?

Mr Peters: I could stand corrected here, Mr Coe. I will check this for you. But I am pretty sure that the Gold Coast model is that model where it will run as a line haul with buses feeding into the stations.

Mr Rattenbury: I think one of the other challenges is that you talk about buses running at the same speed as a tram system. I think this is actually one of the key issues. It comes up in the context of timeliness of services, which I am sure we will come to at some point. It is that the buses are increasingly subject to traffic congestion in Canberra. As motorists are experiencing, there is congestion on the roads. One of the advantages of light rail and one of the future challenges for buses is that congestion issue.

THE CHAIR: Ms Porter, a new question.

MS PORTER: I turn to pages 37 and 38. On page 37 under “2014-15 priorities” reference is made to promoting the use of NXTBUS real-time passenger information system obviously to make transport easier and more reliable through the information that you gather. Is this system fully operational? Secondly, under the strategic objective, which is where it occurs again, it also mentions replacing the ageing bus fleet. I notice that it is mentioned on page 40 that this target will not be met because of the delay in the receipt of new buses. Can you elaborate on the reason why these buses have been delayed and when they might be expected?

Mr Rattenbury: Firstly, on the issue of the NXTBUS that you initially asked about, it is not fully live yet. It is still in testing phase. People will have seen that the screens

have been installed on the buses. At the moment they are running timetable information or where the buses have been fitted with a GPS tracker and the system is live, it is giving up-to-date information.

At the moment there are sort of two levels of information there. We expected to have that live shortly. We are actually looking at over the next six to eight weeks a substantial leap forward in ACTION's delivery of services to customers with the implementation of network 14, which will I believe enhance the timetable significantly in providing more frequent buses, more direct routes and better connections. Tying that in with NXTBUS, passengers' experience should improve we believe in quite important ways. It will make ACTION more attractive. That is the timing in NXTBUS. We do not have an exact date yet, but it is weeks rather than months, we believe. Mr Peters will speak to the delays in the buses.

Mr Peters: There are 77 new buses being purchased over a four-year period. Essentially, we just took a bit longer in the contract negotiation phase to make sure that we got the right supplier at the end of the day. We have signed the contract—that took us a bit longer to make sure that we got through that—and the buses are being delivered now.

We do expect to meet that target, but the reason we did not meet it this year was because we thought we would have more being delivered by now. But they are starting to be delivered and they will be delivered over that four-year time frame. We do expect to meet that target at the end of the day. Essentially, we have ordered the buses. They are coming. It is just a matter of the timing of the delivery.

MS PORTER: So where are they coming from?

Mr Roncon: Scania was the successful contractor. The Euro 6 compliant buses are the latest technology in terms of emissions. They are actually being constructed in Adelaide. The chassis comes from overseas, from Scania, and then the body of the bus and the rest of the bus is built in Adelaide.

MS PORTER: You mentioned that network 14 is going to be introduced very shortly. Page 109 of budget paper 3 mentions delivery of additional weekend bus services in new suburbs. Is this part of the network 14 rollout or is this additional to that? Will there be additional services for other locations as well under 14.

Mr Rattenbury: Under network 14 overall there will be more services running every day, although—yes, that is right. The additional services to new suburbs may just take us a little longer to get implemented. The focus is on network 14. This is about getting services to new suburbs that have not previously had a weekend bus service. In addition to network 14 are the new weekend services.

Mr Peters: To add a little bit more to that, the way the business runs is that the network during the week is a five-day business rather than a seven-day business. So those shifts need to be allocated through a process that we agree in the enterprise agreement and that sort of locks in the weekday service. There is a formal process whereas the weekends are essentially voluntary services which we do not need to go through to that extent. We can introduce those at any point in time that makes sense to

customers and ourselves. Our focus at the moment is getting the weekday services right for network 14.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe has a supplementary on NXTBUS and network 14.

MR COE: Firstly, with regard to the procurement of the buses, how many of our buses have been held up in the yard at Custom Coaches?

Mr Peters: Custom Coaches is the body builder, and that company is currently in administration. Scania holds the main contract with the ACT government. Custom Coaches is, essentially, a subcontractor to Scania. At the moment their business is trading and our expectation is that that will continue.

MR COE: So the yard is not locked up anymore?

Mr Peters: No. We are still getting delivery of the buses that we expected to get delivery of, but obviously we are keeping a very close watching brief on what is happening in that space.

MR COE: In the event that—and it will be a real tragedy given Custom Coaches' service to Australian transport for a long time—they do cease to trade, what liability does the territory have, as opposed to the head contractor?

Mr Peters: Our contract is with Scania who is the head contractor. In a sense, if that did come to pass—and none of us would like to see that happen but if it did happen—Scania would need to make good the buses to the territory. Our exposure is nil.

MR COE: On the issue of procurement, were there any complaints from other manufacturers about the procurement process?

Mr Peters: I probably need to take some advice on whether I would answer that in this forum. It was a Shared Services procurement and it may have some commercial in-confidence issues.

MR COE: Is any litigation currently taking place with regard to procurement of those buses?

Mr Peters: Not that I am aware of, no.

Mr Roncon: No, not that we are aware of.

MR COE: Is that because the pre-litigation process is still being carried out or is it because all parties are content or are not pursuing it?

Mr Peters: I do not think I would answer that, Mr Coe. That would be in-confidence stuff. But I am not aware of any particular issues in that space.

THE CHAIR: Why would it be in-confidence?

Mr Peters: If there are legal proceedings I would probably prefer not to answer that.

THE CHAIR: Whether there are or not is a statement of fact. It is not asking for detail about the—

Mr Peters: I am not aware that there are.

Mr Roncon: No, we are certainly not aware. As part of the tender process, anyone that tenders is provided with the opportunity for a debrief after that if they have been unsuccessful. Two or three of the unsuccessful tenderers took up that opportunity and, as far as we know, everything is fine.

MR COE: With regard to the specs of the buses that were put out to tender, were any of the components required in any of the buses only to be provided by one supplier?

Mr Peters: Not to my knowledge, no.

MR COE: So all the major components in the supply chain, or the companies in the supply chain, are all in effect competitive and all the products that are required are all products in a competitive market?

Mr Peters: Yes, it was an open tender process.

MR COE: I guess what I am getting to is: were there any components where it was pretty much stipulated that they had to come from one supplier?

Mr Peters: No, not to my knowledge, Mr Coe. It was an open tender process and any and all companies could bid.

MR COE: That is for the head contract, but in terms of the components that were required as part of that head contract, were any of those components, in effect, stipulated to be from a certain manufacturer or a certain capability that only one manufacturer provides?

Mr Roncon: Certainly not to my knowledge, Mr Coe.

Mr Peters: As you can imagine, it was a pretty comprehensive specification in a tender document. We could go back and trawl through and check it, but to my knowledge it was an open tender process. Any number of companies could bid.

MR COE: As an example of what I am getting at: say there is a certain type of air conditioner that only one manufacturer builds. Is it possible that that one manufacturer could therefore dictate who the winning bidder is?

Mr Roncon: No, not to my knowledge, Mr Coe.

Mr Rattenbury: If you have something you would like to share, Mr Coe, we would be happy to look into it.

MR COE: I have been given a piece of information in confidence. I will go back to the person and go from there.

Mr Rattenbury: I am happy to take it up outside the estimates process and just work on it if you do receive further information.

MR COE: Sure. Finally, with regard to the new EBA which has been signed, which was made mention of earlier, there is still no progress with regard to a seven-day roster. Did ACTION seek to have that incorporated in this round or has it been put off again?

Mr Peters: We obviously discuss a whole range of things during bargaining around trying to improve the business. I think we might have raised that as an early thing. Essentially, the way wages are structured at the moment means it would cost a significant amount to introduce seven days with the current enterprise agreement. So we did not really pursue it that far this time.

MR COE: Do you know of any other government-owned bus operations in the country that still operate on a five-day roster?

Mr Peters: I am obviously aware of Brisbane Transport, which is a seven-day business. I do not think there are others.

Mr Roncon: From the ACTION perspective, it operates seven days a week. It has an enterprise agreement that has a clause in there that talks about five days. As Mr Peters mentioned, in any negotiations or discussions around that the starting point is always to get that particular clause in the agreement and have the ACTION business recognised as a seven-day-a week business. That often meets with rejection from the other party, and you have got to have two parties in agreement to be able to change that. It is a work in progress, and we will continue to try and do that.

MR COE: From ACTION's point of view, or from the government's point of view, what were the wins in the EBA? What are the steps forward compared to the previous one?

Mr Peters: Last time around there was a long and protracted process around bargaining which caused significant disruption in the business and there were a couple of times when buses were actually off the road, causing disruption to the community. We looked at, essentially, the change and reform that we got out of that last process and assessed what we might want out of bargaining this time around. It is probably fair to say that this time the pay rises have been given in accordance with the government core.

Whilst there is probably not any specific efficiency, or major efficiency things, that you can point to in the business, I think we are in a position now where we have tacit agreement with the unions to work on improving the business outside the bargaining framework. We are seeing that with how we are being able to introduce things like revenue protection, which we introduced this week on the buses, and the way we are implementing network 14. We have had a much more cooperative and collaborative approach to working out what routes make sense and what timings make sense.

MR COE: Did the government use any external negotiators?

Mr Rattenbury: For the purposes of negotiating the EBA? No.

MR COE: It was all done in house?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes.

MR COE: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry has a supplementary as well.

MS BERRY: Would you say that bus drivers are generally happy people, with their work arrangements? Do you know?

Mr Roncon: Yes, most definitely, Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: Is that something that you would use to measure your business's outcomes—the outcome on the wellbeing of your staff?

Mr Roncon: Absolutely. Obviously morale is very important in terms of any workforce. On any given day any of us can get out of bed the wrong side and have a bad day, but I think overall if you balance it across a year or across a period of time, I would say morale is very positive. On most of the buses that I catch and the drivers I talk to, and the staff across ACTION, they think it is the greatest job on earth. They are very happy.

Mr Peters: That is probably also reflected in the customer satisfaction indicators that we have, which we have met. Drivers are happy and responsive and deal with customers well and the customers are happy and like catching the service again.

MS BERRY: Would you say that working on a five-day-a-week roster rather than a seven-day-a-week roster lends itself to having a better lifestyle? That would make a workforce more happy, generally speaking?

Mr Roncon: I think if you look at that—

MS BERRY: You can balance it out.

Mr Roncon: Most definitely. The only rider you would put on that is the nature of the ACTION business being an operational business 21 hours a day, virtually seven days a week. It means that to try and always get the family-friendly balance that the rest of us might enjoy is not always possible because there are people that are going to have to work into the night or very early in the mornings; they cannot have the 8 o'clock to 4 o'clock shifts.

MR COE: That might suit some people as well.

Mr Roncon: Yes, and that is some of the feedback that we get from our staff—that if you have a husband and wife working, the husband can be at home during the day looking after the family and then he can go and drive a bus at night when his wife has

come home from work. All those systems work pretty well.

MS BERRY: Thank you for those answers.

Mr Roncon: Sure.

MS BERRY: Regarding network 14, minister, you alluded earlier to bus services in new Macgregor and Dunlop. Will the new weekend services—because Macgregor does not have a weekend bus service; it only has one bus service—be included in those announcements?

Mr Rattenbury: As I said earlier, we will not necessarily time those new weekend services with the start of network 14. The new initiatives funded in the budget will probably come a little bit later, just in terms of getting the main network going, and then we will add those weekend services.

MR COE: Why can't they be incorporated in the network? The budget was handed down in early June; surely ACTION would have been given the heads-up some time ago that there would be some funds for new routes?

Mr Peters: The answer to that is that it is purely a resource issue with our schedulers and our planners, and being able to negotiate shifts with the drivers. As I say, we really need to negotiate the Monday to Friday shifts with the drivers, whereas we do not have that same constraint with the weekend shifts, which are voluntary shifts. At the moment our planners and schedulers—and we do not have an abundance of them; they are quite hard to attract and keep—are focused on getting the Monday to Friday network and shifts right. Once that is done then we will simply move to the weekends. The weekend changes, once we get to focus on them, will not take us a lot of time.

MS BERRY: With those bus services in Dunlop and Macgregor, with some of the problems that came to light after those suburbs came into being, there were problems regarding suburb design and bus access because of that design. What is being done to ensure that this sort of problem does not happen in new suburb developments?

Mr Peters: It is picked up in a number of places. One is through the initial planning process where we look at a new estate and the road network. The actual network for the bus service is normally called a collector-type road, which is normally a bit wider, up to 10 or 11 metres wide, so that it can actually accommodate buses passing plus stops plus parked cars on one side. Usually it is about whether that network actually links through the suburb or whether it goes all over the shop. Is there a nice, obvious route through the suburbs that is appropriately spaced to serve the maximum passengers that we can? That is picked up in the planning part of it. The ACTION planners are a more formal part of that process now, so they get to see those things and comment on them.

The second part of that is our TAMS road design standard, which we are currently in the process of reviewing with industry. An issue that you have in west Macgregor is that the road is not really wide enough to take a bus once you have parking and all the rest of it along there. We make sure that if it is identified as a bus route in a plan it is actually wide enough to take a bus, and that becomes the standard that development

plans are assessed against.

MS BERRY: That is not something that happened previously, obviously?

Mr Peters: It obviously did not happen to the extent that you—

MS BERRY: The bus route was planned but not actually getting a bus into the street.

Mr Peters: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I have a supplementary that goes to something said a bit earlier. The five-day roster: does it make ACTION less effective, less efficient or more costly to run?

Mr Peters: James can probably provide some more on this. If you have a seven-day business, essentially, where you can basically assign shifts to drivers and they must drive them across seven days, it certainly gives us more certainty as a business that we are going to be able to fill shifts on the weekend because the shifts go across seven days. They are seven-day shifts; they are not five-day shifts. Whilst we do not currently have any real issues with attracting drivers to do the weekend shifts, at some point there will become fewer and for a range of reasons we might not be able to attract drivers to volunteer to do those shifts. So the real benefit of the seven-day business is that we can guarantee those shifts are filled across the seven days.

In terms of expense, the expense is really the driver's wage. We need to have a driver to fill a shift. ACTION has a composite rate, which means we are probably cheaper than most other places to run services on the weekend because other places probably have penalty rates for driving on the weekend, whereas we do not. We have an agreed composite rate.

THE CHAIR: We will move along. A new question from Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: I want to go to accountability indicators g., h. and i. on cost per passenger, fare box recovery and passenger boardings. Regarding cost per passenger, on what basis does ACTION believe that the figure will decrease in 2014-15? We are looking at the portfolio statement, page 14.

Mr Peters: There are a couple of things that are going to happen to us in 2014-15 which we expect will mean that the number of passengers that we carry will increase. The first of those is we have a new bus network which we think is going to be more attractive to passengers because we have basically looked at our services that do not carry many people and whether we can satisfy that demand in some other way and try to increase the services that we have during the peak. So we would expect to carry more passengers with our next network. That is point 1.

The second point is that the introduction of pay parking in the parliamentary triangle, which has never been in place before, we expect would drive more passengers onto the public transport system. There is a pretty well-proven relationship between the cost of parking and public transport use.

The third point is that the way we provide information to customers will be much enhanced with the introduction of the real-time system. People will be able to have the timetable information and some certainty about where their bus at their bus stop is via their smartphone. Those three things, in our mind, should drive our patronage up.

MRS JONES: You are saying that will occur by having a better network and some better services. But given that the cost per passenger has increased sharply over the last few years, is anything being done at the same time to reduce the burdens that are pushing it up?

Mr Peters: In a nutshell, yes. We have focused on looking at how we manage things like our inventory, for instance, in the business, where we think perhaps we can get some efficiencies and reduce our expenses in that area. Most of the cost of the business is actually in the drivers' and the mechanics' wages. With the efficiencies that we get on the other side of the coin, we really have to go in and look quite hard for them.

MRS JONES: On the fare box recovery, why was the fare box recovery as a percentage of total network operating costs lower than expected?

Mr Peters: It is a combination of factors. I guess the main one is that our patronage this year did not hit our target.

MR COE: When I first came to this place, parking across the road cost \$6.70 a day. It is now \$14. In that same time period, ACTION patronage has gone backwards. I am just curious to explore that link between parking and bus patronage. Does that necessarily stack up in the ACT?

MRS JONES: Is it just a general correlation or do you have actually have some research into it?

Mr Peters: There is pretty well-established research from around the world. It is called elasticities. If you put the parking price up by this much then you would expect your public transport patronage to go up by that much. So the relationship is pretty well proven. In terms of our patronage in Canberra, it is not only driven by parking price. There are a range of factors that affect whether our patronage is going to go up or down, not the least of which is the weather. On a particularly cold day we will not pick up—

MR COE: But that is a constant across all years, though.

Mr Peters: It could vary. There is also the number of uni students that catch our services. For instance, on-campus accommodation has increased significantly over that period, so the number in that category of passengers perhaps has not grown as much as we expected. People's lifestyles have also changed over that period. For some people the bus may not be as effective a mode if they want to go to the gym or do all sorts of other links or trips, which is another phenomenon that has happened.

MR COE: With that environment how confident are you about increasing patronage as a result of the new network?

Mr Peters: If you look at the research done elsewhere in other places that have introduced real-time passenger information systems, other places have increased their peak services—the number of services that they offer during peak periods. In other places that have increased their parking costs, they do see increases in patronage. I have no reason to think that we would not see the same thing here.

Mr Rattenbury: Certainly, Mr Coe, there is a group of people in Canberra who have not used the bus for a long time and have formed a view that buses simply do not work for them. That is why ACTION are undertaking a range of measures to try and get people to give it a go. We have had the early bird fares as a recent trial. We have had some fare-free events and the like. We are trying to use those opportunities to perhaps break some of those habitual perspectives of ACTION. There are plenty of people who find it a very useful service for them.

MR COE: Of course, absolutely.

Mr Rattenbury: So it is about trying to entice some of those people. As a long-term Canberran I think that view has built up that ACTION does not deliver for people. We have to try and break some of that stereotype.

MR COE: For some people, in some circumstances it will be great. For instance, in Belconnen two suburbs get, in effect, treated quite differently. There has to be a boundary somewhere, I guess, but with Giralang and Evatt, from Giralang you can get a bus directly to the city and directly to Belconnen. In Evatt, from a house 500 metres or a kilometre away, you have to get on the 300s; therefore you have to go through the Belconnen town centre and thereafter. There are always going to be some sort of suburb or boundary issues, but there is a reality that, as it stands at the moment, some suburbs are better served than others.

Mr Rattenbury: Yes. Certainly, in people's individual circumstances, for some it will work well for them and for others—someone gave the example of people who go to the gym or do all of these other things—it depends on where their various needs are in a day.

MS BERRY: How is the early bird trial going?

Mr Rattenbury: Good.

Mr Roncon: Yes, very well. There has been a significant shift in people's behaviour from post 7.30 to pre 7.30 to take up those measures.

MS PORTER: Is this going to become a permanent feature?

Mr Rattenbury: We need to do some evaluation now that it has finished. We will look at the number of passengers that it has shifted. The purpose was twofold. In getting some people to go earlier or enticing new people to give it a try, it also potentially frees up some of the buses later for more people to be able to get on or to be less crowded, which is an issue we have had in some places.

MRS JONES: Does the new network include a bus directly from Gungahlin to either the airport or Russell offices?

Mr Rattenbury: The 200 goes via Russell.

Mr Peters: The 200 goes to Russell. We have been talking to the airport about bus services to the airport, and that is one of the ones we are looking at. There is an express that goes from Gungahlin to the airport that has been carrying very few people. There is another route that goes out there from the city, which we are looking to make more direct.

MRS JONES: Do you advertise to passenger groupings? For example, you have a group of people at the airport who come from Gungahlin down that road every day, do you do direct advertising within those building about routes?

Mr Roncon: Not to that level, no. Certainly from the current network I think the 757 will not be in network 14 simply because the patronage does not justify it. But we do not physically go into buildings. That said, though—

MRS JONES: Even via email or updates?

Mr Roncon: The minister mentioned earlier some of the marketing we have been doing and some road shows we have done through the parliamentary triangle. We are looking at that as a bit of a model for how we will start to target individual areas such as Brindabella park—

MRS JONES: Yes, where you have maybe a map of routes that come into certain large workplaces.

Mr Rattenbury: We found the experience in the parliamentary triangle was very positive in that ACTION was there. People were able to come down and say, “Look, I live in Banks, what are my options?” I think people really appreciated that very direct ability to just walk up to somebody and say, “I haven’t caught the bus before. I haven’t caught it for years. What’s on offer?”

MRS JONES: Certainly that gives you an opportunity for real behavioural change.

MR COE: Has the early bird offer reinforced the view that people are not price sensitive for public transport? I have heard a lot of people say that here in the ACT a saving of \$2.84 is not a huge amount of money and that the big issue is the commuting time, the waiting time, the door-to-door time. What has the early bird MyWay data shown?

Mr Roncon: The early results of the study suggest that for a dollar people will shift their behaviour but they will not necessarily shift it from, say, 8.15 to 7.25.

MR COE: From 7.45 to 7.30? So people who already take the bus going slightly earlier as opposed to getting a surge of new people, is that correct?

Mr Roncon: There has been an uplift in patronage certainly in that time slot, and it

has mainly come out of that 7.30 to 7.45 time frame and a little bit in that 7.45 to 8, which you would expect.

Mr Rattenbury: That goes to Ms Porter's question earlier about whether we will continue. That is the evaluation we have to do now—has it delivered new passengers? There is a cost in obviously charging less, so we have to weigh up whether it is worth that cost. Does it create more space later that others might take up? They are things that need to be done in a bit of detail now.

MRS JONES: How long was the trial?

Mr Rattenbury: It finishes this week. It will have been eight weeks.

MRS JONES: In some ways, that is only enough time for some people to find out about it.

Mr Rattenbury: There has been some fairly extensive advertising. You might have seen the posters at the bus stops announcing it.

MR COE: I think is it a good idea.

Mr Rattenbury: It is worth giving it a go, and we will now do the analysis to see whether it should remain in place or not.

THE CHAIR: Mr Coe, a new question.

MR COE: I recall, minister, a media release relatively recently about the government considering different fuel types and different fuel options for new buses, is that right?

Mr Rattenbury: I must confess, it does not ring a bell, but go on.

MR COE: If so, what are they?

Mr Roncon: No. The government has invested very heavily in the Euro 6 technology with the most recent purchase of buses and before that Euro 5. There has been a trial of some biodiesel going back three or four years.

MR COE: I thought there was something in relation to the Tuggeranong depot. I know you have got the CNG there, but I thought there was some work there.

Mr Peters: There is a project in the capital works program that starts this financial year to replace fuel tanks.

MR COE: Is it just replacing the CNG or is it diesel?

Mr Peters: No, it is for the diesel fuel tanks. They are just old.

MR COE: And the CNG fleet is going to continue indefinitely?

Mr Roncon: You could probably not say "indefinitely" Mr Coe. Certainly the first

generation of CNG fleet buses were purchased in 2004, I think. Back in January we had a few issues with those around heat. They have certainly improved since, the technology. Getting back to your earlier question about procurement and tendering for buses and that sort of thing, we go out to market and set parameters about what we might be looking for in terms of fleet and then the market responds. While you would not rule it out, you could not necessarily rule it in.

The Euro 6 outputs are as clean if not cleaner than anything else that is on the market, including the CNG. The Euro 6 all have an AdBlue additive as well, and that is part of the new fuel facilities that are being built so that adds to that efficiency and lower emissions.

MR COE: Some bus operators elsewhere have put to me that it is possible to over spec buses and you can easily spend a lot of money to get an incremental improvement, whereas if you had Euro 5 buses, that might free up a lot more money to do other environmental initiatives. Was Euro 6 the standard that you had to go with or did you consider Euro 5 and saving many thousands of dollars per bus and reinvesting that money elsewhere?

Mr Roncon: From memory, it was really very tight. I think in the end the Euro 6 were only marginally more expensive than the Euro 5. They were still within the budget envelope and there was not a lot of difference in cost and quite a significant difference in terms of lower emissions.

MR COE: Is that just for Scania buses or other buses as well?

Mr Roncon: I think Scania were the only ones that were providing the Euro 6 option for us.

MR COE: Was Euro 6 stipulated in the contract or not?

Mr Roncon: I do not believe so, no.

THE CHAIR: In regards to improving patronage, does ACTION do surveys of non-ACTION users to find out what are the barriers to getting them on to the bus?

Mr Roncon: Yes, certainly. TAMS undertake a customer survey program each year and we have the results of that. There has been a quite significant increase in customer satisfaction with the business. We are certainly getting better in that space, not only dealing with our existing passengers, who are unquestionably important and perhaps the most important, but also trying to get out to the wider community. The minister mentioned earlier the road shows that we have done out in the parliamentary triangle. That was designed to get to people. There is a bit of a myth that there is no service through the parliamentary triangle when it is actually the most heavily serviced area of the network.

Getting out and being able to talk to people has been part of the process of attracting new people. Getting into the social media space—Twitter and recently Facebook—has been another good avenue for us. If you look after your existing customers and they speak highly of you, they then recommend to non-users, and that is part of our

marketing and customer experience process as well.

THE CHAIR: But have you actually surveyed non-users of ACTION to determine what are the major barriers to getting them on the bus? It is well and good to take the TAMS customer survey to find out whether people are satisfied or not. It is the ones who are not using it that I am interested in.

Mr Roncon: Yes and no is probably the answer. We are always looking for ways to do that. Through that social media space we will often put out comments and lines asking what are the impediments to catching the bus, what are the barriers .

THE CHAIR: How many people have responded that way?

Mr Roncon: I do not have that figure off the top of my head.

THE CHAIR: Can you take that on notice?

Mr Roncon: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Is it a large number of people? Because if you do not know what the problem is, how do you fix it?

Mr Roncon: I will have to take that on notice.

THE CHAIR: You do not do any specific surveys to find those who do not use the service and find out what is wrong?

Mr Roncon: Not as such, no. Certainly not to date.

THE CHAIR: Minister, is that worth doing?

Mr Rattenbury: It seems like a very interesting idea.

THE CHAIR: I would have thought it was logical that if patronage is not increasing you would find out what the problem is. You cannot fix what you do not know.

Mr Rattenbury: We get plenty of public feedback. We had around two and a half thousand responses to the consultation on the new network last year. We are not short of public feedback. But the specific question you raise is interesting—

THE CHAIR: But of that two and a half thousand, how many were existing users and how many were potential users?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not know. The point you make is an interesting one and we will have a look at it.

THE CHAIR: Mr Byles, how many people is the TAMS customer survey done with?

Mr Byles: A thousand people, a random survey.

THE CHAIR: Is it possible for the committee to have a copy of the survey?

Mr Byles: Certainly. I have got a copy here. I can circulate that to the committee.

MR COE: How are the random people chosen?

Mr Byles: It is done through a company called MicroMix, and we leave it to the company to choose.

MR COE: And that is by mail, is it?

Mr Byles: No, it is by phone.

THE CHAIR: How many questions about ACTION were in that survey?

Mr Byles: It is in the survey. But one of the first questions is: "Have you caught an ACTION bus?" And then it goes on to the satisfaction of catching that service.

THE CHAIR: And if they say no to catching a bus, does it ask why not?

Mr Byles: No, it does not, from memory. I think the point you raise, as the minister says, is an interesting one which we should pursue.

THE CHAIR: I take the point on elasticity of the market and if you increase one factor or decrease another, it changes. Canberra is unique in that, from top to bottom, it is probably, what, 70 kilometres. It has got 380,000 people. Hornsby to Cronulla is the same as Amaroo to Banks, except there are five million or six million people there. If we are going to cater for the needs of Canberrans, how appropriate is it to put, as an overlay, surveys from other cities that are geographically and demographically entirely different to the ACT?

Mr Rattenbury: I think we will just take it as a comment. As I said, we have taken the suggestion on board. I think it is a good idea.

MS BERRY: Can I give you some feedback right now?

THE CHAIR: Are you an ACTION bus user or not?

MS BERRY: Yes, I am. I have my MyWay card. About a month ago my garage door fell off and my car was trapped inside my garage. I was catching the bus. But my bus is perfect because it is not far from my house. It is less than 100 metres from my house. I have got one of those concrete ones. That is cool as well.

Mr Rattenbury: The bomb shelters.

MS BERRY: The bus that I catch, the 43, goes down my street and past the school. My children and I got on the bus together. The bus driver let my kids travel for free. He could tell I was clearly stressed. He stopped and waited long enough for me to get off the bus and say goodbye to my kids. They walked off to school and I then got back on the bus. If you could provide those services across Canberra, I reckon you would

have more people catching buses.

Mr Rattenbury: What you do underline, though—and this is the feedback we get quite a bit—is that people really like the drivers. It goes to the earlier question about whether they are happy. A lot of the drivers do make those extra efforts. They chat to people, and that is obviously good.

MR COE: With regard to the surveys, this part of TAMS does not do the mail-out surveys?

Mr Rattenbury: No. You have asked me about the mail-out surveys before.

MR COE: Yes, I have. I received one addressed to Mr A Coe. “What do you think of TAMS?” “If you fill it in we’ll give you a \$2 scratchie. Tell a few of your mates and we’ll give them all \$2 scratchies.” I just thought it was a bit odd.

Mr Rattenbury: After you asked me about that—I think it was in the Assembly—I went and asked about it, and I could not track down any information about that. The only thing we have been able to draw as a conclusion is that a company that we must have been using for some project somewhere uses that as an incentive to get responses. But we are not aware of the detail.

MR COE: This letter I got was hand-addressed.

Mr Rattenbury: I think you were being set up.

MR COE: I looked it up in the contract register. It said, “Let us know anybody else who wants to fill it out and we’ll send them all scratchies.” I am happy to send you a copy of the letter.

Mr Rattenbury: If you could, that would be handy. After you asked me I did go back and ask about it and I could not dig up any information.

MR COE: It is PCL, I think.

Mr Rattenbury: We will be happy to have a look into that. As I say, I did follow it up but with no joy.

MR COE: That is interesting.

Mr Rattenbury: It is, especially because it was hand-addressed. I will not speculate.

THE CHAIR: A new question, Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: I notice at page 41, at the top, under note No 8:

The percentage of network operating costs recovered through fare box recoveries is expected to increase as a result of a rise in cost of passenger fares from 4 January ...

That was this year. I am wondering whether or not you saw any change in the number of passenger boardings, given there was a rise in fares. That is my substantive question. But I did have also a supplementary on the issue around buses to the airport. If we provide a bus to the airport through ACTION, will it be allowed to drive up to drop off passengers at the actual entrance or will people have to continue to lug their bags from wherever?

Mr Rattenbury: You can start with the airport.

Mr Peters: If I start with the airport, there is an existing private operator at the airport who picks passengers up and charges them to come into town. We are very aware of that. But we have been in discussions with the airport around providing a service directly to the terminal, to the bottom floor essentially. We can design our service so that it just runs around Brindabella office park slightly differently. That would mean that we could come in and out of there quite streamlined and be able to do what you suggest.

However, we really need to understand what the impact of that might be for the airport and any arrangements that they or the private sector might have. We have sort of started those discussions. I guess in our next network design, because we are going to design the route so that it is quite streamlined, essentially we will be able to duck in there instead of going straight out so that it would not require a major network change if we got to the position where we decided that that was an agreeable thing for us to be doing.

MRS JONES: What days and what hours does the current bus service operate?

Mr Peters: I think he is seven days. I would need to take that on notice.

Mr Rattenbury: The Airport Express.

Mr Roncon: Every day, yes.

MRS JONES: And have negotiations started with drivers at all about that change, if and when it comes in?

Mr Peters: Our drivers?

MRS JONES: Yes.

Mr Peters: No, we are still in preliminary negotiations with the airport.

MS PORTER: So back to the fares.

Mr Rattenbury: The fares increased by 7½ per cent on 4 January this year, and that was a budget 2½ per cent increase along with an additional five per cent increase to cover increased operating costs for the network.

Mr Peters: As I was explaining earlier, the effect of the range of factors on patronage is quite complex. We have not got the level of sophistication, I guess, to work out how

much of the drop in patronage that we have experienced this year was due to the fare increase, how much was due to on-campus living, how much was due to the changes in people's lifestyles. But we are looking at ways that we can get to the bottom of that and be more certain around the various elasticities on those particular factors.

There would have been some impact, as we saw with the early bird. The change in the fare meant that people would move that way. Equally, if you move the fare upwards, then you do move some people off or change their behaviours that way as well.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry.

MS BERRY: I have a question about the safety of kids on buses. Does ACTION buses give a pack to kids for school buses to teach them how to get on a bus and exit a bus safely and that sort of thing? Have you ever thought about having a Kenny Koala-type mascot for ACTION buses?

Mr Roncon: There is a bus wash program that ACTION have been running for many, many years which deals with that preschool level. It takes the kids on a bit of a tour, takes them through the bus wash and that sort of thing. It is really about trying to get them used to getting on, getting off a bus and the whole thrill of it. They get to have a bit of a drive around the depot. That is the sort of early education program we try and do. Do we give out packs? No. But we do that early education process.

MS BERRY: It would be good to build that bus-catching culture at an early age with safety and how they behave on the bus. Would you consider bringing back the *Bus Safe Rap*.

Mr Rattenbury: Funnily enough, someone saw this on YouTube the other day; we had it on in my office. It was quite spectacular. Does anyone know who the blonde kid in the front of it was? He looked familiar.

MS BERRY: There is a rumour circulating around the building that, in fact, it was you that appeared on the original *Bus Safe Rap* video.

Mr Rattenbury: No.

MS BERRY: Not you? Okay.

Mr Roncon: But he would be happy to bust out some moves in the next one.

THE CHAIR: For all those public servants tuned into estimates, if you can identify the blonde kid in the *Bus Safe Rap*, the minister will have a special prize for you.

Mr Rattenbury: There is a Freddo Frog on the line for whoever comes up with the answer.

MS BERRY: Seriously, would you consider something around safety for kids on buses and some packs for schools to give, primary school kids and their parents?

Mr Rattenbury: Ms Berry, we have a school liaison group that ACTION operates

with. It has a range of school representatives on it. I would be happy to have it put on the agenda and will ask whether there are particular things they think would work.

MRS JONES: One of the reasons we have not taken up school-based travel is there is no guarantee of the times the buses come past that are going on directly to school routes. It is difficult for parents to have the confidence that their kids are not going to be standing at the bus stop for 10, 15, 20 minutes. This is one of the major problems we have with trust in a network that does not have a dedicated school network and there are no guarantees of the times.

MS BERRY: Is that a school bus or a network bus?

MRS JONES: It is a network bus because there are not any school-only buses in the ACT.

Mr Rattenbury: There are.

MRS JONES: Are there?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, there are.

MR COE: I note in the new network that it has been flagged that some of those school buses will be cut where there is a route bus that goes past the school and goes on a similar route. What feedback have you had from parents about children who were on the school bus then having to use a route bus?

Mr Rattenbury: The main feedback we have had—you probably saw this in the press in the last week or so—is just concern about having enough time to get used to the new system. I was contacted by a number of parents who said that because of the school holidays they felt there was not going to be enough time, because the school was the main way of communicating the information. This was particularly a concern of the parents in private schools, or non-government schools, because they have three weeks of holidays rather than the government schools having two weeks. Many of them were leaving Canberra for the winter and they were not going to be in town to be able to get the information. That was the primary feedback I have had in recent times. For a range of factors, we have now undertaken to those parents that they will have four weeks of term time notice before the new network comes into effect.

MR COE: But you have not had concerns from a safety or comfort point of view?

Mr Roncon: I guess just the normal bit of uncertainty that people might have because things are going to change, but not in any wave of concern. Just a couple of statistics on school children who log on through the MyWay system: about 23.4 per cent of the patronage is school children. Of those, 59 per cent use a dedicated route service and then connect with a school bus somewhere else, usually in Civic. Then about 41 per cent are on dedicated school runs.

The changes that have been made in network 14 around the school services are really to try and straighten up some routes. There might be a couple of school runs that follow one another and there only needs to be one. Again, that is all based on data or

hard evidence to support it. There have been a couple of services, due to very limited patronage, where they will be encouraged to catch a route service and then connect with a school service in the city.

As part of the introduction of network 14, for the schools that are most impacted we plan to go out and have a bit of a roadshow. We plan to go and talk to them about what the changes are and how they are going to play out. We will make sure that we hit as many of those as we possibly can.

THE CHAIR: Just to go back to Ms Berry's question on safety on buses, what is the number of incidents that were reported on a bus, say, for the last 12 months—passenger on driver and passenger on passenger?

Mr Roncon: You mean trips and falls and all those sorts of things?

THE CHAIR: Not accidents, but abuse—verbal abuse, violence?

Mr Roncon: Against the driver?

THE CHAIR: Firstly, against drivers and then passenger on passenger.

Mr Roncon: Very low. Unfortunately, we do have the odd incident where a driver might be abused or spat at or, in limited circumstances, punched. But it is not regular. Maybe there is one a month or one every couple of months; six a year is about the average. It is very unfortunate, but we are quick to deal with it. We have got some good processes in place to provide support to the driver. With CCTV now, usually we can easily identify who the offender is, so we are able to act pretty quickly.

THE CHAIR: And passenger against passenger?

Mr Roncon: I could not give you statistics, but very few reports that I am aware of where passengers are actually going at one another.

THE CHAIR: If you could take it on notice, say, for both numbers for the last three years.

Mr Roncon: Sure.

THE CHAIR: Just for clarity: network 14 is due to begin when?

Mr Rattenbury: We do not have an exact date, but within the next few months.

THE CHAIR: The next few months?

Mr Rattenbury: Weeks rather than months is the sort of—

THE CHAIR: And NXTBUS is due to be operational when, given it was—

Mr Rattenbury: The same sort of time frame.

THE CHAIR: first mooted in, what, 2006?

Mr Rattenbury: I do not know the history. It is the same sort of time frame—weeks rather than months.

THE CHAIR: So by the end of third term. Weeks rather than months. A new question, Mrs Jones.

MRS JONES: I just want to go to off-peak single concession fares—BP3, page 253. Why is the government increasing the off-peak single concession fare?

Mr Rattenbury: The government is increasing this because, compared to other states and territories, the ACT significantly undercharges for off-peak concession fares. In other jurisdictions concession fares are generally about 50 per cent of the standard fare. In the ACT at the moment it is 28 per cent of the standard fare. We thought it was appropriate that 50 per cent is still a substantial discount.

MRS JONES: What will the fare be in 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18?

Mr Rattenbury: At this stage the only committed fare is 2014-15, and that sees an increase from the current price of 62c per ride up to 79c. But the plan is to increase it to that 50 per cent mark by 2016-17. I deliberately took a decision to not do it in one go but, rather, to step it over a number of years to ease the transition.

MS PORTER: We still have the gold card in place?

Mr Rattenbury: Yes, and that is a good point; thank you, Ms Porter. All people over 70 still get free travel. That has been reduced in recent years from 75 to 70. Seniors get that free travel.

THE CHAIR: A final question, Mr Coe.

MR COE: Perhaps you can give an update on whether the notorious person on the bus at the Raiders has been caught yet?

Mr Rattenbury: Sorry?

MR COE: The incident on the bus. Have they been identified yet or not?

Mr Roncon: Not that I am aware of, Mr Coe. One party has but not the star of the show.

Mr Rattenbury: It was a particularly unpleasant incident, that one.

MR COE: Yes.

THE CHAIR: We might call it quits there. We have got capital metro at 3.30. Minister, thank you, and to all the staff of Territory and Municipal Services who have appeared today. There will be a transcript provided. If you would like to make any corrections or clarifications when you have that transcript, if you could contact the

secretariat and the committee will look at it. Any questions taken on notice, if we could have answers within five working days. And, members, if you have additional questions, can you put them on notice once the transcript has arrived; you have three days in which to do that.

Sitting suspended from 3.12 until 3.40 pm.

Appearances:

Corbell, Mr Simon, Attorney-General, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Workplace Safety and Industrial Relations and Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development

Capital Metro Agency

Thomas, Ms Emma, Project Director

Edghill, Mr Duncan, Executive Director, Finance and Economics

Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate

Ekelund, Ms Dorte, Director-General

THE CHAIR: Welcome, minister, and officials from the Capital Metro Agency to the 2014-15 estimates. Before you is a pink privilege card detailing your obligations and protections that privilege offers. If you could acknowledge that you have read and understand those privileges?

Mr Corbell: Yes, Mr Chairman.

THE CHAIR: So acknowledged; thank you, minister. If a question is taken on notice I ask that it be acknowledged that the question has been taken on notice. Output class 1, light rail network stage 1, by a motion in the Assembly, has two hours allocated to it, so we will commence. Minister, would you like to make an opening statement?

Mr Corbell: Mr Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this afternoon. Thank you also for your indulgence in relation to the slight delay in attending this afternoon due to an unexpected announcement with the Chief Minister.

I would like to make an opening statement in relation to this matter. Today we are here to answer questions in relation to Capital Metro Agency budget allocations and key performance indicators for the 2014-15 budget. The Capital Metro Agency is planning, designing and delivering one of the most significant urban transformation projects ever undertaken by the ACT government.

Recent comments that have been made about the project in the media and elsewhere focus on questions about the need for light rail and whether or not investment in alternative transport modes, such as buses, is an acceptable alternative.

Today I would like to outline why some of these arguments need to be put in their proper perspective. The first is that it is a false dichotomy to suggest that Canberra can only have one form of public transport to the exclusion of others. Indeed, the most successful cities have integrated public transport systems that integrate both bus and rail services, including light and heavy rail, to manage the transport task.

Capital metro is not about working against or to the exclusion of the bus service. Indeed, by investing in this project we are making an investment in better public transport. As a city with one of the highest car dependency rates in the world, we need to reinvent the provision of public transport to ensure that we can develop more

sustainably and that we can improve the quality of life and the economic productivity of our city. Light rail forms the backbone of a well-integrated effective public transport network that is easy to use, frequent and reliable.

Secondly, I would like to turn to the issue of using business-as-usual estimates for population growth. We have to recognise that even using business-as-usual estimates, the Gungahlin district is growing at five times the rate of the territory as a whole. Without effective public transport, the city-to-Gungahlin corridor will become increasingly congested and less productive.

The transport task in north Canberra, and particularly along the Gungahlin-to-city corridor, requires significant investment in both buses and roads just to keep pace right now. Surely it is clear that putting more and more land under roads can only take us so far before a more effective solution is needed.

Thirdly, it is important to highlight issues around land use planning and transport planning and transport network delivery in the territory. Light rail is a powerful tool to revitalise and reshape cities. Light rail is not just another form of public transport. Permanent tracks in the ground provide business certainty. They encourage and bring forward investment and better connect people and places.

It is difficult to imagine that our city can continue to grow and reach social and economic potential without a change in the way we approach our pattern of settlement. More intensified land use, particularly along our major transport corridors, which is, of course, a key objective of the ACT planning strategy, is a key enabler for us to reach that goal. Unless we invest in the requisite transport infrastructure to encourage and facilitate that intensification, sustainable growth will not be able to be achieved and we will not meet our broader strategic planning objectives.

Turning to the rationale for this project, light rail will encourage smarter land use. As our population grows to over 500,000, we need to use our land more efficiently because continued urban sprawl is neither sustainable in economic or environmental terms. Capital metro will help support the planning strategy by encouraging infill along the corridor and offering a range of housing needs in Gungahlin.

Capital metro is also a catalyst for redevelopment along the corridor. It will also help in the revitalisation of the city centre. The government has set out in the city plan and city-to-the-lake initiatives the enormous urban potential for activity—residential, commercial, cultural and recreational—in our city centre. Capital metro is a way of leveraging and empowering those investment decisions.

Light rail is much more than about achieving a transport task, as important as that is. It is also about promoting investment in a local economy and encouraging more job concentration, development and growth in both the public and the private sectors.

It is worth highlighting the employment benefits of these projects. Looking, for example, at the Gold Coast light rail project, stage 1 of GoldLinQ on the Gold Coast has generated over 6,000 jobs. In Manchester, the metro link expansion facilitated over 3,000 permanent new jobs in the corridor. In Washington, areas within two kilometres of a light rail stop have eight times the employment density of other areas

in that city.

This form of transport is well known for its ability to stimulate economies and to support significant job numbers, both during construction and throughout its operation. We know that there are significant pockets of unemployment in our city, particularly in the youth sector. Youth unemployment is more than 11 per cent. Capital metro is just one example of a strategic long-term investment that will help diversify the economy and attract employment and economic opportunities to our city.

Recently I was pleased to release analysis undertaken by EY—Ernst & Young—commissioned by the Capital Metro Agency on the potential for local employment opportunities that can be expected to flow from this project, both in the short and the long term. That job creation analysis is on the public record and available on the CMA website. It has provided the first detailed insight into the number of jobs that can be supported by this project—over 3½ thousand jobs, direct and indirect, during the construction period. But even more significantly, mapping out over a 30-year period from the start of construction, the analysis indicates that up to 50,000 jobs in our local economy can be supported.

In anticipation of the immediate short-term employment benefits, a skills analysis, gap analysis and training analysis is underway with the Education and Training Directorate to identify where skills shortages exist and where training opportunities should be established to increase employment opportunities for people in our city.

Predictably, many of these requirements are in the construction and engineering sectors, but it does not stop there. As is the case with any significant infrastructure project, there are flow-on effects to areas such as hospitality, retail and other services. At a time when our city needs that type of investment most, this project has significant opportunity for us.

Projects across the world have also demonstrated how light rail can attract investment and opportunity to areas that would otherwise suffer decline. The city and Northbourne Avenue areas have significant potential that light rail will help to realise. The Capital Metro Agency will work closely with the Land Development Agency on land release strategies along the corridor to help realise the significant land uplift that is anticipated as a result of this project. Building rail in advance of market demand can yield positive economic returns if done in effective coordination with land use planning activity.

The government is also working very closely on the delivery of this project day by day. There have been a range of detailed studies and papers prepared by ACT government directorates through the Territory and Municipal Services Directorate, the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate and the Economic Development Directorate to identify the various needs of the city as it grows and develops.

It is wrong to claim that there has not been detailed analysis or consideration of transport options in the city generally or along this corridor in particular prior to the decision being taken to develop a light rail service. First, there was the proposal to Infrastructure Australia in December 2008 which sought federal funding for four

routes for a light rail network. There were submissions to Infrastructure Australia in 2011 which updated that previous work and provided for the Northbourne Avenue rapid transit and urban renewal analysis.

There was a city-to-Gungahlin transit corridor study concept design report in April 2012, which was an investigation at a concept level into the feasibility of both BRT and LRT along the city-to-Gungahlin transit corridor. This study, in particular, confirmed that LRT was the best choice for Canberra.

The Northbourne Avenue bus priority cycleway facility and Dickson bus station feasibility study developed and assessed a number of options for improving the cross-section of Northbourne Avenue to provide for bus priority and options for future bus stations in Dickson. This was also an important input into understanding why the choice should be made for light rail over buses. That study was completed in November 2012.

There was the city-to-Gungahlin transit corridor study, which was commissioned and finalised in April 2012, and further revisions in January 2013. That presented to the government an economic and financial appraisal of both LRT and BRT options, drawing together elements from other reports. Both options were shown to be economically viable with positive cost-benefit outcomes. Finally, there were submissions made to Infrastructure Australia in 2012. This highlights the level of detail and analysis that has been undertaken to date in relation to this project.

Finally, I would like to outline to the committee what steps are being taken in relation to community engagement. Effective and early engagement on the design for this project will help stakeholders and the broader community to inform and contribute to the final definition of the project. A range of consultation activities are planned, including information sessions to be held at the Gungahlin and Dickson shopping centres, a letterbox drop to all residents along the corridor, a dedicated engagement hub through the capital metro online web presence, in-depth stakeholder workshops to provide analysis on the background and context for the project and a series of presentations at community events and forums. All of these community engagement activities will be supported by a range of accessible communication materials in both hardcopy and online through the Capital Metro Agency's website.

These are important building blocks for this project and further detailed work—

THE CHAIR: Minister, you have been running for about 10 minutes. Is this going to go much longer?

Mr Corbell: No, I am just about finished, Mr Chair.

THE CHAIR: That is good. Brief is brief, minister.

Mr Corbell: No, 10 minutes; I will conclude.

THE CHAIR: It is closer to 15.

Mr Corbell: I will conclude. Therefore, Mr Chairman, I am confident that we have

put in place a comprehensive rationale, an effective community engagement and a technical analysis process to help realise that project. With that, my officials and I are happy to try and answer the committee's questions.

THE CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Minister, if you could just clarify for me where capital metro sits. Is capital metro a stand-alone agency and directorate or is it subservient to some other directorate?

Mr Corbell: Capital metro is a stand-alone agency. Ms Thomas, as the project director of capital metro, holds the technical nomenclature of a director-general.

THE CHAIR: I am curious then as to the appearance of Ms Ekelund, the Director-General of the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate, and her role in the proceedings.

Mr Corbell: The reason for Ms Ekelund's presence here today is that the Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate has responsibility for the development of the light rail master plan which, whilst not within the immediate scope of the Gungahlin-to-city corridor project, is also a light rail related project, and I am conscious that the committee may have questions about both.

THE CHAIR: There is \$21 million in this year's budget; it is on page 82 of budget paper 3. What will the \$21 million form?

Mr Corbell: The \$21 million is to be spent on a range of activities: first of all, to support staffing and administration for the Capital Metro Agency; secondly, to underpin and fund the detailed and extensive stakeholder engagement that will be necessary as we proceed through final project definition and design. Also, funding in relation to consultancies for a range of economic, commercial, legal, costing, risk management, technical and operations advice to inform the development of the engagement with the market and, finally, to fund a series of studies in relation to environmental and planning matters, utilities' location and assessment, patronage, operations and regulatory analysis.

THE CHAIR: But the statement, or the description, on page 82 says, "This includes preparing Capital Metro to an investment ready stage and, subject to the full business case," and a string of other things. When will the full business case be ready?

Mr Corbell: Approximately between the third and the fourth quarter of this calendar year.

THE CHAIR: October, November, December this year?

Mr Corbell: Towards the end of the third and into the fourth quarter of this calendar year.

THE CHAIR: Will any of the other work commence before the full business case is presented and accepted by the cabinet?

Mr Corbell: Which work are you referring to, Mr Smyth?

THE CHAIR: Well, I will read your description:

This includes preparing Capital Metro to an investment ready stage and, subject to the full business case, commencing the procurement and delivery of the light rail service and its operation, specialised economic and financial advisory services and stakeholder engagement activities.

Mr Corbell: A number of those bodies of analysis will inform the final business case and therefore will be undertaken to inform and populate the final business case with the necessary information for the government's consideration. In relation to procurement and delivery, that is contingent on the government's agreement to and endorsement of the recommendations of the final business case.

THE CHAIR: How many studies are underway currently that would inform the full business case?

Mr Corbell: I might ask Ms Thomas or Mr Edghill to answer that.

Ms Thomas: In terms of formal studies, we are still closing out the integration study that was commissioned by SMEC. We are undertaking a number of survey-type studies that will include looking for utilities, contamination and geotechnical requirements along the corridor. Other than that, we only have three of our advisories—whether you refer to them as a study or not; I would not be sure as to the exact definition of a study. We do have a technical advisory, a commercial advisory and a legal advisory whose work is still ongoing throughout that time. They do perform some exploratory work in terms of exploring what legislation would need to be changed and the like.

THE CHAIR: Will there be any procurement and delivery of the light rail service actually undertaken in the 2014-15 financial year?

Mr Corbell: Let me answer the question this way. Procurement is contingent on the government's consideration of the final business case and the recommendations and proposals contained within that business case. Procurement will only proceed if the government accepts the business case and chooses to endorse it and proceed to the market.

MR COE: What do you mean by “choose to accept the business case”? Are you saying that there is a chance that, if the business case says light rail is not viable, there are no investors or the financial returns are not good enough, the project will be wound up?

Mr Corbell: The business case will outline the detailed financial and economic analysis as well as the technical and risk analysis associated with this project, and will make recommendations as to how it should be procured and the assessments in relation to financial, technical and operational matters and so on. If the government is satisfied that the business case addresses all of those matters effectively and is within the overall parameters that the government considers acceptable for the project, we would proceed to procurement.

MR COE: It seems to me that you are backtracking considerably here. Your language to date has been very strident: “There will be light rail.” “Light rail is happening.” “It is going to be delivered for 614.” Now it is 614 plus CPI as a ceiling. You have got people who are on five-year contracts throughout the agency. Now you are saying that actually the final decision for light rail has not been made, and it is all contingent upon a business case?

Mr Corbell: I think that is a mischaracterisation. Obviously the government has an election commitment in relation to this project, but that does not mean we do not go through a full and detailed assessment in probity terms, in technical terms, in financial and economic terms, to ensure that we are confident that all of the parameters are right. That is exactly what we are doing.

MR COE: Do you accept that your language is considerably different from that of the past, when you have been particularly strident and have hounded down the opposition whenever we have said that there are serious issues with this project?

Mr Corbell: No, I do not accept that at all. It is not unusual for a government to say that it believes this project should proceed, to make political commitments in relation to it, and then to work through the detailed technical, economic, financial and other matters that have to be considered. And that is exactly what this government is doing.

MR COE: So you are now saying that capital metro may not go ahead? Is that what you are saying?

Mr Corbell: No, that is not what I am saying.

MR COE: Well, you said it is contingent upon the business plan.

Mr Corbell: What I am saying is that we want it to go ahead on the basis of a rigorous or robust business case that addresses all of the technical, economic and financial considerations that are important for a project of this size.

MR COE: In the event that that rigorous and robust business case suggests to you that it is probably not the best way to spend taxpayers’ money, will the government abandon its election commitment and not proceed with light rail?

Mr Corbell: It is not for me to talk about what decisions cabinet may take in advance of cabinet considering those matters, but the government’s position is very clear. We have an election commitment in relation to this project, and we want to ensure that the project is fully assessed and that the financial, technical, economic and other matters are effectively and adequately scoped and understood before we make the decision to proceed to market.

MR COE: You personally attacked Mr Nairn, who provided a report to the opposition as a contractor. You in effect attacked his credibility and his reputation. He in effect flagged some of these issues which you are now talking about. Two weeks ago it was inappropriate; now it suddenly seems to be appropriate to do due diligence.

Mr Corbell: Again you mischaracterise, and also, I think, quite falsely claim that. At no stage have I attacked Mr Nairn personally in terms of his professionalism or his technical experience, but I have questioned his report, and I have questioned his report for the reasons I outlined in the statement I issued.

THE CHAIR: I want to go back to the numbers. Of the \$21 million, how much of that goes towards employment costs at the Capital Metro Agency?

Mr Corbell: Could you just repeat the question, Mr Smyth? I did not quite hear it clearly.

THE CHAIR: Of the \$21 million outlined on page 82, how much will go towards the employment costs of the Capital Metro Agency for this coming financial year?

Ms Thomas: I do not know if those figures, unfortunately, are broken down.

Mr Corbell: In relation to staffing and administration, I am advised that the cost is \$2.265 million.

THE CHAIR: Of that number, 2.265—

Mr Corbell: That is direct staff, employed by CMA directly, and their administration costs.

MR COE: What about contractors in effect based at the agency?

Mr Corbell: In relation to consultancies, the figure is \$9.770 million.

THE CHAIR: Does this fund any of the contracts that were entered into this month—the specialist adviser consultancy services?

Mr Corbell: That is one consultancy that has been issued by the agency, yes.

THE CHAIR: So the money from this will fund that?

Ms Thomas: The specialist advisory panel is a panel that has been set up to allow us to gain access to a number of technical consultants. We expect that that technical consultancy panel may add up to about \$4 million over 18 months to two years, but at the moment we have a very small number of people engaged under that contract because we have only just organised those panel arrangements, in the last month or so.

MRS JONES: Ms Thomas; it is hard to hear sometimes from this side. The microphones are not great.

Ms Thomas: Sorry.

MS PORTER: My question is in relation to strategic objective No 2, which is on page 3 of this budget statement, the small one. It mentions securing industry engagement. In light of what you said earlier, minister, how and when would you expect this industry engagement to take place?

Mr Corbell: The Capital Metro Agency has been engaging with industry; reference to industry in this respect is in relation to potential bidders who may be looking at the project in terms of either their construction expertise or their service delivery expertise and associated skills. It is important that, as we undertake our analysis and also undertake the work that needs to be done to make recommendations to government in relation to delivery, we understand the expectations and the insights of industry and the potential bidders and consortia that will constitute those bidders for this project. So the Capital Metro Agency has been closely engaged in discussions with a range of potential bidders and other industry operators with experience in light rail projects to help inform the development of the final business case and particular issues surrounding the delivery model, which is critical to understanding businesses' perspective.

MS PORTER: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Ms Berry, a new question?

MS BERRY: Will capital metro or the light rail project be run by the government or by a private provider once it is up and running?

Mr Corbell: That will ultimately be determined as part of the decision-making in relation to the final business case, but at this point in time it is likely that it will be a privately run operation.

MS BERRY: I was interested in some of the comments that Ms Porter made about the community consultation and how that is going to work regarding this project. We have been talking a lot about something which seems far removed from people's imaginations. I wonder if you could describe for us a bit of a vision, your vision, for what light rail would look like—as if you were having a conversation with me.

Mr Corbell: Thanks for the challenge, Ms Berry.

THE CHAIR: I am not sure that is a question.

Mr Corbell: In terms of what will it look like, this is going to be physically tracks in the ground, two dedicated rights of way, two sets of rail in the median strip travelling from Alinga Street down the length of north Northbourne Avenue within the median, and then continuing down the Federal Highway and Flemington Road, again in the median—either the existing median or a constructed or adjusted median where that is needed, because there are different arrangements at different lengths along different parts of the corridor—and terminating at the end of Flemington Road in the Gungahlin town centre on Hibberson Street.

Hibberson Street is anticipated to become pedestrianised in the area where the light rail service will terminate, connecting the Gungahlin town centre to the city with a service which will be delivered by light rail vehicles capable of carrying up to 200 people at a time—a high frequency service with quality stops and stations along the corridor. In the coming weeks, the government will be outlining the detail of the proposed design and possible station locations. It is anticipated that there will be

approximately 12 stations between Gungahlin and the city, including the two termini, if that is the right terminology. It will provide very effective access for the very large number of people who live along the corridor and in proximity to it.

MS BERRY: I have been to Melbourne and Sydney on my grand adventures. Is it anything like the train system in Sydney or Melbourne? Is there something that I can look at to get an idea of what it would look like?

Mr Corbell: You could look at the recent extensions to the light rail network in Adelaide, at newer light rail infrastructure in Melbourne and at new light rail infrastructure in Sydney, in terms of the types of rolling stock and technology that are in place—the types of trams that are being used, the types of station design that are being put in place. It is a very similar form of infrastructure to that which you see in those newer light rail systems. If you go to the Gold Coast, as well, you will see something very similar in terms of the physical infrastructure in the ground.

MS BERRY: Over the weekend, on Facebook and on Twitter, when I was watching, was the old song from the 1980s “Canberra is growing up”. It was an ad by Channel 7 saying, “Canberra is growing up”. There was a little song and a jingle. I was thinking that 1980 is such a long time ago now. One of the questions that I always get when I am out in the community and people ask me about any development is “How are you going to manage the traffic?” It feels to me as though that is what this light rail is supposed to be doing. In a city that has grown up, that is 101 years old, we need to start thinking about our capacities for the future as a grown-up city. It is more than the jobs. It is about what our city is going to look like for future generations, not about what happens right now to us.

Mr Corbell: It is very much about both, Ms Berry. But you are right to highlight that. It is a project that sets the framework for managing future growth and development and future demand for public transport provision, but it is also about delivering better public transport provision now.

What we have to understand is that the Gungahlin to city corridor—in particular, the Federal Highway, the Barton Highway and Northbourne Avenue—is roads that are suffering significant capacity constraint right now. In particular, they are suffering capacity constraint in terms of accommodating the very large number of public transport services that operate along that corridor as well as the general vehicular traffic. Right now, bus services have to compete with cars in the same traffic lanes. That is having a big impact on their ability to deliver a timely, frequent service, and it also impacts on the movement of general vehicular traffic.

Over time, that situation is only going to continue to deteriorate. The choice we have as a city is to say, “How do we respond to that challenge?” This is a key carrying corridor for our city. It carries a very large number of people in and out of the city every day. We need it to work efficiently and we need it to work effectively. Do we create additional capacity for general vehicular traffic? What does that mean for the corridor in terms of its visual presentation? Do we really think that adding another two traffic lanes is a good idea on what is already a six-lane separated road at the moment? Do we give priority only to buses within the existing traffic lanes? Is that a good outcome in terms of managing congestion—reducing the number of lanes

available to cars from three to two? Or do we provide priority outside of the general traffic lanes so that public transport can work efficiently and at the same time the existing capacity is maintained for general vehicular traffic.

The government's assessment, and it is backed up by a range of the studies that I mentioned in my opening statement, is that the general efficiency of the road network overall is improved by removing public transport from the equation and giving it its own dedicated right of way. The landscape amenity of the corridor is maintained if the median is utilised effectively with a good landscape response for the public transport priority.

It is not the view of the government that the median should be used to construct another roadway for a bus rapid transit system, because we think that would be a very poor outcome in terms of the landscape amenity of the corridor. It is not the government's view that we should remove a traffic lane from general traffic and just allow buses to travel along it, because that would have unsatisfactory and undesirable impacts on general vehicular movements and the efficiency of the road for general vehicular traffic.

We want motorists to win from this equation and we want public transport users to win from this equation. That is why the best choice is to use the median, to retain the existing number of lanes for general traffic. The only way to effectively use the median for public transit is to use light rail, because it is much more compatible with the landscape quality of the corridor. Otherwise you are just turning the median into more roadway.

MS BERRY: One of the things that Canberrans love about this city is that you can walk outside: we have got pretty good air quality in Canberra. It is one of the things that people say when they visit here—that we do not have the traffic congestion. It is building, but we do not have it yet. We do not want that to happen in our city. You have talked about what the light rail is going to do to relieve the traffic congestion, but how does it maintain the wonderful clean air that we all enjoy and that visitors get to enjoy when they come here?

Mr Corbell: It is about reducing car dependency in the city. We have a very high level of car dependency, one of the highest levels compared to any other city in the country. So we are already a very car-dependent city. We know that the use of internal combustion engines has a direct impact on air quality. And even with significant improvements in fuels and the efficiency of the engines, more cars lead to deterioration in air quality.

In terms of the future sustainability of our transport network, we do have some choices to make. The ability to, first of all, reduce the total number of journeys that occur by the private motor vehicle is of overall benefit to the operation of the transport network and to air quality, amongst other issues. But also, obviously, the use of a transport mode like light rail, that is able to use electricity rather than transport fuels, contributes directly to air quality.

MR COE: Just on that vision, in relation to all the artists' impressions that have been produced over the last few years, who actually owns all those? Are they owned by the

government?

Mr Corbell: The ones that have been produced by the government are owned by the government. But I note that there are some in circulation that have been produced by other parties that are not the government.

MR COE: For instance, there is one here in the Labor Party policy announcement, originally in the URS report, first published in the URS report. Does the Labor Party own that or is that a government image?

Mr Corbell: I think the image was made publicly available for general use.

MR COE: So with that one, anyone can use it freely, can they?

Mr Corbell: It has been used freely. I know it has been reproduced in papers and other places.

MR COE: Sure. And some of the media sources even say “Supplied by ACT Labor”.

Mr Corbell: If they have, it is not to my knowledge. But, as I say, these images become freely available through their presence on online sites and so on, and their capacity to be used.

MR COE: With regard to these pictures with the eucalyptus arches hanging over the rails and hanging over the wires—these are pretty misleading, aren’t they?

Mr Corbell: No, they are not misleading insofar as there will be the need, with this project, to re-establish formal landscape plantings. That is going to lead to a treed corridor when the project is complete and those trees mature.

MR COE: In the meantime, all the trees on Northbourne get chopped down, don’t they?

Mr Corbell: The issues around the management of trees on the corridor are a critical issue. When the government proceeds to consultation in the coming week or so, one of the key issues for engagement with the community is about the future desired landscape character of the corridor. This is a matter of great interest to the community and also is an important consideration for the National Capital Authority, given their planning and works approval functions for the corridor.

To that end, the Capital Metro Agency has been closely engaged with the National Capital Authority about these issues, seeking their guidance, advice and feedback to help inform how we engage the broader community in that conversation. The government will be outlining detailed assessments of tree health along the corridor, the changes in tree plantings that have occurred over time along the corridor, and the opportunities to retain and strengthen the beautiful landscape quality of the corridor as a result of this project. That will be critical for us achieving endorsement from the NCA for works in the corridor.

MR COE: What asbestos do you expect to find down the median as insulation around

the various services?

Mr Corbell: Issues around potential contamination and risk are a key consideration for the project. As Ms Thomas indicated in her earlier answer, detailed investigations have been put in place and are underway to allow us to properly understand risks and take appropriate steps to mitigate them in advance of market procurement. The further we go in de-risking this project, the stronger the position we are in in relation to addressing cost.

MR COE: Have you drilled down or dug down a cross-section to find out what is there?

Mr Corbell: I am happy to ask Ms Thomas to outline what steps are proposed in relation to addressing those risks, including the geotechnical and other issues you raise.

Ms Thomas: We have not actually started those contamination investigations just yet, but I understand the process. The process that has been outlined to me is that they will take core samples along the corridor and understand what is in the corridor and also any potential depot location.

MR COE: The core sampling, I imagine, would be helpful for general contamination, but core sampling may not necessarily provide information about the location of the actual services. Is that right?

Ms Thomas: That is not for the services. Sorry; I thought you were talking about asbestos specifically, about contamination.

MR COE: A combination thereof. There could be general asbestos contamination, but then, further, there could actually be asbestos insulation around some of the services, could there not?

Ms Thomas: The utilities and geotechnical and contamination are all risks to a project such as this. We will be undertaking surveying in a number of different ways. We have been working extensively with the utilities companies for the last couple of months, and understanding from their drawings where their utilities are located. The next step in that is to undertake physical surveying works. That can happen in a number of different ways—some form of ground-penetrating radar; actual sampling itself; or doing some trenching work, as was the case in Sydney. We will be using a combination of all of those methods as we see necessary to understand the risk fully and continue with the project.

MR COE: The minister—

THE CHAIR: We will just let Ms Berry finish her question and then we will go to Mrs Jones. We will be with you shortly.

MR COE: Sure.

MS BERRY: The Gungahlin to the city rail network—that is not the end of, is it?

Mr Corbell: No.

MS BERRY: What is the plan for the future?

Mr Corbell: The government recognises that by investing in this project we are laying the first foundation of a potentially broader light rail network. Each element of a broader light rail network will have to be assessed and considered on its own merits, and decisions on issues around staging and future development will be made by this government or future governments. But by making this investment, we are setting out a long-term opportunity to connect the city in a way that it has never been connected before. And from a sustainability perspective, from an economic development perspective, we have the opportunity to lay a very important foundation for the future growth, development and provision of transport in our city.

The Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate is responsible for the light rail master plan. The light rail master plan will look closely at future possible stages of a light rail network for the city. It will look at the planning considerations in terms of current designation in the territory plan. Obviously the territory plan currently has provision for what I think used to be called a lease on—and I still call it this—the inter-town public transport corridors that connect the town centres together and where there is a priority corridor for public transport provision.

We will use that as the starting point, but then it will look more closely at particular corridors. It will look at both the currently designated corridors in the territory plan and also possible alternatives, if those are suitable or should be considered further. That will allow us to have, at the conclusion of this consultancy which ESDD is managing, a light rail network master plan which will identify the further corridors for expansion should future governments or the current government choose to do that at some point. That is the sort of detailed planning work that looks at connection with all of the different town centres as well as a number of other key locations, such as the parliamentary triangle, Russell and other locations.

MS BERRY: And just finally—

THE CHAIR: Just finally? Good.

MS BERRY: There have been other mentions of “just finally”; mine honestly will be just finally. I know that there are going to be reports that are either for or against this project. That is always going to be the case with something this significant. And I know people will be nervous about it, because it is a big change for our city. I think it is important, during the consultations, that we accept that that is going to be the case. There was a report completed by Cameron Gordon, who is a senior economist at the University of Canberra—I do not know if you have seen this—that talks about cities like Sacramento and Salt Lake City, where they had smaller population bases. They invested early in their transport infrastructure and then, over time, grew into that. I am thinking that it sounds as though this is the sort of planning that has gone into the development of this project. Is that the case?

Mr Corbell: There is no doubt that smaller cities are able to deliver viable light rail

networks. You can look at a range of examples around the world. There are quite a number of examples, for example in Europe, of cities that in some instances have smaller populations than Canberra and have very effective light rail networks.

MR COE: What about the density, though?

Mr Corbell: There are cities, for example, in northern France where the metropolitan centre has a population of only, say, 43,000 people but the greater urban area has about 390,000 people. That city, *Valenciennes* in northern France, has invested significantly in a light rail network. It has now three phases, and it services a relatively sparsely populated hinterland. So there are issues of similarity between Canberra and—

MR COE: We do not even have 43,000 people within walking distance of a tram stop, though, do we?

Mr Corbell: It is not a debate, Mr Coe. I am trying to answer Ms Berry's question. In relation to other cities, Freiburg, in southern Germany, is home to 200,000 residents—smaller than Canberra. It has had a long history of light rail in the city. We know that these are cities where light rail operates efficiently. So it is not purely a factor of population.

MS BERRY: Density.

Mr Corbell: There are a range of factors at play, but it is certainly wrong to say that Canberra is too small to have light rail. There are plenty of other examples—I have got three or four other examples here—of cities with populations of around quarter of a million with very effective and extensive light rail networks.

THE CHAIR: For each of the cities that you have, what is the population density per hectare?

Mr Corbell: That will vary from city to city. I am happy to provide it.

THE CHAIR: Yes, but have you determined it?

MR COE: Can we ask for each one.

Mr Corbell: I am happy to provide population densities if those figures are available in relation to each of those cities. It is important to stress that population density is measured in a range of ways and it is not necessarily measured uniformly. For example, in some calculations of population density, areas of open space are not included in making that assessment; in other places, they are included. Issues around population density have to be treated with some caution, because it is not a uniform measure and there is not uniform methodology used. But I am very happy to supply it.

MR COE: How many people will be within walking distance of one of the 12 tram stops?

Mr Corbell: The current corridor population is 41,541, based on the 2011 census.

MR COE: No, what I am asking is the walking distance. If you were to do, generously—ACTION work on 400 metres as a walking distance, but let us say 800 metres—an 800-metre radius around each of the tram stops, how many people live within walking distance?

Mr Corbell: I will ask Ms Ekelund to answer this question because it relates to broader issues around transport planning considerations which are the responsibility of ESDD.

MR COE: I am particularly interested in that specific question: do you know how many people currently reside within 800 metres of either the track or individual stations?

Ms Ekelund: I guess underpinning your question is also the concept of whether we are investing in lagging or leading infrastructure. In the case of capital metro, it is leading infrastructure because it will influence the shape of the city in the future. In terms of 2011, over 40,000 people will be able to walk to the stops available. By the time capital metro is operational, that number will have increased very substantially.

Most people appreciate the incredible change that has been happening in the city over the last decade and the choices that people are making to actually live in high amenity areas central to Canberra. We have seen a lot of demand for people to live in apartments. There is a lot of student accommodation along the corridor and people wanting a different lifestyle, which does not necessarily involve having a detached home.

By the time we see the 2016 census come along, we will have a population in the city of 400,000. Increasingly, more and more people are choosing to live in these central locations. By the time we have this infrastructure operational, there will be a lot of people being able to walk and then, even more obviously, being able to cycle to access this infrastructure.

MR COE: What distance are you actually talking? When you say “walking distance”, what is your defined walking distance?

Ms Ekelund: My definition of walking distance, which I have been criticised for by some people, is about a kilometre. But this figure is less than a kilometre. A kilometre is about 12 minutes walk for most people and 15 minutes walk for people who are less able. It has been found that people are quite happy generally to walk to fixed rail infrastructure to access public transport; less so to access buses.

Mr Corbell: The figure that I have quoted to you, Mr Coe, the 41,541 2011 population figure, is the figure that reflects the population who live within walking distance of the rail corridor.

MR COE: That is a kilometre or so.

Mr Corbell: Approximately a kilometre, yes.

MR COE: I guess that includes people who live in the city?

Mr Corbell: It includes everyone who lives within a kilometre of the rail corridor.

MR COE: The rapid business case points to the fact that very few people, even in 2031—it is only 600 or something—are going northbound on the tram in the morning. People in the city do not really need to ride the tram because they are in the city. Therefore, including everyone who happens to live in the city or in Reid or in ANU—where are they riding the tram to?

Mr Corbell: I understand you are raising the issue in relation to counter flows during the peak.

MR COE: If you are counting all those people who live in the city, who live in the Manhattan or live in the Metropolitan, I would go as far as saying that they do not need public transport and that is why they are living where they are.

Mr Corbell: That assumes they all work in the city centre, and that would not be the case.

MR COE: Do you think they might be working in Gungahlin and living in the Metropolitan or Manhattan?

Mr Corbell: If I can try and answer your question. Obviously there are a number of considerations here. People who live in the city centre may be working in locations other than the city centre, but they are valuing the proximity and the accessibility of living in the city centre. Obviously they are closer to other locations such as the parliamentary triangle, which are important considerations for possible future expansion of the network.

MR COE: As it stands at the moment, the rapid business case—

Mr Corbell: But also—

MR COE: suggests that very few people are going north.

Mr Corbell: Again, Mr Chairman, I am trying to answer Mr Coe's question. There are also other locations. For example, Dickson is an important and growing employment location. The government itself has indicated that consideration will need to be given to accommodating future jobs growth in the corridor. The projections are that employment located in the corridor will grow from 62,935 jobs in 2011 to over 71,560 jobs in 2031. That is in the corridor as a whole. That includes—

MR COE: 62 to 71, did you say?

Mr Corbell: Yes, I did; 62,000 to 71,000.

MR COE: A 10 percent increase over 20 years?

Mr Corbell: Yes; approximately 10,000 more jobs over that period located in the

corridor. We have some choices here. Do we think it is acceptable that all those people and that employment growth will be accommodated by more vehicular traffic on the road network, or do we have to put in place other alternatives? The government's very strong view is that it is not desirable from an economic, a financial or a sustainability perspective to accommodate more and more growth in vehicular traffic associated with those jobs and instead there need to be viable alternatives to help manage that increased demand in relation to journeys to work and inter-work journeys along the corridor.

THE CHAIR: Mrs Jones, a new question.

MRS JONES: I just want to go to budget paper 4, page 4, versus BP3, page 82. There is a figure in the portfolio statement, \$23.535 million, for government payments for outputs in the 2014-15 budget; yet in BP3, the figure is \$21.342 million. What is the reason for the \$2.103 million difference between the government payments for outputs and the money being used for scoping facilitation in budget paper 3?

Mr Corbell: Where was the first figure you were referring to, Mrs Jones, just so I can follow it?

MRS JONES: The table in the top half of page 4 of the portfolio statement: budget 2014-15, 23,535.

Ms Thomas: The budget number that is on page 82 of budget paper 3 relates to the new initiatives. It is funding initiatives beyond what was in the budget in the previous year's budget. That is why, when you add the previous year's budget to this—to the 21.342—that comes out to be 23.535.

MRS JONES: The original funding was being spent on the set-up of the agency, and this is the additional funding?

Ms Thomas: The original funding was the projection in the previous year's budget for what this year we would spend in the absence of the planning work that had happened in this year.

MRS JONES: So the original projection was that it would cost about \$2 million in this budget year, but it is actually going to cost \$23.5 million?

Ms Thomas: That is correct. That was the original appropriation that was given by government. I do not know if it was the projection.

Mr Corbell: It was not the initial projection. It was the initial start-up provision, recognising that there would be growth in the agency's budget as the agency wound up its operations.

THE CHAIR: There is a contradiction to that on page 5, though. It says in "Changes to appropriation" for 2013-14 that we carried across \$3.042 million, and indeed this year for capital metro scoping and facilitation it is only \$20,435,000. Where is the other \$907,000?

Ms Thomas: If I can draw your attention to page 82 again. It talks about additional funding of \$907,000 to the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate for increased staffing work, mainly in Treasury, for—

MRS JONES: So the actual funding will be moved across?

Ms Thomas: That was in their funding already. That is why you only see \$20,435,000 in the capital metro budget papers, because out of that 21.342, 907 is already in the CMTD budget.

THE CHAIR: Is that payment from capital metro to those departments or is that appropriation to those departments for services they provide to capital metro?

Ms Thomas: I understand it is appropriation to that group as part of capital metro, yes.

THE CHAIR: Why was that not appropriated in the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate directly?

Mr Corbell: It is a redirection. It is being directed—

MRS JONES: It is very difficult to hear.

Mr Corbell: I beg your pardon. It was previously provided to CMA, and it has been redirected. The government has redirected a component of CMA funding to CMTD, recognising that CMTD have a range of whole-of-government responsibilities, particularly in relation to consideration of economic and financial matters associated with potential project procurement.

THE CHAIR: I am not sure it is a redirection because it is all being appropriated to capital metro this year and then somehow transferred, I assume, to Chief Minister and Treasury. It cannot be a redirection if it is being appropriated this year.

Mr Corbell: That is my advice, but I am happy to seek further clarification and take the question on notice.

THE CHAIR: Given that some of the costings were categorised by the current financial year's budget, can we have a reconciliation of how that money actually ends up in the CMTD?

Mr Corbell: Happy to do so.

THE CHAIR: Thank you. Mrs Jones, a further question? No? Mr Coe?

MRS JONES: I thought Alistair was about to ask a supp.

MR COE: A new question, if I may.

MRS JONES: Okay, a new question.

MR COE: Minister, it has been alleged that someone in cabinet, a member of cabinet,

said to the Chief Minister, “How much is too much?” and the Chief Minister retorted, “A billion dollars.” Is a billion dollars the cap for light rail?

Mr Corbell: Mr Coe, you can manufacture whatever gossip you think someone knows about something that has never been said, but it is not for me to comment on those matters.

MR COE: But as for a billion dollars, is a billion dollars too much?

Mr Corbell: The Chief Minister has set out clearly the government’s overall parameters in relation to these issues.

MR COE: What is that new amount?

Mr Corbell: The Chief Minister has indicated that we have to understand that the costs associated with the project as outlined in the project update that was issued prior to the last election should be considered in the context of growth and in the context of the dollar values at the time the project commences, and indeed at the time the project completes, which is 2016 to 2019.

MR COE: Why would that be the case, given that that project update said that tracks would be laid in 2016?

Mr Corbell: Well—

MR COE: Given that it was already projecting the same start date which you are continuing to use, surely when you made that announcement it was already considered to be in 2016 dollars?

Mr Corbell: No, it was not in 2016 dollars.

MR COE: What are the 2016 dollars? If it was 614 in 2012, what is it going to be now? What is the new ceiling?

Mr Corbell: The government is not proposing to release revised cost estimates as we approach the procurement process. To do so would be to potentially compromise that procurement process and competitive tension in that process. It could also compromise value for money for the government and the community. It is generally the case that governments do not publicly disclose these analyses ahead of a procurement process, for the reasons that I have outlined.

MR COE: But you did. You said \$614 million and gave a fairly detailed breakdown.

Mr Corbell: That was prior to the government determining to proceed with this project, so it was an initial cost estimation which was in current dollars at that time only, and it did not have the level of detailed analysis that has subsequently been undertaken by CMA.

MR COE: Are you saying that as at the time of that project update, the government still had not decided to go ahead with light rail?

Mr Corbell: No, it had not. As you know, the commitment in relation to light rail was made during the 2012 election, and that figure was disclosed before the 2012 election.

MR COE: The figure in the TAMS budget of some \$20 million for capital and \$960,000 for associated expenses, depreciation for the city to Gungahlin corridor improvements—is that included in that 614, 650, 660 ceiling? Or is that separate?

Mr Corbell: I will just reiterate that I am not going to be drawn on a specific figure, for the reasons that I outlined earlier. The works that are outlined in the TAMS budget are potential enabling works that will allow us to proceed into the procurement stage with a higher level of certainty, particularly around managing potential risks and early works that can assist in managing the overall cost of the project. They are separate from the business case considerations.

MR COE: Given this new concern about commercial in confidence, is that going to be your mantra from now on whenever we ask about costs—“Sorry, we can’t do that; it’s commercial in confidence.”?

Mr Corbell: I think the community would be rightly concerned to ensure the government achieves effective value for money. That is why we are adopting the approach I have outlined.

MR COE: In which case, why did you decide to go ahead with light rail prior to actually determining whether it was value for money?

Mr Corbell: Because we were comfortable with the assessments undertaken to date that demonstrated the viability of the project. We also recognised that doing nothing was not an option; that simply closing down traffic lanes for bus priority was not viable or acceptable to the community, and not a good outcome in terms of public transport or road network operations; and that the best choice for Canberra was dedicated right of way for light rail, because it was the most effective mode and the most responsive mode in terms of managing future growth in capacity.

MR COE: I understand the load time at a station is something like 45 seconds. Would that be right?

Ms Thomas: It varies, depending on how many people are on the tram and everything else, but a figure of somewhere between 30 seconds and a minute would be about right.

MR COE: So we have an average of 45 seconds. In the morning peak, let us assume it is well patronised; I imagine it will be in that one-hour peak. So you have 12 stops and an average of 45 seconds, though it could well be the upper end of that range, because it is the peak. Is it possible that you are going to have upwards of six, nine or 12 minutes of load time on any journey from Gungahlin to the city?

Ms Thomas: I think you would find that the load at one end of the track would be higher and then the boarding or disembarking load at the other end would be a much faster element. At the stops in the middle, it would be much faster. I do not think you

can just put up a 45-second or 60-second average across every stop for the whole alignment.

MR COE: But if that was so, that would mean it would be pretty much a one-directional system. If people are not hopping on and getting off throughout—

Ms Thomas: They will hop on and get off, but not in the extreme volumes all the way through. I think it would be difficult to say that that would be the boarding time that you would allocate across all of the stops.

MR COE: What might be a reasonable boarding time across a journey from Gungahlin to the city at 8 o'clock in the morning?

Ms Thomas: I do not have an exact answer for that.

Mr Corbell: These are matters that will be considered in further detail in relation to patronage assessments that will form part of the final business case. Detailed assessments of patronage are an integral part of the final business case, as are decisions on the parameters that the government will put in place through the procurement process in terms of the levels of service delivery that we will expect from a successful tenderer, a successful bidder. Those are matters subject to further detailed investigation by Capital Metro Agency.

MR COE: What was the average journey time that was incorporated into the economic modelling? It is required, to put a cost on time in the economic analysis. In the economic analysis that you have done, what was the journey time that was used as the assumption?

Mr Corbell: Those are matters that are subject to cabinet consideration. The government has not publicly disclosed those figures at this time.

MR COE: The economic analysis? But in the economic analysis that you have already published, what was the assumed journey time?

Mr Corbell: That work was undertaken prior to Capital Metro Agency being established. I would have to take the question on notice in relation to the assumptions that the previous consultants used in relation to that report.

MR COE: Fortunately, you are the minister for the agency that did do that report, and we have the director-general for that agency here as well, so how about you—

Mr Corbell: I am happy to answer the question, and I have taken it on notice to provide you with an accurate answer.

THE CHAIR: Are you saying, minister, that you cannot tell us what the average projected time is for the journey from Gungahlin into Civic?

Mr Corbell: Mr Coe is asking me about a report that was completed nearly three years ago now. I think it is reasonable for me to make sure I provide an accurate answer to the committee; that is why I am taking the question on notice.

THE CHAIR: I am asking for the most recent time. You have said you cannot reveal the cabinet decision.

Mr Corbell: In relation to that matter, that is information that is being provided to cabinet as part of the final business case.

THE CHAIR: What is the harm in telling us the average expected journey time?

Mr Corbell: It is not unusual for ministers to tell these committees that certain matters are cabinet in confidence, and that is one of those matters.

THE CHAIR: So we cannot know the actual time taken for a trip?

Mr Corbell: It is part of the final business case and is a matter that will be considered by cabinet before a decision is made on release of that information.

MR COE: From 9 am to 3 pm today, Mr Rattenbury was here, and on not one occasion did he say, "Sorry, it is cabinet in confidence; I cannot disclose that information." I am just curious as to why, in the biggest capital works project the ACT government has ever embarked upon, you cannot tell us what the length of a journey will be for your flagship transport project.

Mr Corbell: Maybe you did not ask him any cabinet-in-confidence matters. But those details do form part of the final business case.

THE CHAIR: We will move it along. I am going to assume that was your question. I have some questions on changes to the appropriation on the budget portfolio statement. The Treasurer's advance last year was access to the tune of \$1.2 million. What was done with that funding?

Ms Thomas: I can answer that. That was done due to the delay in the appropriation coming across for the recurrent funding. The Treasurer had to advance the \$1.2 million as a cash flow requirement until the appropriation was made to change the funding.

THE CHAIR: That being the second approp or the first appropriation?

Ms Thomas: The second appropriation—the final one, the one that I was just a part of a few months ago.

THE CHAIR: Yes.

Ms Thomas: That Treasurer's advance was made for that purpose and has been returned. It was not used for any purpose other than carrying us across until the appropriation.

THE CHAIR: All right. So that is that Treasurer's advance offset line on page 5?

Ms Thomas: Yes, that is correct.

THE CHAIR: Did you actually use the \$1.2 million until the appropriation turned up?

Ms Thomas: I do not know exactly, but I can find the answer to that. I understand that we did use some of that in terms of a cash flow to allow us to make our appropriate payments, but I do not know the exact number of how much we spent.

THE CHAIR: You had \$8.468 million in 2013-14 for scoping and facilitation. Was that all spent?

Ms Thomas: Yes.

THE CHAIR: What projects did that fund, and are any of those still ongoing?

Ms Thomas: It funded the capital metro project and all the requirements that we had under that project. We do not really categorise anything as specific projects within the project, but there was a light rail integration study that was mostly funded out of that during that period.

THE CHAIR: And that is completed?

Ms Thomas: Almost. It is not quite completed just yet.

THE CHAIR: When is that expected to be completed?

Ms Thomas: Next month.

THE CHAIR: Next month?

Ms Thomas: July.

THE CHAIR: And when will that be made public?

Ms Thomas: That will be a matter for government to consider.

THE CHAIR: Are there any other studies ongoing?

Ms Thomas: There are no other studies ongoing, other than the advisories that I have spoken about already and, as part of that, the utilities and the other studies that you asked about as part of next year's funding.

THE CHAIR: Ms Porter.

MS PORTER: On page 1 of the small budget paper, it talks about one of the priorities for the Capital Metro Agency being "pro-actively providing support to Government in the identification and prioritisation of urban revitalisation options along the light rail corridor". I know that this reflects the government's policy of urban renewal. You talked about the changes in the way we live and the way we are expected to continue to change in the way we live and where we live. How does this

reflect on other priorities in relation to the implementation of light rail? What are the benefits of undertaking this approach of not only implementing light rail but also undertaking urban renewal along the light rail corridor at the same time?

Mr Corbell: Ms Porter, I am very happy to answer that question, but before I do, with your indulgence, Mr Chairman, I might quickly go back to the question you asked me earlier about travel time. I am reminded that I do have authority to disclose that, because it is subject to detailed public consultation. The figure is 25 minutes: less than 25 minutes is the expected travel time between Gungahlin and the city.

MR COE: That is an average speed of 30 kilometres an hour.

Mr Corbell: I apologise for that oversight. In relation to Ms Porter's question, it is the case that we have to understand the opportunities for urban intensification along the corridor and how that fits in with the broader planning strategy for the city. The city does continue to grow. Whilst there will be fluctuations in that rate of growth driven by economic circumstances at particular points in time, the city is going to continue to grow. It is going to hit half a million people well within our lifetimes—potentially well within the next 10 to 20 years.

We need to plan for accommodation of that growth. We have some choices as a city. We can either continue to spread outward and consume more land, impacting more and more on the natural environment, particularly in areas that are recognised now as endangered ecosystems. There are impacts on the natural environment, as well as the impact on the human environment in terms of increasing car reliance and increasing unhealthy transport choices. Or we can put in place planning and transport strategies that enable more people to walk and cycle to work, in combination with good public transport; that reduce their reliance on the private motor vehicle; that reduce their commuting time; and that reduce the financial impact on multiple car ownership and the significant health benefits that arise from that.

As a city, if we have more people living along these corridors—close to centres, close to where they work, close to facilities and services—we can accommodate that growth in a smart way, a healthy way and a sustainable way. The alternative is to tell people that there is no option but to own a car—or two or three or even four, which we are starting to see—with the enormous cost impacts that that puts on families. I do not think that is a good choice for us; I do not think it is a healthy choice. It is certainly not a sustainable choice. If we profess significant concern about the cost of living, one of the most critical things we can do to reduce cost-of-living impacts is to reduce the need for households to buy, maintain and pay for the operation of the private motor vehicle. It has an enormous impact on household budgets.

Those are the choices we have. That is why we need to focus on consolidation of accommodation for people close to high quality public transport. This is a growth part of the city. The Gungahlin to city corridor is growing five times faster than the rest of the city. It is the right spot for the first part of a broader network of light rail in our city.

MR COE: Minister, you said—

THE CHAIR: Sorry; Ms Porter has not finished. I think Mrs Jones has a supp and then you have a supp.

MS PORTER: Mr Coe was talking about visual representations that have been presented to the public through various methods, and there was some discussion around the look of the city, particularly as we are coming into it from the Federal Highway down Northbourne Avenue, for instance. I have been here since 1977, and in 1977 I think you could have put a cannon down Northbourne Avenue and nobody would have actually noticed if you fired it.

Obviously, it is a lot different now, but we still have this issue with people saying, “I came into Canberra via Northbourne Avenue and I wondered when I was actually going to find Canberra—the city, my capital city.” With people from interstate looking for their capital city, when they are coming for the first time, they are not necessarily impressed by that entrance. Do you think the urban renewal that you are talking about is going to be able to enliven that entrance to the city and make it more like a capital city, if you understand what I am trying to say?

Mr Corbell: Yes, I do, Ms Porter. To answer your question, I think we have to go back to the original planning for the city and recognition that these major avenues and boulevards were conceived as just that, people-orientated boulevards, by Walter Griffin and Marion Mahony. They saw these as people-populated boulevards with activity on the street, not just thoroughfares for cars.

Obviously, over time the car has become the dominant transport mode in the city, but it was not envisaged to be that. These should be great public spaces, not just effective transport corridors. They should have activity on the street, they should have people moving about on the street and they should be places that are familiar to and comfortable for people to occupy rather than facing a very significant freeway.

When you look at the physical layout of the cross-section of Northbourne Avenue, it seeks to represent what Griffin envisaged, but Griffin envisaged those corridors for public transit down the median. That is why it is there. It is for public transport. That is why the median has been built. You can achieve an effective landscaped corridor and still provide for the use of the median for public transit. That is one of the things we will be seeking to achieve through this project—to realise that original Griffin ambition and vision. That is why it is there, and now is the time to realise that in its entirety along this particular boulevard.

MS PORTER: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Supplementary, Mrs Jones?

Mr Corbell: I will just ask Ms Ekelund to add to that briefly.

Ms Ekelund: We are doing some work in collaboration with capital metro, TAMS and the Economic Development Directorate, as part of the implementation of the city plan but also in conjunction with working with capital metro. We are actually looking at the urban design quality in and around Northbourne Avenue all the way up the corridor and up into Flemington Road. We are very conscious that the urban design

quality of the corridor, the treatment of the public realms and the footpath treatments et cetera need a significant upgrade. They would probably need an upgrade even if capital metro was not to occur. So it will be to address those issues about what is the design form as well as the built form that might happen on private leases and also the public realm treatment. That will be work that you will see rolling out over the next 12 months; the design work will be accompanied by significant consultation with all stakeholders.

MS PORTER: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Supplementary, Mrs Jones? Then a new question.

MRS JONES: With regard to this change to Northbourne Avenue and Flemington Road, in the rapid business case document that has come into the public domain, it says that, in order for the project to be viable, there must be a deliberate favouring of development in the corridor over all other parts of Canberra. What is the practical effect of this statement?

Mr Corbell: It is not for me to comment on a document which has not been released by the government. It is a cabinet in-confidence document.

MRS JONES: If the decision was taken to deliberately favour development in the corridor over all other parts of Canberra, what practical effect would that have?

Mr Corbell: What this recognises is that our planning strategy already says that development will be concentrated in key corridors—in key corridors. Our planning strategy outlines that now. It is not a contentious or new idea; it is reflected in the ACT's planning strategy which was released in 2012. We do have a strategic planning framework that consolidates growth, development and employment location along key corridors. It is a necessary response, if we are to address the sustainability, liveability and affordability issues that our city faces, that that type of employment growth is accommodated in corridors.

It is also important to recognise, though, that the employment sector and accommodation for employment are a segmented market. There are different types of requirements in terms of property and in terms of geographic location, and the city has to make provision for the variety of those different needs across different market sectors.

MRS JONES: Was that about employment, did you say?

Mr Corbell: Employment locations.

MRS JONES: Is there an intention to increase office space up and down Northbourne Avenue and Flemington Road or something like that?

Mr Corbell: The issue that we have to have regard to is that there are opportunities for growth in employment, office accommodation, professional suite accommodation and mixed-use development along the corridor as well as in other locations in the city. The government will give consideration to how that should be realised in the corridor

whilst recognising that the commercial sector, in terms of office accommodation needs, is a segmented market and there are a range of needs that need to be catered for across the city, not just the corridor.

MRS JONES: Will that come from other parts of Civic into Northbourne Avenue as an effect or are there other parts of it for Canberra?

Mr Corbell: There may be market decisions made by individual employers who consider there is significant advantage in being located on a rapid transit corridor serviced by light rail. We know that that is considered advantageous and attractive for employers and employees—to be close to that infrastructure. That is why the government is doing the light rail master planning work—

MRS JONES: So it does not concern you that—

Mr Corbell: If I could just finish the answer—that is why the government is doing light rail master planning work, so that we are able to plan for future provision in other parts of the city. And, secondly, it is important to recognise that decisions about employment location are decisions that, in this corridor, will be overwhelmingly made by the private sector on privately owned land.

MRS JONES: So it does not concern you that in the at least supposed initial stages of this project, there might be a leaching of businesses from other town centres?

Mr Corbell: I do not believe that is the bogey some people make it out to be.

MRS JONES: Sure.

MR COE: Who is making it out to be that?

Mr Corbell: I think you know that there is commentary on that from time to time, but the issue from the government's perspective is to communicate that many of these decisions will be decisions made by private employers who own private property or at least choose to lease private property. It will not be driven solely by land release decisions made by the government. What it also highlights, though, is that light rail does have the potential to drive intensification along a corridor in a way that other transport modes cannot. That is one of the key rationales for determining light rail as the preferred mode.

MR COE: Minister, your analysis, the EY job creation analysis, says:

Development and construction activity along the corridor is likely to occur at the expense of activity elsewhere in the ACT. The additional employment located along the corridor will largely be relocated from other parts of the ACT. Estimating the share of the additional corridor jobs that are additional to ACT is not a straightforward task. For the purpose of this analysis we assume that 10% of the additional jobs to the corridor are additional to ACT.

So 10 per cent are new jobs. I repeat:

The additional employment located along the corridor will largely be relocated

from other parts of the ACT.

This is your own document. This is the document which all your jobs analysis is based upon. Isn't that a bit of a worry when it comes to the overall viability of this project?

Mr Corbell: I am happy to ask Mr Edghill to explain to you further what underpins that analysis and the assumptions and other issues that you raise.

Mr Edghill: I understand that discussion within the jobs analysis was in the context of explaining two different sets of numbers which had been presented throughout that number—a net number, if you like, and a gross footprint number. The jobs analysis was making it clear that there is a myriad of different ways that job figures can be presented in a report such as this. It was making the observation that construction jobs, for example, or other jobs on an ongoing basis associated with the light rail project, are not all necessarily new people to the ACT. It was making the distinction that, for example, some of those jobs will be new people, new people coming into the ACT, and new roles that were not here previously.

The other number, the gross footprint number, is a number which is best characterised as a maintenance or a sustenance of existing employment within the ACT. If you use a very basic example, if there was a construction project in the ACT that was finishing at the same time as capital metro was beginning and that person was coming across from that other construction project to capital metro, we would say—EY was making the point—that is not a new job counted within the net figures within the document because that person already existed within the ACT on a different construction project.

What they are saying with the gross footprint number is that the job of a person who was shifted from something that has ended to capital metro, for example, is being maintained and sustained. I think that discussion around the 10 per cent was an assumption. For the purposes of this report—and it may be a conservative assumption—in making that distinction between sustained and maintained jobs and new jobs, new people to the ACT, they have assumed of the total footprint they have used that 10 per cent figure in that particular context.

MR COE: If it is simply sustaining jobs, it is not much of a stimulus. It is interesting that it should be in the chapter marked “Likely job creation from capital metro”. A few paragraphs down that is where they are saying the additional employment located along the corridor will largely be relocated from other parts of the ACT. Surely that is a real worry.

Mr Corbell: But that happens now.

MR COE: But this is a transformational project.

Mr Corbell: Office accommodation shifts all the time. People move. Government departments move from one location to another. Private sector employers move from one location to another. In doing so, they stimulate activity, particularly during construction, fit-out, refurbishment and so on. They drive benefit in terms of the provision of new services in those locations. This is not a new phenomenon; it

happens now all the time in the property market.

MRS JONES: So where is the uplift?

THE CHAIR: But to that extent?

Mr Corbell: Well, look at the airport. What has happened at the airport? There has been a whole relocation of activity from other parts of the city to the airport. Has that been the death knell for the commercial property market in the ACT? No, it has not.

THE CHAIR: At a time when it was quite a buoyant market. It is not so buoyant now.

MRS JONES: Where is the uplift that is expected, minister?

Mr Corbell: What you see is that this is the function of quite a complex property market and different investment decisions that are made. It is not a reason not to do the project. Indeed, it is worth highlighting that the provision of this type of infrastructure is delivering a work-life balance, a convenience factor, in terms of transit that is very important, particularly for new types of employment activity and enterprise.

What we see in terms of the demographics, particularly for people under 30, is that they are valuing their time and their mobility in a way that previous generations did not. They are wanting to make sure that they are utilising their time efficiently. They are not wanting to invest in cars and spend all their time sitting in traffic jams or sitting in the daily commute. They want to be able to use their time efficiently and effectively by being able to use high-quality public transit, work while in transit and use automobility that is being delivered by the new information technology and social media.

This is one of the points that Professor Peter Newman makes in his analysis around the use of rail in cities. This new demographic of young people, the smart young entrepreneurs that we need in our city, are valuing the convenience and valuing the effective use of time that comes with the provision of high-quality public transit services. We should not underestimate the significance of this and the fact that we can achieve a synergy between residential uses, job location, service provision and alignment with educational opportunities in our city that this type of infrastructure provides, which cannot be provided with other forms of public infrastructure, public transport, and certainly cannot be provided by the private motor vehicle.

THE CHAIR: But the counter view is somebody like Edward Glaeser. He is a world famous, well-renowned transport economist who has written *Triumph of the City* and is ranked very highly in the world. He says, “Bus good, train bad” for exactly the reasons you quote.

Mr Corbell: There is a big debate about bus versus train. I am happy to have the debate. I do not know whether this is the place to do it.

MR COE: If or when the project is abandoned, what happens with staff on a five-year contract?

Mr Corbell: I think I have answered that question, Mr Coe, insofar as the government has made it clear that this is an important election commitment that we are committed to delivering.

MR COE: What happens, though, if the project is abandoned, to staff that have signed a four or five-year contract?

Mr Corbell: Your question is entirely hypothetical.

MR COE: It is, but I imagine it would be of some concern to staff that are on a four or five-year contract. As they find out more about this project and they hear you say that it will all depend on the business case, perhaps they are a little bit uncertain of their futures. What guarantee is there that the contract will last four or five years?

Mr Corbell: I think the only uncertainty people would be feeling was if you were the minister, Mr Coe.

MRS JONES: If the 10 per cent is the expected uplift—and is that 10 per cent just in the building phase? Is that what you are saying—we see a conservative estimate of a 10 per cent uplift during the building phase and workers will move from around the city?

Mr Corbell: I think Mr Edghill is probably best placed to answer that.

Mr Edghill: I think it would be incorrect to just characterise the 10 per cent as the uplift associated with the project. I think that is a definition that was made within the EY jobs paper for the purpose of presenting the number. Within the gross footprint number, which is also an equally correct number to be showing how many jobs are being supported by the project, there are a number of jobs within there that are not counted in the net category because there are people already employed within the ACT. It takes into account the fact that the capital metro project is maintaining those jobs along the way. To go back to the example of somebody coming off another construction job and then coming into capital metro, part of the uplift, if you will, depending on how you want to characterise uplift, is having that person who had a job still having a job, and that is a function of this.

MRS JONES: Sure.

Mr Edghill: In terms of the rest of the uplift which is associated with the project, one of the things that the jobs analysis does is to look not just at direct construction employment during whatever the construction term is; it takes into account a number of other categories. It looks at indirect employment during the construction period and it also looks at the ongoing period over a period of time, which is inclusive of direct jobs during the operation of the light rail network. It looks at jobs which are associated with some of the densification and land benefits that have already been discussed today, and then it also takes into—

MRS JONES: Sorry; did you say land benefits?

Mr Edghill: Precisely. We have mentioned densification along the corridor already today. It takes into account some of the jobs which are facilitated through that densification. Then the report also takes into account indirect benefits. For example, if you have a job supported within the rail corridor then there are indirect benefits from that particular firm or that individual then purchasing other services from people who are not necessarily located within the corridor.

MRS JONES: So it is the flow-on effects of the construction?

Mr Edghill: Exactly. There is a multiplier effect of indirect benefits that come from the direct benefits of having employment directly associated with operating a light rail system and constructing it in the first instance.

MRS JONES: Once offices are filled and apartments are filled, that is the economic benefit?

Mr Edghill: It extends a step beyond that in that when you have that level of economic activity within the corridor itself then that corridor does not exist in isolation; it purchases goods and services from elsewhere in Canberra and elsewhere in Australia.

MRS JONES: It is not that there are going to be great new businesses after the construction; they are possibly moving in from elsewhere in the ACT.

Mr Edghill: I do not think it would be correct to say that a new business in the corridor has necessarily taken away a business that exists somewhere else today.

MRS JONES: But that is what the report says.

Mr Edghill: If the wording in that report is inelegant, I will certainly look at that.

MRS JONES: I do not think it is inelegant. I think it states that there is an expectation that a large number of the jobs that will exist over the long term in the corridor will have come from somewhere else. I imagine people who have a shop in the Tuggeranong hyperdome will be concerned about that.

Mr Edghill: The way that I read that section on the jobs analysis—remembering that we are looking over an extended period of time here: the light rail network is not a five or a 10-year asset; it is something which has a very long useful life—my reading of what EY have suggested there is that if, for example, there is a new business that is looking to enter the Canberra market or which is attracted to Canberra and has an opportunity to be making a decision as to where it locates then—

MRS JONES: They are more likely to go there.

Mr Edghill: It may well be the case that because of the economic activity which has been developed in the corridor it chooses there rather than somewhere else in the ACT. I think there is a distinction there. That is not to say that it is stealing from existing businesses which are located elsewhere in the ACT.

MR COE: All the economic activity currently in this corridor—what is the driving force behind that? It is not light rail. We have 40,000-odd people living there and there are many businesses. You have got the Canberra Centre, the Dickson group centre and businesses up and down Northbourne. What is driving them, if it is not light rail, now?

Mr Corbell: I think if we have a look at the condition of the corridor currently, it is suffering significant decline, particularly on Northbourne Avenue. In relation to its amenity, its urban—

MR COE: All the private sector sites are going gangbusters, aren't they?

Mr Corbell: No, they are not, actually.

MR COE: Which ones are not?

Mr Corbell: There is significant vacancy along the corridor currently. There are also significant problems with the quality of some of the building stock along the corridor. There is poor pedestrian amenity. There is increasing congestion. There are problems with noise. There are a whole range of other issues in relation to the corridor.

I do not think Northbourne Avenue is a fitting gateway to the national capital. I think it is suffering significant decline. It is suffering significant decline because it has become car-oriented. Its primary purpose now is seen only in the context of providing for car use when, instead, it should be a place which is for employment location, which is for activity on the street and which is for ease of access for pedestrians as much as it is for cars.

Car-oriented streets are not healthy streets, and they are certainly not sustainable streets. There is a great opportunity for increased economic investment and increased economic productivity by changing it away from a car-oriented avenue to a person-oriented avenue. The way to achieve that is by providing high-quality public transit that empowers people to move away from their cars, to undertake more of their journeys by walking and cycling and really reclaim these spaces as spaces for people rather than spaces simply for the automobile.

MR COE: So how do we—

THE CHAIR: No, we will go to Ms Berry for a question. She has been very patient.

MS BERRY: Thank you, chair. I wanted to get back to the question I asked earlier. I do not think we got into it at all. It was about the consultation around this project. For people along the corridor, but also across Canberra generally, can you talk us through what it is going to look like? I know that Housing and capital metro will be working together around the people who have homes along the corridor, both public and private residents. I really want to know what the plan is for that consultation.

Mr Corbell: In relation to public housing or more broadly?

MS BERRY: No, more broadly. I know there are lots of different parts to it. I think if

people have a better understanding of what is going to happen with that information getting out into the community, it might help with some of their fears.

Mr Corbell: Significant work is occurring within CMA to deliver a very wide ranging and detailed public consultation process. We need the community's feedback on a whole range of questions in relation to this project—station locations, station design, frequency of service, the quality of the service provision and a whole range of other issues: landscape amenity, landscape quality along the corridor. There are a whole range of issues that need to be worked through, and public engagement is central. CMA will be putting in place, for example, a shopfront in the city so that people can come in, have their say and get more information about the project and talk to people.

MS BERRY: Whereabouts in the city will the shopfront be?

Mr Corbell: I will be making announcements about that shortly. It will be in a central location, an easily accessible location in the city.

MR COE: Not where the tram is going?

Mr Corbell: There will also be information sessions at Gungahlin and at the Dickson shops, at those centres. There will be a letterbox drop to all residents across the corridor. There will be a dedicated engagement hub established on the capital metro website. That will be supported by social media channels to support and encourage engagement, discussion and information sharing, because that is very important. There will also be detailed stakeholder workshops to provide details on the background and context for the project as well as to facilitate discussion on the detailed design and the broader corridor issues that I mentioned, particularly landscape quality along the corridor.

There will also be CMA staff reaching out to the various groups with interests in this project and presenting at community events and forums. These are really important levels of engagement. This is a big project for our city. It is a transformative project for our city, and we want to engage the community very broadly in its rationale and its benefits and the issues where we need detailed feedback to make sure we deliver a quality project.

MR COE: Is that information as a result of the telephone poll that your party did a month or so back?

Mr Corbell: I am not here to answer questions about the Labor Party, but I would simply say that the government is committed to effective consultation on this project. I think the community would expect that for an investment of this size and a project of this scale.

MR COE: The initial survey—

MS BERRY: Can I just have a turn? Seriously. I have been sitting here patiently, not interrupting at all.

MR COE: Sure.

MS BERRY: I feel like this project is something that would benefit from a consultation method like design by inquiry where people are not just being told about things that happen but are participating and are part of the project development. Is that the sort of consultation that you are looking at? I feel like consultation can sometimes be used fairly loosely. It is just about telling people what is going on rather than engaging them in the actual project.

Ms Thomas: We have had some initial discussions with the Gungahlin community who are interested in a design-by-inquiry approach. I think it is an interesting approach to use with them. We are still working through the details of how that might happen and have not provided any recommendations through to the minister yet. I know that he has been supportive of that sort of approach in the past.

We are supportive of working with community groups to look at those issues themselves and really explore the design aspects through a design-by-inquiry approach that can help them understand why some things might be better placed in some particular areas for their community. It is something that we are interested in exploring with communities. As I said, we will try one as a trial and see how it goes. I am sure there is a lot of scope for other communities to try and take up that sort of activity.

MS BERRY: I just think this project is perfect for it. It is perfect for it where it sits and in the community as far as Gungahlin and the city are concerned. It also means that all of those fears that people might have about something that is so big like this can generally be calmed if they are part of it. That is what that design-by-inquiry process does. All the evidence of all the projects that are done by that process shows that by including the community in those sorts of design projects it really makes a difference to their ownership of their city as well. I would encourage you to do that.

THE CHAIR: Is that a statement or a question?

MS BERRY: It is a statement, but I will also—

THE CHAIR: We are here for questions.

MS BERRY: Another statement I will make is that I will continue to push you to look at that way of engaging the community in that project.

My other question was just around the first question I asked, which was about whether or not the light rail would be operated privately or by the government. I know that is something that is being considered. I wonder why you would have a government-operated public bus service and not integrate that into a light rail service and have ACTION bus and light rail service. It does not make sense to have two public transport services operating in a different way when they can both work really nicely together.

Mr Corbell: Ownership is not directly an issue in relation to effective network provision of public transport.

MS BERRY: No, I am not saying that.

Mr Corbell: There are certainly many examples around Australia and around the world where the public sector role is overwhelmingly in the network design and ensuring the delivery of that network design and maintenance of appropriate service delivery standards for public transit, but the actual day-to-day operations are run by private sector operations under concession from the government, usually. That is common for light rail networks in Australia. It is government-run in South Australia, but it is the case in Victoria and it is also the case on the Gold Coast. There are a variety of models.

In relation to the ACT, ACTION historically has been operated as a public sector agency. Whether or not that should change is a separate question. The government has not indicated that it is contemplating any change to that at this time. We have got an historical situation in relation to ACTION, but that does not mean that the same should be the case for a light rail network—

MS BERRY: But there is no reason why it should not be either.

Mr Corbell: It can be either but, certainly, from the government's perspective, we believe that there are opportunities for managing overall cost if consideration is given to private operation.

THE CHAIR: Mrs Jones, a last question.

MRS JONES: Minister, have you heard any of the discussions around the value capture levy that was being discussed with relation to this project?

Mr Corbell: Yes, I have seen the public commentary on that.

MRS JONES: How would such a proposed levy be implemented?

Mr Corbell: The government has not proposed such a levy. But I am certainly familiar with the—

MRS JONES: I am sorry, I cannot hear you.

Mr Corbell: I said the government has not proposed such a levy. But I am familiar with the public commentary about it.

MRS JONES: Is it an option that is to be considered?

Mr Corbell: The government will give consideration to a whole range of options in relation to the delivery of this project, particularly around the financial and economic analysis. It is simply pre-emptive to speculate on this. The government is very focused on achieving this project in an efficient way, in a cost-effective way and in a sustainable way. I think, as John Fitzgerald, who is the chair of the Capital Metro Agency board, and Ms Thomas have both said to the property industry, the government is very cognisant that you do not kill the goose that lays the golden egg in

relation to these matters; you approach this issue very prudently. That is very much the government's view.

MRS JONES: With regard to funding the plan, we have already canvassed with the Chief Minister the possibility of an entitlement to develop a piece of ACT government land. I guess that is like a gift of land for a developer to make it potentially more economically worth while for someone to run this or build this business. Land that was floated was potentially EPIC or something along those lines. As a levy—you are saying you want to investigation options—is that an option that you are also willing to investigate?

Mr Corbell: The issue of land development along the corridor is separate from your previous question, and they are not necessarily—

MRS JONES: It is around funding and making the project viable.

Mr Corbell: Yes, but it is not a levy mechanism.

MRS JONES: No, it is not a levy mechanism.

Mr Corbell: Which is the point I am making. In relation to EPIC, it is reasonable to look at issues around higher value land use along the corridor. It is reasonable to do that because these projects do add value to land along the corridor and it is reasonable to give consideration to alternative land uses. But it is also important from my perspective, and I think from the government's perspective as a whole, to recognise that the use of light rail for mass transit to event locations is also potentially very valuable. We need to look at both. Obviously, if you have got a large number of people attending events at EPIC or the racecourse, moving them in and out efficiently when there is very limited parking and significant congestion problems is also an important consideration. It is possible that you could achieve both, but those are matters that are subject to further consideration.

MRS JONES: So you are not closed to the idea of a gift of land to go with the development of this?

Mr Corbell: In relation to that question, I do not believe the government is going to give away land, valuable sites. It is not going to give away valuable sites.

MRS JONES: Not even to make the project financially viable?

Mr Corbell: I do not believe that question arises in relation to the assessment we have done on this project to date.

MRS JONES: Thank you.

THE CHAIR: We might call it a day, now that we have complied with the Assembly resolution of at least two hours of questions on capital metro.

Mr Corbell: Ms Thomas just wanted to clarify an answer given earlier, if she could, for the record.

Ms Thomas: You asked a question earlier about the employee costs for the project. The minister rightly gave you the employee costs that were associated with the \$2,435,000 additional funding. That did not take into account the other budgeted funding. The total employee costs that are projected for the project are \$4,574,000. I will note, however, that on page 3 of budget paper 4 we talk about the headcount as 42, but we say that we may not actually recruit all of those positions. That \$4,574,000 is the projected employee costs. I just wanted to correct that for the record.

THE CHAIR: That is kind; thank you. Thank you, minister, and your officials, for appearing before the committee today. If you could please respond to any questions taken on notice within five days after the hearing. On behalf of the committee, I thank all the witnesses who have appeared today. I remind members there are three days for additional questions on notice once the transcript is received.

Today's chairman award could have gone to Ms Berry for saying bus drivers are happy people. It almost went to Mr Rattenbury for saying, "Try me." It almost went to Mr Rattenbury for saying, "CanberraConnect is more efficient than ministers." Now there is a telling insight. It could have gone to Mrs Jones who said, "Well, if you need any help for lobbying, minister, I will give you a hand." But it actually went to Mr Gill, who had the common sense to go to the world cup to avoid coming to the estimates for the 18th time in a row.

The committee adjourned at 5.42 pm.