

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

INQUIRY INTO WORKSAFE



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
TUESDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2017**

SESSION ONE

Members

**Hon Adele Farina (Chair)
Hon Jacqui Boydell (Deputy Chair)
Hon Ken Baston
Hon Kyle McGinn
Hon Darren West**

Hearing commenced at 11.30 am

Mr LEO COCI

Acting Managing Director, Main Roads Western Australia, sworn and examined:

Mr JOHN BRAID

Principal Environment Officer, Main Roads Western Australia, sworn and examined:

Mr CHRISTOPHER RICKARD

Stakeholder Relationships Specialist, Main Roads Western Australia, sworn and examined:

The CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, I would like to welcome you to the meeting. Before we begin, I need to ask each of you to take the oath or the affirmation.

[Witnesses took the oath.]

The CHAIR: You would have signed a document entitled “Information for Witnesses”. Have you read and understood that document and could you each respond on the record?

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIR: These proceedings are being recorded by Hansard and broadcast on the internet. A transcript of your evidence will be provided to you in the next couple of days. To assist the committee and Hansard, please provide the full title of any document you refer to during the course of this hearing for the record, and also be aware of the microphones and try to talk into them. Ensure that you do not cover them with papers or make noise near them. I remind you that your transcript will become a matter for the public record. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today’s proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session. If the committee grants your request, any public and media in attendance will be excluded from the hearing. Please note that until such time as the transcript of your public evidence is finalised, it should not be made public. I advise you that publication or disclosure of the uncorrected transcript of evidence may constitute a contempt of Parliament and may mean that the material published or disclosed is not subject to parliamentary privilege.

With those comments, I now invite you to make an opening statement to the committee if you would like to.

Mr COCI: I really have not prepared one. Basically, we are here to answer the questions that we will receive, to the best of our ability.

The CHAIR: The committee has received evidence that concerns were raised in relation to asbestos being present at the Roe 8 site that was cleared and about how that was handled or not handled, so the questions we will ask will relate to that particular incident. Who was the principal contractor for the Roe 8 project?

Mr COCI: The Roe 8 contract was an alliance of a number of contractors. It was made up of CPB Contractors, Georgiou, WA Limestone, and three consultants—AECOM, GHD and BG&E. Main Roads is a member of that alliance. It is an alliance contract.

The CHAIR: Who was the subcontractor responsible for clearing the bushland at Roe 8?

Mr COCI: The alliance, in my understanding, would have been responsible for the clearing of Roe 8. They could have subcontracted that work out to a number of operators, plant operators et cetera, but the overall control and responsibilities is with the alliance.

The CHAIR: You do not know who the subcontractors were who actually carried out the works?

Mr COCI: No; I can take that away on notice, if you like

The CHAIR: Okay, could you take that as a question on notice 1?

Mr COCI: Yes.

The CHAIR: Was the Roe 8 site inspected before works commenced for the presence of asbestos?

Mr COCI: Yes. Well, before we even started the process—in fact, it could have even been almost a year earlier; I am not sure of the details—they would have mapped out, walked the site, investigated the site, identified areas where there was basically illegal waste dumping on the site, and they would have identified up to the order of 180 sites. Again, if it is important to get that number, I can get that detail. That would have been mapped out. That is in the area of our reserve. There is the reserve, there is the area to be cleared, and there is the area that actually got cleared, which is three things, but I understand the whole reserve was mapped out. Then a management plan would have been put in place. Basically, the areas on inspection that clearly had no risk of being exposed to containing asbestos would have been cleared. Those that had potential to have asbestos would have been treated as though it was a contaminated site. Again, I think of the order of about 30 per cent of those sites were sort of treated as an asbestos site.

The CHAIR: Can I just get clarification? Those areas that were identified as having asbestos present were treated and the asbestos removed before any works commenced on the site at all?

Mr COCI: Yes, before they worked in that area.

Mr BRAID: No. Just to answer your question correctly, those sites were identified, but clearing did commence before those sites were necessarily removed or remediated. But those sites were not cleared. In the particular instances where there was asbestos, they were excluded, fenced off, and the area was subject to dust suppression and also tarping of the asbestos prior to any works. No works occurred in those areas until they were remediated and the asbestos was removed.

The CHAIR: Clearly, with asbestos, the fibres go into the air the minute you start handling it, if it has been broken in any way. The committee has heard evidence that plant and machinery were driving over asbestos and crushing it up, exposing fibres to the air. Was this reported to Main Roads?

Mr BRAID: To the best of my knowledge, nothing like that occurred. The sites were identified and fenced off, so isolation occurred, and no vehicle movement was going in within those sites.

Mr COCI: I am trying to visualise. There would have been areas that had been fenced off, so they clearly would have worked around those particular dumpsites, so to speak.

The CHAIR: Were you informed of the fact that someone from the community actually took samples throughout that construction site and that 42 samples were identified as having asbestos present in them by a lab?

Mr BRAID: Yes, I believe that was made public by Twitter. So we were aware of that. From evidence given by the alliance team members, the locations of those samples that were taken correlated to the mapping that had been done by the alliance.

Mr COCI: They were not new sites.

Mr BRAID: They were sites we were already treating.

The CHAIR: Yes, but you said that those sites that needed to be treated were cordoned off so that there was no access to those sites. Clearly, if these samples were taken from those sites, those sites were not cordoned off because people were able to access those sites to take the samples. Which one of those statements is correct?

Mr BRAID: I am sure there was not a security guard there 24 hours a day. But they were cordoned off, they were fenced and tarpaulins were placed over the top of the asbestos.

Mr COCI: The ones that had a risk of containing asbestos.

The CHAIR: There was a tarpaulin placed over the asbestos?

Mr BRAID: Yes.

The CHAIR: Okay. Can you provide to the committee the map that identifies those areas where asbestos was identified as being present?

Mr COCI: Can we take that away?

The CHAIR: Yes, that will be question on notice 2.

Mr COCI: I would be happy to provide that.

[11.40 am]

Hon KYLE McGINN: You said that suppression was done on some of these sites while you covered up the asbestos. Do you want to identify when the suppression was done—the dates that it commenced?

Mr COCI: Again, I would not have the information here, but I can get that information as well.

The CHAIR: That will be question on notice 3—to provide the dates when the suppression works were undertaken.

Hon KYLE McGINN: And where.

The CHAIR: Yes, and where.

Mr COCI: And where, yes.

The CHAIR: So there was no work undertaken in those areas identified as having asbestos until the asbestos was cleared?

Mr COCI: Correct.

Mr BRAID: To the best of our knowledge, that is correct.

The CHAIR: Did Main Roads require the contractor to prepare and implement a dust management plan?

Mr COCI: Yes.

The CHAIR: When was that plan finalised?

Mr COCI: Can you answer that?

Mr BRAID: I cannot answer that question; no.

The CHAIR: That will be question on notice 4—the date on which the dust management plan was finalised.

Mr COCI: It would have been finalised before we started clearing, though.

Mr BRAID: Correct.

The CHAIR: Would you be able to table a copy of that dust management plan for the committee?

Mr COCI: Yes.

The CHAIR: We will take that as part of question on notice 4. Was Main Roads satisfied that that dust management plan was adequate?

Mr BRAID: Yes.

The CHAIR: What is the process once the contractor provides a dust management plan, or any other plan? Does Main Roads have a look at it and independently assess whether it is adequate, or is it provided to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation?

Mr BRAID: It would depend on the project, but generally Main Roads would review the plan, particularly sensitive ones that may require further assessment by other departments, or advice I should say.

The CHAIR: Once that plan has been approved and it is in place, who assesses whether the contractor is actually meeting the requirements of that plan?

Mr BRAID: In part it is the contractor, but it is also Main Roads by observation on site and auditing.

The CHAIR: Did Main Roads require the contractor to prepare and implement an asbestos management plan?

Mr COCI: Yes.

Mr BRAID: Yes.

The CHAIR: Can you please inform the committee when that plan was finalised and provide the committee with a copy of that plan? I will take that as question on notice 5.

Mr COCI: Yes.

The CHAIR: Did part of that plan require independent assessment or verification that the plan was adequate for the handling of asbestos and removal of asbestos from that site?

Mr BRAID: By independent, what do you mean?

Mr COCI: A third party.

The CHAIR: A third party undertaking an assessment of whether the risk management included within that asbestos plan was adequate and complied with all regulations and requirements.

Mr BRAID: I cannot answer that question.

Mr COCI: It is another one we will take on notice.

The CHAIR: That will be question on notice 6.

Was the dust management plan assessed by the EPA?

Mr BRAID: No.

The CHAIR: Was there no requirement for it to be assessed by the EPA?

Mr BRAID: In terms of dust management for general dust and for public health purposes, no.

The CHAIR: Was the dust management plan assessed by the Department of Health?

Mr BRAID: Not prior to works, to the best of my knowledge.

The CHAIR: There is no requirement for it to be assessed by the Department of Health?

Mr BRAID: No.

The CHAIR: Was the asbestos management plan assessed by the EPA?

Mr BRAID: No.

The CHAIR: Is there any requirement for it to be assessed by the EPA?

Mr BRAID: No.

The CHAIR: Was the asbestos management plan assessed by the Department of Health?

Mr BRAID: I do not know.

The CHAIR: Do you want to take that as a question on notice?

Mr COCI: We will take that on notice.

The CHAIR: Thank you. That will be question on notice 7. Were the dust management plan and the asbestos management plan made available to the public?

Mr RICKARD: Were they contained in the list of documents?

Mr BRAID: No, they were not contained in the list of EPA management plans that were published.

Mr RICKARD: That is a no.

The CHAIR: What is the reason they were not made public?

Mr BRAID: I do not know.

Mr COCI: We do not know.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 8 and you can come back to us on that. As I understand it, the evidence that you have given is that there were some sections that were identified as not having asbestos present, so clearing was commenced on those areas. In other areas, where asbestos was identified as being present, suppression and then removal measures were engaged before there was clearing of those areas. Is that correct?

Mr BRAID: That is a reasonable description; yes. Just bear in mind that these areas of asbestos contamination were quite small in regard to the whole site. They were typically in the order of trailer load-sized materials. I think there was one location where an old building had been demolished on site previously—before Main Roads worked there.

The CHAIR: Basically, with the exception of that demolished building on site, the rest would have been just illegal dumping?

Mr BRAID: Correct.

Mr COCI: Yes. Some of it had been there for many years. Some were fresher than others, in my understanding.

The CHAIR: Given that clearing was occurring on some sections of the site at the same time as the asbestos removal exercise might have been occurring on other sections of the site that had been identified as having asbestos present, were all employees working on the site made aware that there was a risk of exposure to asbestos during that removal process through airborne asbestos?

Mr BRAID: I believe that would be the case. It would have been part of the induction for all workers on site.

The CHAIR: What measures were implemented to protect everyone on that site from airborne asbestos?

Mr COCI: In my understanding, the size of the fencing off and the suppressing—even some water.

Mr BRAID: They are the main controls.

Mr COCI: I think that two or three people who were generally working at the site were given monitors as well to measure—asbestos, was it?

Mr BRAID: Yes.

Mr COCI: They were being monitored to validate, I suppose, that they have not been exposed to anything.

The CHAIR: But not everyone working on the site was provided with those monitors?

Mr COCI: No, just the three key operators—I think the dozer operator, the mulcher and the main supervisor who worked in the particular area where the focus was.

Mr BRAID: That was the monitors that were worn by individuals. There was also air-quality monitoring conducted on the boundary of the site for dust. Obviously, that dust monitoring included asbestos monitoring.

The CHAIR: Who undertook that monitoring?

Mr BRAID: The alliance undertook that monitoring.

The CHAIR: Do we have the results of that monitoring?

Mr BRAID: We do not have it here.

Mr COCI: We would be happy to provide that.

The CHAIR: We will take it as question on notice 9 for you to provide the results of that monitoring, together with the dates and locations at which that air monitoring took place so that we can tally up the results with the location and time that they were taken. Who undertook the asbestos removal work?

Mr BRAID: There was a subcontractor who was a licensed asbestos removalist. I could not tell you what their name was.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 10 for you to come back to us.

Mr COCI: We are happy to provide you with that detail.

The CHAIR: Who undertook the assessment as to whether all the asbestos was removed at the completion of their work?

Mr BRAID: The asbestos removalist.

The CHAIR: They themselves verified it?

Mr BRAID: In accordance with Department of Health guidelines and the like.

The CHAIR: There were police officers on site to protect those people working on site and to keep the protesters out of those areas where there was work going on. Those police officers would have been exposed to dust during the course of those works taking place and potentially exposed to airborne asbestos fibres. Were the police informed of their exposure to asbestos fibres?

[11.50 am]

Mr COCI: I do not know. I would guess yes, but I think we need to validate that.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 11.

Mr BRAID: I think the police were informed —

Mr COCI: Yes.

Mr BRAID: — as in, their hierarchy was informed, but we cannot comment on whether every officer was informed from there.

The CHAIR: Were respiratory masks provided to the police officers on the site by either the alliance, the principal contractors, Main Roads or WA Police?

Mr COCI: I do not know.

The CHAIR: That is fine. In terms of the air monitors that were on site, do we know how long they were on site for? Were they on site just during the period that the asbestos was being removed or were they on site for the whole duration of the clearing works?

Mr BRAID: I believe they were on site for the whole duration of the clearing works. However, we would have to take on notice the full extent of the time the dust was actually actively being monitored on site.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 12.

There was a fair bit of public comment at the time about concern about asbestos on the site and exposure to asbestos. Is Main Roads satisfied that every appropriate measure was taken to protect people from exposure to asbestos while the works were going on on the site?

Mr COCI: “Every” is a big word; everything that we believed was practical to do so.

Mr RICKARD: To elaborate, I think there was a strong demarcation of the site boundary, and the entire site and construction area was fenced. Security guards were in place and there was a strong police presence. In addition to that, there was strong communications around the risks associated with illegal entry into the work site given the vociferous protest activity that was taking place. To support that, Main Roads used its own website and we had our own dedicated contact centre in addition to the alliance’s stakeholder engagement personnel that were liaising with the community on an ongoing basis and communicating the dangers of illegal entry into the site. So I think in practical terms, we did pretty much everything reasonably possible to deter people from entering the site and exposing themselves to a number of risks.

The CHAIR: Are you aware whether any airborne asbestos was picked up by the monitors?

Mr BRAID: Yes, there was. There were two positive recordings on the individual monitors. From information I received from the project director this morning, he said that it was a type of asbestos called crocidolite. It actually occurs naturally in the soils and limestone in the area, and it is not considered to be harmful but I think we should probably get those results for you so we can be definitive on exactly what was detected.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 13.

On those dates when asbestos was detected by the air monitors, was work on the site stopped?

Mr BRAID: We will have to take that on notice as well.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 14. Also, as part of that question on notice 14, can you tell us what measures were put in place once the asbestos was detected in those air monitors in terms of preventive measures to protect people on the site from that airborne asbestos? The whole point of monitoring is to actually ensure the health and safety of workers.

Mr COCI: My understanding is that the readings were not considered to be above unacceptable. We will take that question on notice but it did not raise alarms —

Mr BRAID: No.

Mr COCI: — is what we are saying.

The CHAIR: Who determines what level of asbestos air fibre is acceptable?

Mr BRAID: It is the Department of Health and WorkSafe. I think they both have limits for monitoring the air that is acceptable for airborne fibres.

The CHAIR: Was the advice that you received that those levels that were detected were within what was considered to be a safe limit?

Mr BRAID: That is correct.

Hon KYLE McGINN: Is that with PPE being worn or is it acceptable without PPE being worn?

Mr BRAID: We will have to take that on notice as well.

The CHAIR: That is question on notice 15.

Were works stopped on the site at any time due to concerns being raised about asbestos?

Mr BRAID: Due to concerns about asbestos, I am not sure that work was stopped.

The CHAIR: We will take that as question on notice 16.

Mr COCI: We will take that on notice. There were opportunities to move works from one area of the job to the other, so we probably could have used that opportunity as well while they were looking in more detail at something—they were moved to another area on the job. But again, we will take that on notice and get it from the team.

The CHAIR: The committee has heard evidence that people who were conducting the asbestos removal did not observe the legal requirements in terms of safety and health that should have been complied with. There were no wash-down areas on the site and they removed their protective breathing masks before removing their overalls. If there was airborne asbestos, it could have been on their overalls so you would remove your overalls first before removing your mask. Are you aware of what procedures were followed by the removalists?

Mr BRAID: Not in that sort of detail, no.

Mr COCI: No. If you like, we can investigate and see if we can get more information on that.

The CHAIR: I am not too sure how you would do that, if it was not reported. I just need to know whether it was reported to you —

Mr COCI: Certainly not.

The CHAIR: — and it was not reported to you.

Mr RICKARD: It was publicised by our social media channels so, yes, we did become aware of it and I do understand that the alliance investigated the processes that were being followed at the time.

The CHAIR: Were changes made as a result of that?

Mr RICKARD: I do not believe that the evidence obtained by the alliance at the time supported the accusations that were being made.

The CHAIR: Did the alliance provide a report to Main Roads about their investigation of those allegations?

Mr RICKARD: I have not seen anything if that was the case.

The CHAIR: So how do you know that the alliance investigated those allegations on social media and found them to be unsubstantiated?

Mr RICKARD: Because they advised that they would look into allegations of significant breaches such as that. So, yes, at the time they did advise that they were going to investigate and speak to the people involved, plus further management crew was at the site overseeing that work.

The CHAIR: I assume that there will be telephone conversation file notes made of those telephone conversations.

Mr RICKARD: I will need to go back and double-check with the alliance and come back to you.

The CHAIR: Can we take that as question on notice 17 because I would expect that Main Roads officers who received those phone calls or were part of those conversations would have made file notes on those conversations. Could we have any material relating to those allegations and concerns that were raised on social media and the response by the alliance to those, and the communications between Main Roads and the alliance in relation to those allegations? Sorry, John; I think I cut you off.

Mr BRAID: I was just going to say that I believe the alliance would have raised that as a safety incident and it should have been investigated through there but, once again, that will come out in the investigation of that question.

The CHAIR: Okay; thank you. Does Main Roads require the principal contractor to set up a safety and health committee in relation to the Roe 8 site? Was that a requirement of the contract? Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, there is a requirement for workplaces to set up a safety and health committee and I wanted to know whether a safety and health committee was set up in relation to the Roe 8 site.

Mr COCI: Not that I am aware of.

The CHAIR: Can we take that as question on notice 18?

Mr COCI: Yes.

Mr BRAID: If that is the legislation, then CPB should have —

Mr COCI: When you said the word “committee”, I wonder whether this is within the team or does it go outside the alliance? They certainly would have a safety, health and wellbeing committee section of their team to resource it.

The CHAIR: As I understand it, under the legislation, workplaces are required to establish safety and health committees.

Hon KYLE McGINN: Also, if a health and safety representative from the employees was elected into that health and safety committee, as is under the act.

Mr COCI: Yes; we will get the details for you.

The CHAIR: We will take this as question on notice 18. Was a safety and health committee established? What was the membership of that committee? Were there health and safety representatives elected, representing the employees—the workers?

[12 noon]

Hon KYLE McGINN: Just a question. When doing the dust plan and the asbestos plan, were there any communications with WorkSafe at all between the alliance or Main Roads?

Mr COCI: Well, there was a fair amount of correspondence with WorkSafe. They got involved, but —

Mr BRAID: As to the exact date, I mean —

Mr COCI: I have here some email correspondence when they contacted the alliance, which was —

The CHAIR: Okay. We will take as question on notice 19 a copy of any communications between Main Roads and WorkSafe in relation to —

Mr COCI: Well, the alliance and WorkSafe, yes.

The CHAIR: The alliance and WorkSafe.

Mr COCI: Yes.

The CHAIR: Does that cover it?

Hon KYLE McGINN: Yes. I was just curious about if it had happened before —

Mr COCI: They did have a fair amount of involvement in sort of—either in an advisory role, a monitoring role, assisting. There was a fair amount of involvement.

Hon KYLE McGINN: Are you aware of any inspections WorkSafe did of the site?

Mr COCI: I have been told there was just general monitoring. There were not any investigations.

Mr BRAID: WorkSafe did attend the site several times.

Mr COCI: Yes.

Mr BRAID: I mean, this is from evidence provided by the alliance. They did attend the site several times and they were satisfied with what they saw each time.

Mr COCI: Yes. There was not any formal investigation of any matter, was there?

The CHAIR: So were Main Roads advised of the outcome of every one of those onsite WorkSafe inspections?

Mr COCI: Every time you say “Main Roads”, it gets a bit confusing, because we are in the alliance. We are integrated in that team. So specifically going outside of the alliance to Main Roads proper, I will have to look, because clearly we have a principal representative that sort of sits on the outside of that alliance, but we are in that alliance as well for certain areas.

The CHAIR: Okay. I will rephrase that. Was Main Roads, as part of that alliance, satisfied that all safety and health measures were taken while works were happening on that site?

Mr COCI: The answer is yes.

The CHAIR: Did Main Roads, as part of that alliance, have any interaction with the Department of Health concerning the asbestos concerns that were being raised?

Mr BRAID: There were certainly interactions with the Department of Health, and in particular with the City of Cockburn. They both attended site and observed the asbestos management procedures, and they were satisfied with what was being undertaken.

The CHAIR: Okay. Is there likely to be any file notes or communications recorded about those interactions?

Mr BRAID: Yes. The City of Cockburn had something on their website to that effect as well.

The CHAIR: Okay. But would the alliance or Main Roads have any recording of the communications that they had with the Department of Health?

Mr COCI: There will be something. If we could take that on notice, we can see what we have on record.

The CHAIR: Okay. We will take that as question on notice 20. We would just like to understand the interaction between Main Roads and the Department of Health in relation to those asbestos concerns.

Mr COCI: Okay.

The CHAIR: I might just do one more. I have a similar question, but in relation to the Office of the EPA and the then Department of Environment Regulation. What interactions did Main Roads have with those two agencies in relation to the asbestos concerns that were being raised? We will take that as question on notice 21 so that you can get back to us on that file.

Mr COCI: No problem.

Hon KYLE McGINN: Just on a question that was asked about the dust management–asbestos management plan being made public, are you aware of any members of the public requesting the plans from Main Roads or the alliance?

Mr COCI: Me, personally, no, but I would not be surprised if there were those requests.

Mr RICKARD: No, I am not aware of that. I mean, it is important to point out that on-the-ground community interaction was managed by our alliance representatives. They fulfilled the role of community relations manager and officer respectively, so community interactions were fed predominantly through our contact centre to those people managing the work on the ground. So I will need to go back and investigate whether they had any direct requests for that information.

The CHAIR: Do you want that as question on notice 22?

Hon KYLE McGINN: Yes, please.

The CHAIR: Just to clarify, can you again explain who were the members of the alliance and what were the respective roles once you had the alliance formed in terms of responsibility? How does that rest within the alliance?

Mr COCI: CPB Contractors, Georgiou Group and WA Limestone, and then we have the three consultants, which is AECOM, GHD and BG&E. Basically, there is no specific role as such. They obviously come with their own skills, and so we form one single team. So, being an alliance, the theory is you are not supposed to be able to tell which organisation you work for, and clearly you are working as a single team for the best of the project. Main Roads, subject to having the resources available, it would place a few key people in that team as well in various roles, in particularly interfacing with Main Roads proper. So, that is the alliance. The key roles are subject to the skill set that various members bring to that alliance. The main primary contractor would be CPB; they are by far the bigger player in that. I think they are about 70 per cent ownership, and a lot more proportionally of the resources. A smaller player would be Georgiou, and WA Limestone have a role in supplying material, basically. The other three are the design consultants, and they pretty well share it, whether it is road design or bridge design or whatever consultancy we have, and they share that responsibility depending on their resources. So it is resourced through those agencies, and we form a single group. Main Roads tries to integrate as much as we can afford to, I suppose, with the resourcing challenges, because that is the best outcome we can get.

The CHAIR: Okay. Given that Main Roads is part of the alliance, does Main Roads also have a role in terms of being the agency responsible for the works in terms of overseeing the work of the —

Mr COCI: Yes. So we have a role that is called the “client representative”, who oversees the contract basically, or the terms of the contract that has been put in place, and ensures that the scope and things are being done the right way by the alliance.

The CHAIR: How frequently would Main Roads undertake that supervision role? Was there a daily, weekly or monthly meeting with the alliance partners?

Mr COCI: There is actually a board set up, and all the representatives of those agencies, including Main Roads, sit on that board. I chair that board meeting. That is at the higher level. Peter Woronzow is the other key Main Roads member on that board. We were supposed to meet monthly, but we are meeting more regularly than that. Then at the next level there is sort of the heads of the disciplines, which I suppose is another what they call a management team, which meets probably at least fortnightly, if not weekly. We make sure that there is a representative of all those organisations, including Main Roads, that sit at that level. Issues are debated and discussed at those two levels, and then you might have your own teams that work on specific aspects of the project.

The CHAIR: Just to clarify it for me, what process needs to be gone through by the proponent of a project? I assume in this case that Main Roads was the proponent of the Roe 8 project. Is that correct? In terms of approvals like EPA approvals, planning approvals and works approvals, who actually undertakes that?

Mr BRAID: That is Main Roads. The Commissioner of Main Roads is the proponent at that level.

The CHAIR: Okay. Were all those approvals required to be undertaken by Main Roads, or were they not required because it is public works?

Mr BRAID: Well, it depends. The EPA and the commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage Protection approvals, they are sitting with Main Roads and they are required. There are elements within the road reserve itself where Main Roads does not require a development application. That is what you were looking for, was it not? Yes. So within the MRS primary regional road reserve, Main Roads does not require a development application; however, there were parts of this project that sit outside that primary regional road reservation, and development applications were sought for them.

The CHAIR: Okay. So what role would the City of Cockburn have had in terms of any approvals that were needed for the works?

[12.10 pm]

Mr BRAID: In terms of the environmental approvals?

The CHAIR: I do not think they do environmental approvals. I think they do planning approvals and building approvals.

Mr BRAID: I have a second-hand understanding of where that was sitting. In this case, Main Roads applied for a—what is it called? It is not a development application as such; it is a planning area.

Mr RICKARD: A planning control area.

Mr BRAID: A planning control area—that is the one—to sit over the project area. That takes away the original MRS zoning, and all development applications within that zoning then go to WAPC. My understanding of the normal process would be that if that was an impact on land outside the MRS road reserve, a DoER application would normally go to the City of Cockburn.

The CHAIR: Members, do you have any further questions for Main Roads on this matter? Are there any further comments that you would like to provide to the committee in terms of this issue?

Mr COCI: No, thanks. I am very happy to take the questions on notice and deal with that. There is a lot of detail there, obviously.

The CHAIR: We may have more questions once we have had an opportunity to look at that information.

Mr COCI: Please feel free to request more information. We can go through all our records.

The CHAIR: I thank you for attending the hearing today. A transcript of the hearing will be forwarded to you for correction, once it is available. If you believe there are any corrections that need to be made to the transcript, if you could mark them on the transcript and return them to committee staff. The committee requests that you provide your answers to the questions taken on notice when you provide those corrections to the transcript. If you require more time, just let us know. That will not be a problem—a week or two is quite acceptable to the committee with the time frames we have for the inquiry. If at any time you want to provide additional information or elaborate on particular points, you may provide supplementary evidence to the committee at any time during the committee's consideration.

Mr COCI: The questions will come through in the next day or so, will they? Sorry, I missed that.

The CHAIR: The committee will provide the questions together with the transcript of evidence. Then you could just provide the answers as quickly as you can—but definitely within two weeks.

Mr COCI: No problem.

The CHAIR: Terrific. Thank you very much. The hearing is concluded.

Hearing concluded at 12.11 pm
