

Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Chairman; Mr David Templeman;
Dr Janet Woollard; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr John Bowler; Mr Ross Ainsworth; Mr Rod Sweetman; Mr Colin
Barnett

Division 49: Planning and Infrastructure, \$403 129 000 -

Ms Guise, Chairman.

Ms MacTiernan, Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr M.L. Harris, Acting Director General.

Mr P.S. Frewer, Executive Director, Integrated Planning and Policy.

Mr R. Carleton, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr M. Burgess, Acting Executive Director, Public Transport Services Division.

Mr A.W. Hubbard, Executive Director, Transport Systems.

Mr L. Preece, Senior Finance Officer.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: My question relates to the fourth dot point on page 802, which refers to an integrated, well-planned and well-patronised public transport system. It goes on to mention the Perth-Mandurah passenger rail line, which will be entering the building and construction phase. Will the minister indicate where the AlintaGas proceeds are in this budget, or are they located elsewhere?

Ms MacTIERNAN: My understanding - I will check this - is that they are in the Western Australian Government Railways budget.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: The Perth urban rail development operating costs appear in the table under major policy decisions on page 802. The budget estimate for the forthcoming financial year is \$1 216 000. Is that for the current operating costs of the railway network?

Ms MacTIERNAN: This is the subsidy provided by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure to the Perth urban rail development. I understand that PURD has started borrowing funds for work that has been done to date. Debt servicing requirements arise because of those borrowings. This is the sum required to service those borrowings.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer the minister to page 806. The last dot point before major initiatives for 2002-03 refers to the fact that the Planning Appeals Amendment Bill and the proposed changes have been introduced to Parliament. I understand they are still in the Legislative Council. Will the minister update the committee on how many appeals have been lodged with the minister since she took over responsibility for this portfolio; how many are currently awaiting determination by the minister; how many are pending, still awaiting the completion of the consultation and investigation process; and how many appeals have been lodged with the tribunal since the minister took office?

Ms MacTIERNAN: We will provide that by way of supplementary information.

The CHAIRMAN: For the purpose of *Hansard*, will the minister clarify what she has agreed to provide?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I will provide the information that I have provided to the member on many occasions; that is, the number of appeals that were current when I took office, which was roughly 372; the number of appeals that have been lodged since that date; the number of appeals that have been determined; the number of appeals that remain outstanding; and the number of appeals that are currently before the Town Planning Appeal Tribunal.

Mrs EDWARDES: Will the minister also provide the number of applications to the Town Planning Appeal Tribunal within the past year since Labor came into government?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Since we came into government or in the past year?

Mrs EDWARDES: Since Labor came into government. I am trying to gauge the level of increase in the number of appeals going to the tribunal.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes, we will also provide the number of appeals that have been lodged with the tribunal since we came into office.

[*Supplementary Information No A33*]

Mr TEMPLEMAN: I refer to the works in progress listed on page 813, and specifically the Mandurah bus transfer station. An amount of \$1.75 million is allocated in the 2002-03 budget. How does that relate to the budget provision for the entire cost of the bus station project, and what is the timetable for its completion?

Ms MacTIERNAN: This is a \$4 million project. It will include the station building, public toilets, a security station and a closed-circuit television linked to the central monitoring station at the Perth City Busport. It will

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also include 12 fully covered bus stands, a coach stand, taxi rank, parking and set-down bays for the disabled, a Park 'n' Ride, a drop-off point and landscaped footpaths. It will also include a contribution to the construction of the improvements to Allnutt Street. The \$4 million allocated last year is the full amount required to complete that construction. It is currently under way. I hope that station will be up and running for the commencement of the new school year next year.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: My question again relates to the Perth urban rail development, which is listed on page 814 under the metropolitan works as part of the public transport enhancement program. The estimated total cost is \$57 184 000. Will the minister give me a breakdown of that figure and advise whether the Thornlie spur line and the Clarkson line make up any of those costs?

Ms MacTIERNAN: We will provide a breakdown of the works that were undertaken as part of this. PURD is now with WAGR. These works were completed previously.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Therefore, that is part of the Kenwick route?

Ms MacTIERNAN: A number of these were for the Clarkson extension. As set out in the budget papers, the PURD project includes the Clarkson extension. Therefore, some of these will be works done on the Clarkson extension and some will be works that have been undertaken as part of the southern extension.

[2.10 pm]

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Does the minister agree to provide the supplementary information as indicated?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes. We will provide a breakdown of the estimated expenditure.

[Supplementary Information No A34]

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: The minister made reference to some patronage studies. To date, those studies have not been tabled. Will the minister supply those studies by way of supplementary information?

Ms MacTIERNAN: No. When the master plan is produced, it will contain the patronage studies. I have in the past referred the member to the various studies that have been publicly released. When the master plan is released, we will produce all the documentation the member requires.

Dr WOOLLARD: I refer the minister to the fourth dot point on page 802 concerning the Perth-Mandurah passenger rail line. Will the minister advise the latest projected costs for the Perth-Mandurah railway line, the south metropolitan route, the passenger numbers for this route and whether those passenger numbers are different from the passenger numbers anticipated for the Kenwick route?

Ms MacTIERNAN: The current budget for the project is \$1.403 billion. We can provide the patronage projections, but when we produce the master plan, those figures will be released. On the basis of studies I have referred to previously in the House, there is a definite elasticity in demand. A reduction in travel time -

Mr Barnett interjected.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I would like to answer the question put by the member for Alfred Cove. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to behave in a rude and offensive manner and prevent me from answering that question, I will seek your protection, Madam Chair.

Mr Barnett interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Member!

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am answering the question from the member for Alfred Cove. The overwhelming sense of self-importance of the Leader of the Opposition does not convince anyone other than himself.

We have in the past referred to studies showing a direct correlation between the demand for public transport and travel time. When the travel time is reduced, there is a corresponding response in the demand. I can provide that study; we have referred to it in the House on many occasions. If the member puts the question on notice, I am happy to provide that report.

Dr WOOLLARD: I will put the question on notice. I am not after studies from elsewhere, but anticipated numbers.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Fundamentally, we expect the Western Australian community to be responsive in the same way. I know it is the view of people who live in the areas that will benefit from this fast, direct rail link that this will be a much more attractive route. The member for Carine supports that, because she is on record as saying that people want to get from point A to point B in the most speedy manner possible. We have a great deal of vehicle usage in Perth, and the same logic applies to public transport. If we are to provide a system that is

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competitive with the motor vehicle, it must provide a travel time that is competitive with the motor vehicle, otherwise people will not turn to it in the numbers that we desire.

Dr WOOLLARD: I ask the minister to provide the anticipated passenger figures by way of supplementary information.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We will produce those figures when the master plan is released. I am happy to provide the studies showing the correlation between travel time and patronage.

Dr WOOLLARD: Does the minister have the passenger numbers now?

Ms MacTIERNAN: We have made various extrapolations, which will appear in the master plan, as to what one could expect.

Dr WOOLLARD: Could I have those extrapolations?

Ms MacTIERNAN: No. They will be produced in the master plan.

The CHAIRMAN: When a member seeks supplementary information, it is best if he or she hold that thought for a moment so that I can allocate an appropriate reference number. If the member has further questions, he or she can then seek the call.

[Supplementary Information No A35]

Mr McGOWAN: On page 806, the fourth dot point of the major initiatives for 2002-03 indicates that staff and urban design support have been provided for the preparation of a concept plan and redevelopment scheme for the Armadale Redevelopment Authority. Will the minister provide by way of supplementary information details of the support provided for this plan, including staff numbers, assistance with office space and the like?

Ms MacTIERNAN: The office space has been provided directly and is funded from the allocation of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority. Will the member clarify what he means?

Mr McGOWAN: The initiative states that the department is planning to provide staff and urban design support. What is the extent of that support provided to the Armadale Redevelopment Authority? Was there any assistance with rent and office space?

Ms MacTIERNAN: No, it has not provided any rental assistance. The rental for that facility is provided directly from the allocation of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority. An urban designer and a planner provide assistance for the project on an as-needs basis. Staff were involved in the development of the inquiry by design process and in the development of the legislation. As we move forward to the development of a master plan and develop the railway station precinct, urban design staff from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure will be involved, but they will not deal exclusively with that task. Separate offices have been set up by the Armadale Redevelopment Authority. The staff will from time to time use those offices; at other times they occupy the departmental headquarters.

Mr McGOWAN: So two staff from the department go there when required?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is right.

Mr McGOWAN: Is the separate grant for the Armadale Redevelopment Authority somewhere else in the budget?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes.

Mrs EDWARDES: Given that some of that work has already taken place and some will take place in the future, will the minister's department independently cost that use so we know exactly what support has been received by the Armadale Redevelopment Authority? Will that usage be logged?

[2.20 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: The Armadale Redevelopment Authority will have a service agreement with LandCorp, which is providing the administrative support for the organisation. We will look at whether we will do that. We do much work in each community using Department for Planning and Infrastructure staff, and we routinely do not cost out the work. Some very extensive work has been done in the Shenton Park area, and in the Margaret River area, and each project is not done as an individual cost centre. We provide assistance to a whole range of areas without costing them out individually.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer the minister to page 805. The sixth dot point under major achievements for 2001-02 refers to Bush Forever. I refer to the additional list that has been mentioned in the media as the secret list. Has

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that list been refined to a final number, and, if so, have the owners of those properties been notified? If they have not been notified, when will that occur?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That has been refined to 17 sites, of which six are privately owned. The department has now written to the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Urban Bushland Council and asked them to participate in the process of finalising which sites are to be included in the Bush Forever list. I have instructed that each of the owners be advised that their properties are being considered, and that they be given an opportunity to make submissions on that. The agency is in the process of doing that.

Mrs EDWARDES: If six of the 17 sites are privately owned, are the remaining sites crown land, or vested in various government agencies or local government?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I do not have a list of the sites, but most of them are crown land. Some are owned by the Water Corporation, and a few of the lots are crown land vested in the local government.

Mr BOWLER: A line item under major policy decisions on page 802 is very dear to my heart. An allocation of \$2 million for the next financial year has been made to the regional airports development scheme. What is the Government's view on this scheme, and what are its total funding commitments?

Ms MacTIERNAN: This scheme was commenced by the previous Government, and has been successful in helping regional and remote airports in Western Australia support regional airline services. It has allowed for the upgrading of a number of the airports to take a broader range of aircraft. This is important not only for commercial purposes, but also to accommodate the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The Government has had very positive feedback and has decided to continue the project. A commitment was made to provide an additional \$2 million to make a total of \$8 million for the scheme, and it is on track to do just that.

Mr AINSWORTH: I understand the \$2 million allocated last year was reused or reallocated as part of the metropolitan tourism fund of \$5 million. Does the \$2 million in this budget represent additional money, or just the replacement of the money that was not utilised last year for that purpose?

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is new money. We did defer \$2 million. There was a crisis, as the member would acknowledge, as a result of the collapse of Ansett and Skywest. It was important that the Government respond. The regional tourism industry was very strong in its view that the Government should provide additional support, so it seemed to be a bit silly under those circumstances to be putting all the money into expanding the facilities for landing aircraft if people were not actually using aircraft. At the behest of industry, that \$2 million was put in. That \$2 million, as I understand it, has now been replaced. The \$2 million that was deferred from last year has now gone into the financial year 2003-04. In the forward estimates of the previous Government there were no RADS allocations after 2002-03.

Mr AINSWORTH: The next line item on the same page deals with school bus services. I notice a fairly substantial increase from \$8.4 million for the coming budget year to \$15.5 million in 2005-06. My understanding was that part of the rationale behind the change to the school bus system and the contract arrangements was to save money rather than increase expenditure, whereas this would indicate the opposite. Can the minister explain that quite substantial increase over that period?

Ms MacTIERNAN: It comes down to a very simple concept - budget honesty. In previous years, there was a mismatch between allocations and expenditure of a quite severe nature that was never addressed in the budget. The amounts actually budgeted did not meet the demand and the Government has decided that situation cannot continue. The budget must reflect the actual expenditure. There has been a ritual of under-funding of that section of the budget. The Government also inherited a mess with so-called perpetual licences, which many bus operators believed they had. Notwithstanding legal advice, certain ministers led operators to believe that they had licences in perpetuity. We have had to come to an arrangement with operators of school buses whereby we provide a finite and clear term of contract and various rate increases. The matter had been limping on for a number of years and had to be resolved. We got in there, sorted through an agreement and arrived at a determination of the rate review and so-called perpetual contracts. We have provided in the budget an accurate reflection of the money that is required to deliver the service.

[2.30 pm]

Mr AINSWORTH: Does that mean that the \$8.4 million budgeted for 2002-03 is the full amount required for the bus services, or is the Government phasing up to the point at which it is covered in the budget?

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is an additional sum. In the order of \$57 million is provided in the budget.

Mr AINSWORTH: Has this additional money also addressed the composite rate issue?

Extract from Hansard
[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 30 May 2002]
p325b-342a

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Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes, we have factored the composite rate into the budget.

Mr AINSWORTH: To make it easier for both of us, will the minister provide by way of supplementary information some detail of the breakdown of those items and how the composite rate and bringing the budget up to the actual expenditure and so forth fit together?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am not sure that it will be possible to say that one amount is for the composite rate and another is for budget honesty. We can give the member some details of the costings. The \$57 million we shall be spending on school buses is alluded to at page 821. I take it that the member for Roe is not complaining about our spending more money on school bus services.

Mr AINSWORTH: No. I merely want to get the detail of where the money is going and why.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member will be aware of the great level of dissatisfaction of school bus operators in previous years because there was no settlement of the rate they were to be paid. You, Madam Chairman (Ms Guise), had great involvement in that issue because you chaired the task force that ably negotiated the resolution on the composite rate and the so-called in perpetuity contracts.

The CHAIRMAN: That information is provided.

Mr SWEETMAN: At the fourth dot point on page 802 reference is made to the Perth-Mandurah railway line. My question is to some extent similar to that asked by the member for Alfred Cove. I am more concerned about the operating cost of that section of line. It already costs the Government money to provide a service in the metropolitan area where there are high volumes and short leads. The railway line to Mandurah will have to be maintained on a very small revenue base for the first five or perhaps 10 years. Does anything in the master plan refer to the operating cost of providing the service to Mandurah during the first five to 10 years?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is a legitimate question. However, it is exactly the same question that the member's Government would have faced in respect of the Kenwick deviation. We believe that the larger patronage to be achieved from the faster direct route will provide a better ratio of fare box to operating costs, but there is no doubt there cannot be a major expansion of public transport without an increase in costs. The operating cost projected to date is around \$40 million per annum.

Mr SWEETMAN: The extra cost of the direct route is \$350 million, is it not?

Ms MacTIERNAN: No. I will take some little time to provide some basic economic education for members of the Opposition, because they certainly have a bad case of amnesia in the very short time that they have traversed the Chamber. I have tabled documents in Parliament. The Perth urban rail development is made up of two components, one of which is the south west link. The calculations used by the member's Government were based on 1998 figures. The calculations for the northern extension were based on 1999 figures. The master plan prepared by the member's Government detailed that these costs would need to be escalated. At that stage it was decided that they would be escalated only when the contracts were let. We decided that we could not continue into 2002-03 operating on 1998 and 1999 figures, so we have escalated the figures. It is the height of hypocrisy and, at best, financial naivety for the Opposition to think that it can get away with an argument that this railway will cost \$200 million extra, because this Government has done an escalation that the Opposition did not do on clearly denoted 1998 and 1999 figures. Had members opposite been elected to government at the last election, they would have had to escalate those figures and I put to them that their figures would indeed have been considerably higher. We did not have to escalate the railcar contract, because we have made savings through the cutbacks. The Opposition can make absolutely no legitimate case that this project has cost an extra \$350 million. I would love the member to be able to support that argument. If any members on his side of the Chamber had any intellectual rigour, they would produce those figures. The \$1.2 billion that the Opposition is relying on -

Mr BARNETT: Endorsed by your Premier.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I will come back on this. We acknowledge that the figures would have to be escalated.

Mr BARNETT: This is an estimates committee, not a political forum.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the minister is attempting to answer the question.

Mr BARNETT: No, she is not. She is engaging in a political debate.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Cottesloe, I am sure she is about -

Mr BARNETT: Leader of the Opposition.

The CHAIRMAN: Leader of the Opposition, I am sure that the minister is about to draw her answer to a close. The Leader of the Opposition might not like the answer but the minister has the right to give it.

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[2.40 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: I have a high regard for the member for Ningaloo. I believe that he is a man of some integrity. I would not like to see him led into error by the reckless and intellectually dishonest positions put from time to time by some other members of his party.

The rail project is made up of two components. The funding we have provided is equal to the amount the former Government had costed for the Kenwick deviation and stage 2 of the bus expressway project south of the Canning Bridge. We decided to build the railway line down the freeway so that we would not need to build the expressway. We took the money for the Kenwick deviation and added that to -

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Did the minister escalate that figure, too?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That was escalated from the 1999 or 2000 figure.

We added the amount the former Government had costed for the Kenwick deviation and stage 2 of the bus expressway project together, which totals \$1.217 billion. We then subtracted the funds for what had already been built, including the railcar contract, which was about \$295 million, and we escalated the remaining figure. We escalated the 1998-2000 figures.

Mr SWEETMAN: It seems like a long time since I got the preliminary answer to the first part of my question. In the event that the operating costs blow out, will the Government reduce the services to Mandurah?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is a hypothetical question. We do not anticipate that the operating costs will blow out. We have state-of-the-art technology and we will have a 15-year maintenance contract whereby the provider of the trains takes the risk to maintain them and ensures that they are available and on time. We do not think there will be a patronage risk because we anticipate that the figures will be solid. The experience of the northern suburbs line, which members opposite also opposed, was that the patronage projections exceeded -

Mrs EDWARDES: I advocated it.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member for Kingsley was a late advocate. It is incredible! The Opposition never built one centimetre of railway line during its term of government, but now that it is in opposition it supports building them.

There is no basis to believe that the patronage figures will not meet the prediction. The northern suburbs rail patronage figures exceeded the initial estimates by around 15 per cent.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: On 16 July, the Premier and the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure announced that the project would cost \$1.217 billion. Was either the Canning Bridge interchange or the two tunnels factored into that cost, or had they already been taken out?

Ms MacTIERNAN: No, that was part of that project. Does the member mean the construction of the Canning Bridge? The cost of that construction was not included in those funds because that project was being built under stage 1 of the busway project.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Was that not included in the \$1.217 billion?

Ms MacTIERNAN: No.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Has Cabinet made a decision about the William Street route?

Ms MacTIERNAN: To which line item does the member refer?

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: I refer to the Perth-Mandurah passenger railway line.

Ms MacTIERNAN: No, Cabinet has not made a decision.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: When will the master plan be made available?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Shortly after Cabinet has made a decision.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Will that be in June?

Ms MacTIERNAN: It will follow shortly after Cabinet decides on the route. The previous Government took seven years between making the strategic decision to build a railway line via the Kenwick deviation and the completion of its master plan. It seems to be disproportionately upset that it will take -

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: You promised us it would be ready by February.

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Ms MacTIERNAN: I announced in October that it would be delayed. The member for Carine even issued a couple of media statements that called on the Government to take more time before it made a decision to ensure that it got it right.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: I would like the Government to get it right.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We appreciate those sentiments and understand that the member wants what is best for the State. We hope to have that master plan ready very shortly after a decision is made on the route.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Will the supplementary master plan deal with the issue of the bus lanes on the freeway and whether there will be a designated bus lane? Will it also refer to the freeway lanes and the number of motorists who use it? One day under duress the minister said that there would eventually be 14 lanes on the Kwinana Freeway.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I said that there would be 14 lanes on the Kwinana Freeway if this railway line was not built. Studies show that four extra lanes would be needed if the rail link to Mandurah was not built. For the benefit of the member for Ningaloo, there will be a substantial cost to the functionality of the city and the need to constantly expand the road program if we do not build the railway. I do not know how many duplications of the Narrows Bridge the public would tolerate.

Mr SWEETMAN: There is a slight difference in the users paying for that.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We must consider how the city works. I do not think the city would work if that were done. I was of the view - perhaps wrongly - that both sides of Parliament supported the rail system to Mandurah. I am sure the member for Dawesville will be very interested to note the opposition among the Opposition's ranks.

Mr SWEETMAN: Be realistic; do not paint us into a corner.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Members opposite do not need my assistance to do that.

Dr WOOLLARD: I refer to the fourth dot point on page 802 of the *Budget Statements*. It states that an integrated, well-planned and well-patronised public transport system will minimise congestion on many major metropolitan roads, especially during peak hours. Will the bus services that go through the Melville-Applecross districts to Perth continue to have access to an express lane for the full journey along the freeway into the city during peak hours?

Ms MacTIERNAN: The way the bus service is managed is the subject of the detailed master plan. When that is released, those questions will be answered. We are working our way through those issues. I note that the member for Alfred Cove has set up a bring back the Kenwick deviation action group. I suspect the member will not find a great deal of support for it. We have been working with the City of Melville -

Mrs EDWARDES: Wait for the petitions!

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am sure that the members for Mandurah, Dawesville and Rockingham will likewise be gathering petitions to ensure that the fast direct route is chosen.

Dr WOOLLARD: The City of Melville, Main Roads and the Department of Transport support the express bus lane. Buses that currently travel over that bridge drive through 20 suburbs in the south metropolitan area. Statistics from 1996 show that 109 000 people live in those areas. Those people will wonder why they might have 10 minutes added to their journey to Perth at the expense of the people of Mandurah.

[2.50 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: We will be seeking to maximise the speediness of travel. Is the paradox in the position put by the member for Alfred Cove not interesting? She has railed against the possibility that people in her electorate might be required to spend an extra 10 minutes travelling; therefore, she and an action group in the community are advocating that all the people from Thomsons Lake, Rockingham and Mandurah spend an extra 12 minutes travelling so that the people from her electorate can save 10 minutes! I wanted to draw that paradox to the attention of the committee in the event that it passed by members.

We want to ensure the maximum effectiveness of our public transport system for all the people of Perth. We are working very hard to accommodate those buses; buses will continue to perform an important role. A number of priority measures have been identified by the Perth Urban Rail Development Project Team and Main Roads, which will be set out in the master plan when it is released. However, the member will find that the Government is doing a fair bit to ensure that the travel time for the people about whom the member is concerned will not be significantly increased.

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The CHAIRMAN: An extensive number of members want to ask questions. I would appreciate the cooperation of members to direct themselves to the budget and keep short both their questions and answers. I realise there is a lot of detail in the budget and I do not wish to negate the ability of members to either ask questions or answer them. However, I am conscious of the time and the amount of work that the committee must get through.

Mr AINSWORTH: Page 806 states that as a major initiative for 2002-03, the Government will continue the review of air services policy. Given the significant restrictions to regional air travel since the collapse of Ansett Australia, is there a specific focus, and is there a budget appropriation, for regional air services?

Ms MacTIERNAN: There is certainly an emphasis on regional air services. I shall explain to the member what the Government is doing. The member may be aware that considerable regulatory powers are available to the State Government for intrastate air services. As a matter of practicality, these powers have not been invoked to any great extent in the past because in Western Australia, basically Ansett was the big player and Skywest Airlines Pty Ltd was the fully owned subsidiary, as there was not much competition on their turboprop routes. Now, with the complete change in the profile of the aviation industry in this State due to the collapse of Ansett and the separation of Skywest, so that Skywest is now owned by a single operator, a number of players now want to enter into the field in competition. That has created a need for the Government to develop a policy. When we refer therefore to developing an air services policy, that is partly what we must do. We must now become much more actively engaged in the issue of air transport regulation and how we might set that regulation. We have made a judgment, which I believe is widely supported, that we must get the correct balance between stability and competition.

We could conduct an open skies policy by saying that we will allow everyone into the market, they can apply for a licence as long as they meet the Civil Aviation Safety Authority standards, they can fly and the open market will determine who wins. However, one does not need to be a rocket scientist to understand what has happened in Australia in the past 10 years. Every time a new player has entered the market as a result of deregulation, there has been a brief period of fantastic competition with unrealistic airfares - for example \$10 return from here to there - and shortly after a collapse. That not only leaves at risk employees in the aviation industry and communities that are reliant on those services but also it has enormous spin-off effects on tourism and the stability of the tourism industry. This Government has taken the view that it must know what is happening with air services. What is a sustainable payload for each air route? How many flights realistically can the market in Esperance support? We must have a more sophisticated idea of the cross-subsidisation that goes on between the various routes so that we can allow competition without compromising stability, which we want to do if we can. We are examining ways in which the new entrants to the market might deliver a different product so that the product grows the total market, not just divides up the existing market. That is what a large proportion of our current endeavour in developing policy is all about.

Mr McGOWAN: I refer to the Rockingham to Fremantle bus transit way implementation and the system 21 service from Rockingham to Fremantle under completed work, metropolitan on page 814. Will part of the capital works budget include an upgrade to the Rockingham bus station? It is very outdated and somewhat dysfunctional. It works but it is not an attractive place to catch a bus. I know that there will be a new train station in Rockingham in due course, but bus traffic will continue. What are the overall plans for the future of the Rockingham bus station and its interrelationship with the shopping centre in terms of land transfers?

Mr BURGESS: A number of issues are involved in the future of the Rockingham bus station. It is owned by the Government; therefore, there is a fair degree of latitude in its future. Its future will depend on the outcomes of the current Rockingham transit study and the links to be provided to the new train station on the corner of Ennis Avenue and Rae Road. Investigations are occurring on those links to that train station site and the outcomes of the study are yet to be concluded. At this stage we have reserved a number of options for the future of the bus station site including whether it will be upgraded in its current location. Commercial considerations must also be taken into account and initial discussions with the owners of the shopping centre adjacent to the bus station are in a relatively early stage. There are various options for whether the bus station stays at its current site or is relocated to better fit in with the future transit system in Rockingham, including the link to the train station.

[3.00 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: I hope the member for Rockingham, as chair of this committee, will work on that issue.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer to the sixth dot point on page 806, and the statement that a discussion paper was released on the consolidation and streamlining of planning legislation. On 21 April the minister issued a media release on a forum being held that day that would review the former Government's proposal, which had been released in a green paper, and that would look at opportunities for streamlining planning processes. Following

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that forum, the minister was to release the discussion paper. I apologise if I have missed it, but has that discussion paper been released? If so, on what date? When are the public submissions due? When does the minister intend to introduce planning legislation? Does it incorporate any changes that might be needed as a result of the federal Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. As the minister is aware, the legislation will have a greater impact on this industry than on other industries because they have been involved in environmental assessment for many years. Have any issues arisen from the agreement to be signed between the federal Government and the State Government for this legislation?

Ms MacTIERNAN: A very successful forum was held in April, which brought together developers, planners, lawyers, government officers, conservation groups and others. A position paper outlined some of the key issues, some of which were areas of the previous Government's proposed legislation that we thought needed revision. It also looked at other issues, particularly those relating to the streamlining of planning processes, that we wanted to fold into any Bill that came before the Parliament. It was a day of very active dialogue on the issues that had been under discussion. A series of formal papers was received from some of the constituent groups. We are taking those into account and are developing a green paper in response to that.

Mrs EDWARDES: That has not happened yet.

Ms MacTIERNAN: No, it has not. We wanted to make sure that the sorts of insights that came out of the April meeting, plus some of the follow-up submissions by the constituent groups, were folded into the Green Bill. We did not want to present a Green Bill that did not take that work into account. That is being undertaken by statutory services personnel in the Department for Planning and Infrastructure. We are hopeful that a Green Bill will be ready by July or so.

Mrs EDWARDES: This year?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes. Hopefully that will be completed by then. We wanted to ensure that all the issues and suggestions of merit that arose from that forum were put into the Bill. Rather than produce a discussion paper on the basis of what happened at the forum, and because the devil is so often in the detail, we thought we would go a step further, tie it down to some specifics, put it in draft legislation and then release it for consideration. I will advise the member when the Green Bill is ready.

In relation to the Commonwealth's biodiversity legislation, I understand that the Minister for the Environment has carriage of the memorandum of understanding. However, there has been liaison between various agencies. We anticipate that a proposition will go before Cabinet in the near future.

Mrs EDWARDES: I return to the planning legislation and the Green Bill. Because the bilateral agreement is fairly close to being signed, will changes need to be incorporated into that legislation as a result of not only the bilateral agreement but also the EPBC Act? Will that be included in the Green Bill? The Government is about to undertake a review of the Western Australian Planning Commission Act. To some extent I am surprised to hear about a Green Bill prior to the completion of that review, as changes might arise out of that review as well.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We need it to be clear. The legislation that we are talking about, which is basically the consolidation of the Town Planning and Development Act and the Western Australian Planning Commission Act, focuses on getting the planning processes into better order. The review of the Western Australian Planning Commission is part of the machinery of government exercise and all agencies are going through that. We did not want to put another stop on this consolidation legislation. The changes to that Act include consideration of the needs of the WA Planning Commission. What role does the Planning Commission play now that the Department for Planning and Infrastructure is in place? Has that role changed as a result? Is there a different way in which we should be delivering the integrated planning across the State? It is very much about the big issues. If we held off introducing legislation until every possible thing was completed, we would never proceed. We have recognised that in the delays in getting legislation through the Legislative Council. Realistically, if we are to pass this legislation and have it up and running during our term, it will have to be introduced some time this year. We do not necessarily want to delay the completion of that Bill until we have sorted out where we might want to take the WAPC. It will not be one Bill that does all. In relation to any changes that might be required as a result -

Mrs EDWARDES: It is just improving the process between planning and the environment.

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is not clear to us whether the memorandum of understanding that we will enter into will require a change in the legislation and whether the difference in the assessment processes will be such that it will require some legislative change. That is something we will work our way through. If that can be dealt with within the framework of this Green Bill, we will do it. We want to put as much as possible into the legislation,

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but we may not be ready to move on that until a subsequent point, in which case we would have to introduce it as an amendment Bill.

Dr WOOLLARD: Reference is made at dot point four on page 802 to an integrated, well-planned and well-patronised public transport system. What additional work is required at Canning Bridge and Mt Henry Bridge to accommodate the railway line? Are there any plans for resumption or reclamation of areas at those bridges?

[3.10 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: As I have said before, the details of the changes that will be required to the Canning Bridge station will be detailed in the master plan. I have pointed out that the Government had a decision to make. We were not going to lock in our rail system to the Kenwick deviation, which we considered to be a totally unsatisfactory path for our rail system, just because a bus station had been contracted to be built. We had to make a decision whether to proceed with the construction of that busway, and we took a number of factors into account: the fact that it would be a number of years before the rail system would be built, so there would be a use for the bus station in the interim; and the fact that a contract had been drawn up, and if we did not proceed with it, we would be required to pay compensation to the contractor. We then calculated that the majority of the infrastructure would continue to be used once we had our faster and direct rail link. On balance, we believed that the most economic and prudent approach was to proceed with the construction of that bus station. The majority of the infrastructure will be reused. However, we were not going to have the tail wag the dog and stick with the Kenwick deviation for the next 100 years because a bus station was about to be built at Canning Bridge. The detail of how that will be dealt with will be contained in the master plan.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: The member for Churchlands asked the minister a question in the Main Roads division relating to buses that cross over the Shenton Park bus bridge, and the minister agreed to provide that information during this division.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes, I can provide that information now. The cost of the bridge was \$2.154 million. The bridge was constructed to improve access for buses on the circle route, to reduce congestion for buses and general traffic in the Nash Street subway, to improve pedestrian and cycling access across the rail line in proximity to Shenton College and the Royal Perth Hospital Shenton Park Campus rehabilitation hospital. It was a key recommendation identified in the Shenton Park integrated transport plan, which was done in full consultation with local government and the community. The bridge has been operational since April 2002. A key factor is that it saves up to 25 minutes on all circle route bus trips. The member knows how important it is to have speedy traffic. Another factor is a reduction in the number of buses required in the fleet for this route, which means buses can be redeployed to alternative routes. That is a familiar argument. It also allows for a reduction in the cost of fuel and operations. I might add that perhaps the greatest success story of the previous Government - maybe its only success story - was the introduction of the circle route. The bridge was seen to be part of ensuring that the circle route continued to provide rapid and good access for bus patrons. The member for Churchlands now wants to extend the bridge and make it available to cars.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: She wanted to extend it so it is a two-lane bridge. She said it seemed obvious - I do not know the area particularly well - largely due to the development on the western side.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I thought she was arguing that it needed to be extended for car travel. That would be antithetical to the reason for this bridge. This structure was built to give a competitive advantage to public transport.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: She was particularly keen to find out how many buses use it.

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is used by 160 buses daily.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Is that on weekdays and weekends?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is on weekdays, bearing in mind it provides access to Shenton College, and it is about half that number on weekends. The site and the bridge geometry across the rail line prohibit the expansion of the bridge. The busway and bridge cater for cyclists and pedestrians. It would be antithetical to the purpose of the bridge and the competitive advantage it gives to public transport to expand it and make it into a road bridge.

Mr BOWLER: I refer the minister to page 821 of the *Budget Statements*. While the minister is looking at that page, I can tell her that after driving on the freeway in recent days I know why I live in Kalgoorlie.

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is why we need a fast direct rail link to the south west.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the member asks the question, I have allowed a lot of latitude because people want a lot of detail. However, I am a tired of speeches rather than answers to questions and questions that turn into

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speeches. Will members please ask their question, and the minister will answer in the shortest time possible I am sure.

Mr BOWLER: I have a very short question. I refer to the regional transport item and the subheading of aviation subsidies, which indicates an increase from the previous year's allocation of \$630 000 to \$715 000. What has brought about this increase in the budget in the past few years?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Basically, the most significant factor is the decision to facilitate the entry of Emirates to provide direct air services between Perth and Dubai commencing in August this year. That subsidy is basically an underwriting exercise. It compensates them for any loss in freight revenue as a result of the collection of passengers. We think this will be a great boost to Western Australia. It will open up a new direct trade link with Dubai for fresh produce and will offer a one-stop, high quality service between Perth and Europe. There is no doubt that there is an enormous market for Western Australian produce in those very wealthy emirates. This will provide us with an opportunity for two-way trade and to get our produce into that substantial market and also to tap the large tourism market that will open up from the increasing number of affluent people from the Middle East who are looking for new tourist destinations. Once they tire of Harrods, the charms of Aherns and Myer will no doubt lure them to Perth.

Mr BARNETT: The fourth dot point on page 802 refers to an integrated public transport system and uses the Perth-Mandurah line as an example. I draw the minister's attention to the issue with Rockingham. As the new route for the rail line will not go into the centre of Rockingham but, essentially, will skirt the outside of Rockingham, and given that the minister has stated that there will be a 12-minute timesaving on the now direct route, what is the projected time difference for a journey starting in the centre of the Rockingham business district to the Perth central business district?

[3.20 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: I do not think the Leader of the Opposition's question is well founded. Perhaps I will make the preliminary point that under the proposed Kenwick deviation plan, only every second train would have gone into Rockingham. The primary line would have bypassed Rockingham altogether, and every second train apparently would have gone on some loop into the central business district. Under the Government's plan, the location of the Rockingham station is in the residential heart of Rockingham. Indeed, for the residents and people who are basically commuters to Rockingham, the trip will be far quicker because two stations will be set in the residential heartland of Rockingham - the Rockingham and Waikiki stations. Far from adding to the length of the journey between Rockingham and the city for the average commuter, it will provide an even shorter travel time.

Mr BARNETT: Further to that, if the minister claims that it is a shorter travel time, why is she contemplating a light rail or some other connection from central Rockingham to the rail station, and why was it necessary to send the members for Peel and Rockingham to Europe to study that option?

Ms MacTIERNAN: With our mass transit rail system, we will be providing a spine to the system. We need to develop linkages from that spine. We recognise that one of the roles of this line will be to provide the people of Rockingham with fast, direct access to the city and points north. However, we also want to encourage a better service for people from other areas to Rockingham. Indeed, one of the interesting things that arose out of the recent Westpoll survey was that some of the greatest supporters of the fast, direct link railway are people from the northern suburbs, who want to go to the sunny climes of Rockingham and Mandurah. We believe that it is important to have a good linkage from the Rockingham railway stations into the raft of facilities that one now finds in Rockingham. We want to link in the university campus, the shopping centre and the attractive foreshore that is becoming a veritable Venice of the south. We believe that this will provide a capacity for all those important areas of Rockingham to be linked. This recognises Rockingham as one of the strategic regional centres that has not only a shopping centre but also a range of other regional centre activities, as well as a university campus and a foreshore. We need to link all those.

One of the great successes in public transport of the previous Government was its circle route. It recognised that having put the spines in place, the east-west connectivity needed to be improved. Indeed, the circle route did just that. In the middle distance suburbs, I suppose I could call them, it linked the spines to those important networks.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer the minister to the seventh dot point of major initiatives for 2002-03 on page 806, which states that the Bush Forever metropolitan region scheme amendment will be referred to the Environmental Protection Authority. Will the minister advise which sites will be included in that amendment and when that amendment will be ready for referral?

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Ms MacTIERNAN: The detail of that will be answered by Paul Frewer.

Mr FREWER: The amendment will include a range of different sites that were advocated in the Bush Forever final plan.

Mrs EDWARDES: Can you list them?

Mr FREWER: There are many of them, but we can provide a list when the amendment has been through the EPA. We will need to assess it before permission to advertise is given. That work is currently under way. It will be compiled in the next few months, put through the Western Australian Planning Commission and referred to the EPA in the August-September period.

Mrs EDWARDES: Can I clarify the process? There are a number of sites. I know from my previous work on this -

Ms MacTIERNAN: This is when the member was the de facto Minister for Planning.

Mrs EDWARDES: - that we had identified a number of sites that would comprise the amendment. I take it that it will obviously include those sites, and it will not incorporate sites for which no current development application is afoot, or greenfield sites.

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is fair to say that we have not finalised the way in which we will deal with that and exactly what will and will not be included. An interagency group has been set up in the Premier's office, because this is a cross-portfolio issue. That group is currently working to develop our final policy on this. That is being worked through the cabinet standing committee on environmental policy. It is working on producing a final report in June or July this year. We will then have a clearer notion of precisely how we will do it. It will not necessarily be the same process. I do not want to pre-empt what that report might state and what Cabinet might decide as a result.

Mrs EDWARDES: Is the minister involved in that committee?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes, I am on the cabinet standing committee on environmental policy. The interagency working group comprises people from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: My question relates to page 813 and is about the Safer Transport Taskforce rail security initiatives, particularly the transit guards. Is the minister able to outline how many new transit guards are currently employed? Is the department still looking for further transit guards? Will the minister give us an update?

Ms MacTIERNAN: The transit guard per se has not yet commenced. A number of things had to be done. We had to give notice to Chubb Security Services that we would not renew its contract, and that required a notice period. We then had to advertise for transit guards. We had to select them and must train them. This is being undertaken currently. Letters of offer are expected to be sent to the successful applicants in June, and we hope to have them up and running by July. It has taken a bit longer than we had hoped. However, we still anticipate a July start-up.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: How many transit guards will be employed?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I cannot give the precise numbers at this point, but we are looking at about 190 in the first instance.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: That is 190 plus the 50 police?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes.

Dr WOOLLARD: I refer again to the fourth dot point on page 802. Will the master plan detail modifications to road traffic and pedestrian capacity at Canning Bridge and Mt Henry Bridge, car parking arrangements and drop-off points at Canning Bridge, and the total government subsidy involved in building and operating the railway over the planned cycle and how much this will represent per passenger journey?

[3.30 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: These details are being developed as part of the master plan and they will be released as part of that plan. Extensive consultations have taken place with affected local authorities.

Mr SWEETMAN: I refer to dot point six on page 802 and dot point 15 on page 806. The statement on page 802 refers to continued deregulation and increased competition in the transport sector, which should provide benefits for users and providers. Will the minister clarify what that statement means, particularly when read in conjunction with the statement on page 806 which refers to the continuation of the review of air services policy

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being undertaken to guide the Government's future role in regulation and subsidisation of intrastate air services? I refer to the \$165 000 review that is taking place currently.

Ms MacTIERNAN: This one must have slipped through to the keeper. We are continuing to increase competition in the transport industry. We are working on providing greater opportunities for competition between road transport and shipping. We are looking at ways to stimulate shipping and provide competition in areas where that does not exist at the moment. There is obviously increased competition between road and rail. This statement does not necessarily reflect what we are doing; we are wanting to increase competition. Continued deregulation is not the only way to achieve that increased competition. In fact, in many instances, deregulation has reduced competition. We have seen a reduction in competition between road and rail, and rail going into decline. Increased competition is not necessarily provided by deregulation; market forces do not always provide that competition. If I had spotted that statement I might have deleted it from the budget papers. We are working to ensure that rail access, for example, is open to all. Interesting new technology is becoming available for rail, which will see it compete more effectively with road transport. Road transport has invested in new technologies over the past 10 years, rail has tended to perhaps fossilise, but a change is coming and we will see some benefits. That phrase might have been a standard one that gets in the budget papers every year.

Mr SWEETMAN: Referring to the statement on page 806, concerning the review of air services, is the minister aware of the fewer number of people, particularly in the tourist segment, who have flown into the Pilbara, the Kimberley and the Gascoyne? Skywest is the carrier at the moment and is asking for route protection. I could not get a seat out of Carnarvon yesterday and it is not school holiday time. The airline is getting some comfort from the fact that this review is taking place and it is not likely to see any competition for the remainder of this year.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We have set very tight deadlines for this review. We were conscious that we could not have a monopoly continuing for any extensive time. I note that Skywest does not fly to the Kimberley, and I am not sure of the relevance of that comment.

Mr SWEETMAN: The minister's review is statewide.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The review is statewide, but the moratorium on new entrants applies only on the turboprop routes. Even within that area, we have said to the players in Kalbarri that we could work around that matter, because that area has not previously been provided with an air service. I am waiting to see a report on that matter; I will follow it up. This review is to be completed by early July. I have raised the member's concerns with Skywest and have been told there is no difficulty getting flights. Perhaps we should organise a meeting with yourself, our policy people and Skywest, because we are obviously hearing different stories about the availability of flights in and out of Carnarvon. I am happy to do that. It was originally proposed that the study would take six months and I said that was not acceptable because we have other airlines wanting to fly in. We cannot defer this matter indefinitely. We have some of the most senior aviation experts in Australia working on this matter. We want to get it right. I agree with the member that this is a lot of money; I went through the roof when I saw the amount involved. I was very annoyed about it. This is a problem we have had in the public sector: we have deskilled the public sector work force and we need to do a lot of rebuilding. I find in some agencies that when something has to be done their immediate response is, "We will get a consultant." What can we do in-house? In Main Roads we have reviewed the skill set and we have looked at where we are spending this money on consultants, and how we can better employ more people in-house at reasonable levels of pay so we can attract competence. Notwithstanding that, and given that this issue involves complex material and we would not need experts in-house all the time, the only way we could have realistically proceeded with this review was through a consultancy. We have world-renowned experts working on this matter, and that is the level of expertise we will need to persuade the market that whatever we are doing is fair and proper.

Sitting suspended 3.40 to 3.54 pm

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer the minister to the third last dot point on page 806, which states that the metropolitan coastal strategy will commence. I understand that the coastal planning group established by the minister towards the end of last year reported back in March this year. That is not referred to in the budget papers, and I do not know why. It may be an oversight. What will the minister do with that report? Does this dot point refer to a continuation of that? Are there any other arms, such as a statewide coastal planning strategy? Where does the minister see it going from here?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I have yet to receive the final report of that task force.

Mrs EDWARDES: I thought it had been completed in March.

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Ms MacTIERNAN: I had a meeting with the members of the committee at Hillarys on a Sunday morning in March. We went through the issues and the directions they were proposing. Some matters were still to be resolved, but that report, as I understand it, is certainly in its final stages, and I will need to set a time to formally receive it. I hope to be able to do that in June. That report will contain a number of recommendations for ways to proceed with coastal planning and, after I have considered the report, it will be released and the plan will be developed.

Mrs EDWARDES: Is this the metropolitan coastal strategy?

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is about developing a strategy for the metropolitan area. It will not be started until the task force report is completed. Also, the draft coastal set-back statement of planning policy is out for comment at the moment. Much work is still to be done. One of the issues that occupies the minds of the Greens (WA) members of Parliament is the number of marinas planned. There must be a plan for strategic development of marina facilities, instead of proposals being considered just when a developer has a good idea. Is there a place for development fairly close to the coast? Dr Rob Kay, a very well-respected coastal planner, will show in his presentations urbanised fringes to the beach that have their own charms. One example is the Indiana Tea House in Cottesloe. Some areas have a very urban edge, while in others the community wishes to preserve the coastal dune system. We must ensure a proper mix of the different aspects of seafront development, and the community must have input into those developments.

Mrs EDWARDES: Is the minister intending to make public the report she expects to receive in June?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes, I will. It may need to be considered by Cabinet first, but it will be made public.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: My question relates to the major achievements listed at page 811, and the statement that the hull identification number system for private vessels has been implemented. How many vessels have HIN plates, and how many do not?

[4.00 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member basically wants to know the number of vessels that have been issued with hull identification numbers. We will provide that by way of supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No A36]

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: The first dot point of the major initiatives for 2002-03 listed on page 812 refers to the development and implementation of a national compliance plate system for recreational vessels. How does that differ from the hull identification number system?

Mr HARRIS: The national compliance plate is a more substantial compliance plate than a hull identification number. It effectively covers construction methodology and materials to ensure that boats are safe, buoyant and so forth. It is meant to be nationally applicable so that when boats move from State to State the compliance plate is still valid.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Is that for existing or new recreational vessels?

Mr HARRIS: That has yet to be determined. It is more than likely that it will apply to new vessels rather than existing vessels, so boat constructors will have to comply with the national compliance plate.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: Also on page 812, the second dot point of major initiatives for 2002-03 refers to developing boating education programs in regional areas. I understood that boating education programs already existed in regional areas. Where are we heading with those programs, what is different and will those programs be embarked on by the agency or private providers?

Mr HARRIS: They will be largely conducted by the agency itself. It is intended to be in part a continuation of the programs that we have currently.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: They are good programs.

Mr HARRIS: I thank the member. Where we can, we extend those programs to a broader group of people or to areas in which they are not conducted at the present time.

Mrs EDWARDES: On page 806 the second dot point of the major initiatives for 2002-03 refers to a review of the subdivision approval process. Will the minister outline when it will commence and how it will be carried out? The brief will obviously be to examine those options to provide a more efficient and effective service. Has the minister any concerns that she hopes will be addressed by the review?

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Ms MacTIERNAN: We have had a number of concerns about subdivision applications. The control study is designed to identify options for the more efficient processing of subdivision applications. It is a joint initiative of the Western Australian Planning Commission and the department. The assessment of subdivision applications certainly consumes a very significant amount of the commission's and the department's resources. The concern was that the level of resources required might not be sustainable; indeed, so much time was being spent dealing with subdivision applications that it was eating into the availability of resources to deal with strategic issues. It was a case of getting down and dealing with the detail, but it was consuming such a vast level of resources that it was felt it needed to be looked at. That process started under the previous Government. We introduced some of the issues that we felt needed to be considered. We wanted to look at the delegation of some of the smaller subdivisions, particularly to local authorities. Some of the options that have been considered include the delegation of the process to local government, which is something that needs to be seriously examined.

Mrs EDWARDES: What do you regard as small lots?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I mean a small number of lots, such as a subdivision of five lots or less, or even three or less perhaps. The development industry is showing resistance to that, although some developers do not mind it. I suppose it depends where they have their land and the nature of the local authority. One of the matters we have discussed is linking that delegation to a performance-based indicator, so we would look at local authorities that clearly had the personnel and resources to consider the issues properly. We would also look at the preparedness of a local authority to do this and its track record in making decisions on the basis of a policy. The performance of local authorities is very uneven. Some act almost without regard to policy considerations and others adopt a very strategic view and make their decisions in the light of the broader policy considerations that they have developed to regulate their affairs. There has also been a discussion on contracting out the department's role in the process. The examination of that commenced under the previous Government. That option is not one that I would support. I have indicated to the officers that it is not a direction in which I would be prepared to go. The same applies to changing the process to allow for private certification. Again, I believe that is fraught with danger and not one that I would accept, but I would look at internal improvements to the processes and applications of technology.

Mrs EDWARDES: When do you propose to carry out the review and how do you propose to do it?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Some of it is about to commence. We are hoping that some of the ideas will be fed into the Green Bill. They might not be ready in time for the Green Bill, but clearly we flagged this very early on as something we wanted to look at.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: On page 812 the eighth dot point of the major initiatives for 2002-03 states that tenders will be issued to enable a smart card-based ticketing system. I certainly support the smart card system. I would hazard a guess that we all support it. When will the tenders be let and when does the minister see the smart card being in operation?

[4.10 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: The target implementation date is 30 June 2004. We want the ticketing system up and running by the time the extensions of the urban rail network are completed. For that reason, we will need to have it up and running by June 2004. We are mindful of what has happened in other States and the enormous difficulty they have had in getting these systems operational. It has become a major political issue in New South Wales. We may consider tendering for the system later this year. It will be linked to the building better stations program. The introduction of the new change machines that we announced some time ago has been delayed because a lot of stations will need a major refit and will not be rebuilt to provide barrier entry. We must be careful about where we site the change machines because we do not want to install them and then have to remove them. We must do a lot of forward planning for those stations.

Ms HODSON-THOMAS: How many stations will be upgraded this year?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Work has been undertaken on the Bassendean station. The planning work is being undertaken, although construction money for Armadale will be available this year. That is listed in the Western Australian Government Railways Commission budget.

Mr SWEETMAN: I refer to the Carnarvon land-backed wharf listed under works in progress on page 813 of the *Budget Statements*. The estimated total cost of that development is \$1.596 million and the estimated expenditure for this financial year will be \$305 000. Last week I met with members of the ministerial advisory committee and the federal Minister for Finance and Administration, Nick Minchin, as the federal Government has been approached to also supply funding. I was told categorically that the project had not received funding from the

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State Government and that the total cost of the project was about \$2.8 million. What does the figure of \$1.596 million in the budget papers refer to? Is that the potential total state allocation?

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is our estimated total cost to provide a 100-metre land-backed wharf with an associated hard sand access road to provide a greater capacity for fishing boats to load and unload. We have allocated funds to complete the design and commence construction. We have provided \$305 000 for the project this year.

Mr SWEETMAN: Does the minister stand by the total cost of the project being about \$1.6 million?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am advised by the agency - I have not done the engineering works myself - that it perceives these costs to be reasonable for the project. However, like many other projects there is often a Rolls Royce version and a Holden version. The fishermen might have a somewhat more ambitious program in mind. I am advised that the program that has been approved by the department can be completed for that sum of money. The member knows that I am going to Carnarvon next week, and I am happy to have a chat about funding for the project. We must be realistic about the sums of money that are available. Funds have been provided for this project -

Mr SWEETMAN: The \$1.596 million will show up in the forward estimates. If the \$305 000 and the lesser amounts preceding it are deducted, is that what the State stands to contribute to this project; that is, just under \$1.6 million?

Ms MacTIERNAN: The remainder of that project is scheduled in the out years.

Mr SWEETMAN: That might be why we end up with the figure of \$2.8 million. The ministerial advisory committee has indicated that it is contributing \$800 000 to the project and that it has also received \$300 000 from the area consultative committee fund. That is probably what increases the cost to \$2.8 million.

Ms MacTIERNAN: That might explain it. Carnarvon and that region are doing very well under our Government.

Mr SWEETMAN: It is a continuation of the works in progress over the past two or three years.

Ms MacTIERNAN: How much had the previous Government put into that project?

Mr SWEETMAN: We had put nothing into that project.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer the minister to the statement of financial performance on page 816 of the *Budget Statements*. The supplies and services budget for the current year was estimated to be \$37.9 million and the budget actual was \$45.7 million. What is the reason for that increase?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I will leave it to the chief executive officer to explain.

Mr HARRIS: I do not have the detail of that variation. However, I have the detail of why that budget has been reduced from \$45.7 million in 2001-02 to \$38.7 million in 2002-03. I can get that information and provide it by way of supplementary information.

Mrs EDWARDES: If the minister is happy to provide that as supplementary information, I would be pleased to receive it in that form.

Mr HARRIS: I suspect that part of the comparative differential is that, as a result of the restructure of the two entities, we have moved from several outputs to only two outputs. Recasting some of the numbers has presented us with some difficulty. Nevertheless, there will be an explanation.

Mrs EDWARDES: I am happy for the minister to provide that supplementary information. Will the minister provide a breakdown of the 2001-02 figure of \$45.7 million and of the 2002-03 budget figure of \$38.7 million?

Ms MacTIERNAN: We will provide some further detail over and above that which is provided in the budget papers for those figures. I am advised that those estimated actuals were done some time ago and that the difference might not be that significant now. The estimated actual for the 2001-02 budget might not be about \$45 million. We can estimate the amount more clearly as we get closer to the end of the financial year.

[*Supplementary Information No A37*]

[4.20 pm]

Mr TEMPLEMAN: There are a number of notations in the *Budget Statements*, particularly on pages 813 and 814, about Hillarys Boat Harbour. Will the minister outline the Government's position on the future plans for the boat harbour, given that its popularity is under threat from the Mandurah Ocean Marina?

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Ms MacTIERNAN: I do not agree with the member on his last point. There is enough room for two marinas in this town and I expect both of them to be very successful. It is important that we have a number of marinas. The success of Hillarys exceeded the wildest dreams of the previous Labor Government, which set it up. In the order of 3.5 million people a year visit that site.

Mr TEMPLEMAN: How many?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Apparently, 3.5 million. It is the most frequently attended tourist facility in the metropolitan area; that is an extraordinary achievement. Obviously there will be a limit to growth and the problems that growth creates in getting in and out of the facility and parking there. We have promised that \$500 000 will be spent on parking and access issues, and we conducted a parking study this year. I said to the department that I wanted to get on with the expenditure of that \$500 000. We have probably dragged our feet a bit in getting that work done, but we believe that some of the best work that can be done is to create a proper southern entry into the area - basically a new access point to the southern car park. We will do that and we will do a lot of work reconfiguring the car parking in line with the recommendations of the Sinclair Knight Merz Pty Ltd study. There are a couple of other technological things that we can do to better use the parking facilities.

Hillarys Boat Harbour is a fantastically popular facility. I know of one developer who is keen to undertake a 5 000 square metre development on that site. Whether that is appropriate, of course, is something that would have to be determined in the first instance by the Western Australian Planning Commission. However, as I said earlier, part of the metropolitan coastal strategy that we will be embarking on will include an examination of where we can have marinas, how many marinas we should have and what are the best locations for these marinas, taking into account the very sensitive environmental issues that always crop up with marinas. There is no doubt that Hillarys Boat Harbour will remain an incredibly important facility. I look forward to Mandurah being likewise and creating employment opportunities for the many people who live in the hinterland of Mandurah, for whom the member and the mayor are concerned.

Mr AINSWORTH: I refer to works in progress on page 813. I was pleased to see in the *Budget Statements* an allocation of funds for a boat launching facility and access road at Coral Bay. That is perhaps long overdue in some members' minds. However, I am interested in what that facility entails. Is it an access road to a facility away from the centre of Coral Bay, where boats are currently launched off the beach, or is it part of the access road into Coral Bay from the main highway?

Ms MacTIERNAN: It is an access road to the facility. No determination has been made on which of the two sites - North Bills Bay or Monk Head - the boat ramp will go. The member for Ningaloo would be familiar with both of those sites. As with anything on the coral coast, this is a highly sensitive issue. To some extent the optimum position will depend on what will happen with Mauds Landing. If the proposed development is constructed at Mauds Landing, it may be more sensible to develop the facility at Monk Head. In some respects, Monk Head is a more difficult site to develop, as I understand the ramp would need deeper water further out. However, there are environmental objections to the North Bills Bay site. We are therefore working through that issue with the Environmental Protection Authority, which is still considering the options. We want to get on with it. As I said, the very great difficulty in this area is resolving the Mauds Landing issue. What happens at Mauds Landing will affect what we do elsewhere. It is hard to make sensible forecasts and undertake long-term planning until we have certainty about Mauds Landing, which is a difficult and highly sensitive issue that is currently going through the environmental protection process. However, we recognise that a number of things need to be done at Coral Bay, whether or not the development at Mauds Landing goes ahead. Clearly, the decision on whether it goes ahead will influence the preferred site of the boat facility. This road therefore will provide access into the boat launch facility itself.

Mr SWEETMAN: I want to ask a question about the Carnarvon surge wall. However, I hark back to the previous question about the land-backed wharf under works in progress on page 813. I want to be sure that the figure of just under \$1.6 million is Department for Planning and Infrastructure money or Treasury money going to the department, and not fishermen's money.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I will need to check that matter because I know that often in these entries in the *Budget Statements* moneys are included from other agencies. I would not want to give the member an undertaking about which I was not absolutely sure. I will ask the director general whether he will give that guarantee.

Mr HARRIS: It is my understanding that the money will come from the department.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We can confirm that with supplementary information because, of all members, I do not want to mislead the member for Ningaloo.

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Mr SWEETMAN: Provided the minister is sure by next week, because we are having meetings about this matter in Carnarvon and the minister needs to know.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the minister undertake to provide that information?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I will provide confirmation by way of supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No A38]

Mr SWEETMAN: I want to be clear in my own mind that the figure for the Carnarvon surge wall is the last tranche of funds to allow that project to go ahead. My understanding is that approximately \$1 million has been with the Gascoyne Development Commission for some time.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Which project are we talking about now?

Mr SWEETMAN: I am talking about the south Carnarvon surge wall, under completed works, maritime, on page 814.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$14 000. Is that the one?

Mr SWEETMAN: Yes, the estimated expenditure in 2001-02 was \$12 000. The Treasurer's release outlining works for the Gascoyne highlighted \$551 000 in the total budget of \$1.051 million for that project.

[4.30 pm]

Ms MacTIERNAN: That may well be in the budget of the Gascoyne Development Commission.

Mr SWEETMAN: Have those funds been topped up? Last year there was nearly \$1 million, and the priority and assurance dividend depleted that fund by about \$150 000 or \$180 000.

Ms MacTIERNAN: This project is in the budget of the Gascoyne Development Commission. This evening the representatives of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development will appear at the Estimates Committee. I will ensure that we alert them to the fact that the member has a query about this issue. The project is managed by our agency, but it is just the project manager. The lump of money is sitting in the budget of the Gascoyne Development Commission. I would not want us to make any rash statements on this. Given that I will represent Hon Tom Stephens, the relevant minister, in this place later today, I will ensure that that question is answered. I will ask my adviser to alert the relevant officer that we need to address that issue.

Mrs EDWARDES: I refer to page 821 and the details of the administered transactions expenses. Money has been allocated for the establishment of the Armadale Planning Authority. The Government was to give \$1 million to the planning authority. This is probably an accounting question. An amount of \$750 000 was budgeted for in 2001-02 and has been expended. In 2002-03 there is \$250 000. If we were able to look at the budget for the Armadale Redevelopment Authority, we would find \$500 000 allocated for next year's budget.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I will explain that. This refers to recurrent expenditure. The figure for the Armadale Redevelopment Authority per se is the capital expenditure. That \$500 000 is available for works of a capital nature in the coming financial year; it is for anticipated minor improvements. The \$1 million in this table is basically recurrent expenditure. I assure the member that all of that \$750 000 has not been expended this year; in fact, not much more than \$250 000 has been spent. The rest is now held in a cash reserve in trust for the authority.

Mrs EDWARDES: That is to do some of the other little works.

Ms MacTIERNAN: These funds are recurrent and will cover the basic requirements of leasing the office, employing a person in the office under a service agreement with LandCorp and preparing the master plan. A large slab of this money will be spent on developing the master plan, particularly for the city centre area. It will also involve some associated project works. The money that comes through the Department for Planning and Infrastructure is the recurrent expenditure. The money that appears under the Armadale Redevelopment Authority is the capital sum.

Mrs EDWARDES: In fact, \$1 million will go to the authority for capital works.

Ms MacTIERNAN: No; \$500 000 is for capital works.

Mrs EDWARDES: I thought there would be another \$500 000 in the outgoing years. It is under division 51, which we have already dealt with. There is \$1 million in this table for operating expenses. There is \$500 000 in next year's budget for capital works for the authority and additional resources are being provided through the department as well.

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Ms MacTIERNAN: That is right.

Mrs EDWARDES: None of it is the same money; it is all different money.

Ms MacTIERNAN: That is right. Some of the services will be provided by LandCorp. We do not want to set up another human resources section, so those people who are engaged directly with and work full time for the Armadale Redevelopment Authority will be employed through LandCorp. There will be a service agreement between the ARA board and LandCorp - I think it has already been signed. Some amounts will be transferred to LandCorp for the provision of those services. Money will be spent on the lease of the premises, which we are to open tomorrow. We have only the \$500 000 for capital works. Effectively, we are waiting to see what the master plan will contain, but this is the interim work. There is also \$6 million in the budget of the Western Australian Government Railways Commission for the relocation of the railway station. That is an important part of this project. The ARA is already working with the WAGR on that relocation and the design factors that need to be taken into account. Hopefully, we will be in a position to go out to contract with that project sometime within the coming financial year.

Mrs EDWARDES: The East Perth Redevelopment Authority is listed under planning and infrastructure in division 49. However, the Armadale, Midland and Subiaco Redevelopment Authorities are listed under Main Roads WA in division 51, which we have already dealt with. Is there a rationale for that split?

Ms MacTIERNAN: We have not been able to work it out yet. I do not know whether they were just part of some alphabetical process. Page 799 of the budget papers lists each of them separately. None of those redevelopment authorities comes under any particular division. I do not know why they have appeared in those areas within that portfolio.

Mrs EDWARDES: Given the fact that they essentially deal with planning, as well as roads and those sorts of issues, I suggest that next year they be incorporated either in a separate division or under the planning and infrastructure portfolio.

Ms MacTIERNAN: I do not think they form part of the Main Roads division.

Mrs EDWARDES: It would make it easier to deal with in the Estimates Committee.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We need to put all the redevelopment authorities that are not part of a division at the end of the portfolio rather than sprinkle them throughout divisions. Page 799 gives an overview of where the authorities fit in and reveals the fact that there is no appropriation for recurrent moneys to any of those authorities directly.

[4.40 pm]

Mrs EDWARDES: I have a number of other questions on this division that I will put on notice to the minister.

The appropriation was recommended.