

Chairman; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Tony Simpson; Mr Murray Cowper; Mr David Templeman; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Frank Alban

Division 44: Western Australia Police, \$1 062 888 000 —

Mr J.M. Francis, Chairman.

Mr R.F. Johnson, Minister for Police.

Dr K. O'Callaghan, Commissioner of Police.

Mr C.J. Dawson, Deputy Commissioner, Operations.

Mr G. Italiano, Executive Director.

Mr P.M. de Mamiel, Director of Finance.

The CHAIRMAN: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be published by 9.00 am tomorrow.

The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. This is the prime focus of the committee. Although there is scope for members to examine many matters, questions need to be clearly related to a page number, item, program, or amount within the volumes. For example, members are free to pursue performance indicators that are included in the budget statements while there remains a clear link between the questions and the estimates. It is the intention of the Chairman to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point.

The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee, rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. For the purpose of following up the provision of this information, I ask the minister to clearly indicate to the committee which supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the Committee Clerk by Friday, 5 June 2009, so that members may read it before the report and third reading stages. If the supplementary information cannot be provided within that time, written advice is required of the day by which the information will be made available. Details in relation to supplementary information have been provided to both members and advisers and accordingly I ask the minister to cooperate with those requirements.

I caution members that if the minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice with the Clerk's office. Only supplementary information that the minister agrees to provide will be sought by Friday, 5 June 2009. It will also greatly assist Hansard if, when referring to the program statements volumes or the consolidated account estimates, members give the page number, item, program and amount in preface to their question.

I now ask the minister to introduce his advisers to the committee.

[Witnesses introduced.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer the minister to the very last section on page 561 of the *Budget Statements* headed "3% Efficiency Dividend". I draw the minister's attention to the last item "General Operational Savings". Can the minister identify what they are?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The general operational savings—is that what the member is asking?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Basically, as I have said before, the operational savings that WA Police has identified are general savings across the agency and these include a reduction in the motorcycle fleet —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I cannot hear the minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Can members not hear me?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am half deaf from all the explosions.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will certainly try to speak up so that members can hear me. I am sure that Hansard will have picked up on that and will increase the volume for members. There is a dial that members can turn up.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It is turned up to full, minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is it? I will try to speak more loudly than I normally do.

As I said, part of it is the reduction in the motorcycle fleet; restructuring of various support groups, including the media that are attached to the police; videoconferencing of court hearings; automation of data processing and

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corporate records; funding property management related to the Criminal Property Confiscation Act from the proceeds of crime trust fund —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: What was the last one?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Funding property management relating to the Criminal Property Confiscation Act from the proceeds of crime trust fund. There are other structural savings. I have a schedule, which I am happy to go through, if the member would like me to.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Possibly, to save time the minister might like to table them.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am unable to table papers in the budget estimates. I will go through them for the member because she is obviously interested in this item. I am happy to do that. I have already told the member about the motorcycle fleet. The member for Warnbro may not like the decision to not proceed with the construction of the Secret Harbour police station, which will release recurrent operational costs. Other structural savings include centralising the marketing, media and public affairs functions; seeking funding from the proceeds of crime funds for the administration and maintenance of confiscated property under the Criminal Property Confiscation Act; capital works operating costs, which are available due to construction delays; savings at the Office of Crime Prevention; a review of the executive support structure; custodial transports, including utilising videoconferencing and centralising the Magistrates Courts; the introduction of an audit committee to implement an ongoing efficiency program; outsourcing of infringement management and the digitisation of speed-detention equipment and systems; and automation of data processing of court and traffic information. Apart from the ones that I read out initially, the others come under “other” structural savings.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: As a supplementary question, I would like the minister to tease out a couple of those. The last point the minister talked about was the outsourcing of traffic infringement processing and digitisation. They are still some way off. In terms of savings in the next 12 months or so, they will be minimal at this stage.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is that a question or is that the member’s opinion?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It is a question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I thought it was the member’s opinion.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am asking the minister a question. When will those things be implemented?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They are being worked on now.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: When does the minister anticipate being in a position to start to get some savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We will basically see those savings in 2010 and 2011. We must bear in mind that not only does the three per cent efficiency dividend apply for this financial year, but also savings have been highlighted—efficiency dividends, if I can call them that—over the forward estimates.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: How was the process of identifying savings undertaken?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is very simple. The Commissioner of Police and his executive officers and the finance director looked through their budgets to see where they could save some money and they put those suggestions forward, which were accepted by Treasury and me.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: As a supplementary question, what was the role of Treasury in identifying those savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Treasury worked, I think, fairly closely with the Commissioner of Police and his officers in trying to identify where there might be savings. I think that they played a role in suggesting certain areas that may need to be looked at. At the end of the day, it is the commissioner who puts forward the estimated savings to me and to Treasury.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: As a supplementary question—the commissioner may need to answer this, through the minister—is it not the case that these savings were in fact imposed by Treasury and is it not a fact that because the word “operational” is used, it will impact on some front-line services?

[10.10 am]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will answer that. The answer is fairly simple. None of the efficiency dividends that were sought or offered up by the police has affected front-line delivery of services. That was sacrosanct from the word go. Front-line services would not be affected by any cuts or dividends. How can our front-line services be adversely affected when we are putting on more and more police officers and support staff?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The first part of the question was within the purview of the commissioner rather than the minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is for me to decide, not the member for Girrawheen.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: It is within his knowledge, and the minister has indicated by his answer that he does not know.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We can have an argument, if the member wants, about whether I know the answers.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I will repeat that last question, and then we can move on. Is it not the case that the Department of Treasury and Finance in fact identified these savings, rather than the police themselves?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As I said earlier, the Department of Treasury and Finance put some suggestions to the police about where savings might be made, and the police offered some savings of their own volition. That was worked through with police and Treasury, and that is how we came to the final conclusion of the three per cent efficiency dividend.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: My question refers to the significant issues impacting on the agency listed on page 563 of the *Budget Statements*. The second dot point begins —

The Western Australia Police has adopted a new service delivery model for the Central Metropolitan District ...

Can the minister explain the concept behind a police hub, and what its benefits are?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have found it now. There are so many pages, and so much to look at in this police budget; there is such a lot of money being spent.

Mr P. PAPALIA: This is a serious business, minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is a serious business, and I intend to take it seriously, my friend.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Get on with it then.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: If the member is going to start being rude, he is heading off on the wrong track.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: I refer to page 563. Can the minister please explain the concept of a police hub and the benefits it has?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It has been identified by the commissioner and his officers that the future of policing in and around the metropolitan area, and perhaps in larger regional centres, shows that a police hub would be more efficient and would get more police officers out patrolling the streets than would be the case with a lot of little police stations dotted around the area. Every police station that is open needs staff to deal with the general public as well as the crimes that may be committed in the area. Most of those little stations can always call on outside help from the larger stations to assist in campaigns such as Burglar Beware, which involves a tremendous effort on the part of police to identify burglar hot spots and to send in additional resources to those areas. A tiny police station with a staff of between six and eight would not be able to cope with that. Every time a police station is open, it requires staff sitting behind the desks.

The policy put to me by the commissioner, which I endorse, is that it is better to have police hubs, which will result in much more efficient use of police officers. Instead of being behind desks, they can be out patrolling the streets and doing the job that they are trained to do and that the public expects them to do. I do not think any of us want police officers sat behind desks answering the phones and dealing with paperwork. It is better for them to be out and about patrolling the streets. That cannot be done in all the country areas. It is very difficult to have a police hub in a country area because there is too much land mass to cover. Smaller police stations must be responsibly located in country areas. However, in metropolitan areas, overseas experience has shown that the police hub is a much more efficient and effective method and planning device for combating crime.

I am more than happy to consider the Commissioner of Police's recommendations in relation to having police hubs rather than lots of little police stations that will very often be open only between the hours of 9.00 am and 4.00 pm, or for even shorter periods in some cases. The public wants to see more police officers out patrolling the streets, responding to the crimes that are being committed, and catching people who are speeding or behaving in an antisocial manner. It is better to have the police out on the streets where they can respond much more quickly, than to have them respond from a small police station where they might already be dealing with a crime in a certain area. That is the principle of the police hubs.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Has the minister identified which police stations are earmarked for closure?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Not at this stage, other than Secret Harbour, which we will not now build, much to the disappointment of my colleague the member for Warnbro. I will be perfectly honest with the member. The commissioner and I are discussing the Ballajura Police Station at the moment, because there are problems in that station. It is not up to the standard that one would expect our police officers to work in. I have had a good look at the Ballajura Police Station. It is basically a converted shop. It may have been okay 10 or 15 years ago, but I do

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not believe that today it would meet the conditions that the public expects our police officers to work in. There is a tiny holding cell—the member will be aware of the kind of thing I am talking about—located in the open-plan office area. It is totally inappropriate that that cell should be located there. Other than that one, the police station does not have a proper functional holding cell.

Mr M.J. COWPER: By way of an example, minister, I was out at the Forrestfield Police Station in August last year. The police station has only a day shift and an afternoon shift. I do not think they have a night shift there. The local hoons were openly doing burnouts in the car park next to the police station.

The CHAIRMAN: Member, rather than a statement, I want a direct question.

Mr M.J. COWPER: My question is: is that the sort of area that the minister is looking to centralise, or to have a hub situation?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The commissioner certainly has not flagged with me any intention of closing the Forrestfield Police Station. Forrestfield is a bit further out than Ballajura, and it is more of a purpose-built police station. The Ballajura station is just a converted shop, and it is not appropriate. I know that the member for West Swan wants to see it stay open, as do many members of the public. However, the commissioner, who has the authority in this matter—as minister, I do not—will make the final decision as to whether or not that station closes down or is refurbished. I certainly have had a clear indication from the commissioner that the preferred option would be to close that police station and service Ballajura and its surrounding suburbs more effectively from Kiara or Ellenbrook, which is a new police station, and call on assistance from Mirrabooka, which is only a short distance away. That sounds like the scenario, but a final decision has not been made. The lease is up in September, and it is up to the commissioner whether he signs the lease again or lets it go. We are coming to its conclusion, and we will almost certainly be there in the next few weeks.

[10.20 am]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question about the second dot point on page 563, which refers to the western suburbs police complex. The police stations at Wembley, Subiaco and Claremont have been a running issue, I think because they are ageing. I gather, in talking about the western suburbs police complex, WA Police is looking at pursuing the hub concept down the track and closing some or all of those stations. Is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member for Girrawheen is quite right. She has highlighted the Subiaco, Wembley, Claremont and Cottesloe Police Stations. They are all located within the central metropolitan district, serving the western suburbs. They are all very tiny stations and are all well past the end of their operational lives, quite frankly; they are getting on. They are old and expensive to maintain and, ultimately, they lack the functionality for contemporary policing, as I have just explained. Preferred accommodation for contemporary policing is in the form of a hub.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: What is the time frame for the western suburbs?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that we are looking at about five years. The ones that can stay in operation will stay in place until a certain time. But WA Police are working to replace all those stations that I mentioned with a western suburbs police hub. For the same reason I alluded to earlier, a hub will be far more efficient. The commissioner has pointed out that it will be done in two phases: phase 1 is to close Subiaco Police Station, with staff to be relocated at the Wembley Police Station. That will be implemented immediately as an interim arrangement for approximately five years, as I mentioned. Phase 2 will be the establishment of the western suburbs police hub complex. That will be implemented as a priority subject to funding through the state budget process.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I refer to the dot point at the bottom of page 563, which relates to reviewing district boundaries. I ask this question in relation to the Peel police district. I would like assurance that the Peel region will be maintained as a police district. I preface that on the basis of not only our continued growing population in the Peel region, which remains the fastest growing region in Western Australia, but also the impending opening of the Perth-Bunbury highway and the concerns about traffic management of that major highway and the linking roads. I would like an assurance that in the review of the district boundaries, the Peel police district will not be dissolved.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The commissioner has advised me that, obviously, this is a review that must take place. But we cannot make any predictions until the conclusion of that review and until we find out whether there are any disadvantages. I do not think there will be any problems with providing adequate police officers in the Peel district. It is a very important area; I agree with the member for Mandurah. I know he has a genuine concern and, if I can give him any comfort, I am sure the commissioner is of the same view; namely, we do need a good police presence in the Peel district.

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Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am seeking assurance that we maintain the boundary. The issue of the Peel police district has been raised on a number of occasions by previous superintendents in the region with concern that we will be absorbed into the southern metropolitan area. Again, I caution that simply because of the growth of the area and the impact that the Perth-Bunbury highway will have.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The commissioner says, quite rightly, that we cannot make a decision until we get the outcome of the review. It would not be responsible to do that, so I cannot give the member a 100 per cent assurance that what he is asking for today will be the case. I think it is more responsible and understandable that we wait for the review to be completed. I am sure the commissioner will discuss it with me once that takes place. I will be very happy to talk to the member and listen to his concerns so that I can pass them on to the commissioner. It is part of my role to listen to members of Parliament and pass on their concerns to the commissioner in relation to the areas they represent.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Thank you.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I refer to the bottom of page 561 under the heading “3% Efficiency Dividend”. Three components are savings associated with imminent hoon legislation implementation, a 2.5 per cent saving in procurement services and contracts, and general operational savings. Has a business case been prepared for each of those three that indicates the savings that are projected for 2009-10 and for each of the forward estimate years? If so, will the minister provide me with a copy of the business case that indicates how those savings can be made?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I gather the member for Midland is not talking to the first line in relation to the three per cent efficiency dividend; she is talking about the savings associated with the imminent hoon legislation, the 2.5 per cent saving in procurement services and contracts, and the general operational savings. I think I have already answered the third point, on general operational savings, for the member for Girrawheen.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Has a business case been prepared for each of those three that indicates that those savings can be made this year and in each of the forward estimates years, and will the minister table a copy of it or provide a copy of it? If there is not a business case, why not, and how did the minister come up with the figures?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As the member is aware, under the hoon legislation the amendments come into effect on 1 July.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I do not want general dialogue; I want to know whether a business case has been prepared. Has there or has there not been a business case done for each of those?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: A business case in relation to hoon legislation has not been done yet. WA Police is working on that now and working through what will happen with the towing and storage of the vehicles and the cost implications. We are looking at something I favour: so that there will be no cost to the police in future, that will be contracted out.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Does that rely on legislative changes?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I believe there will be some legislative changes for towing contracts and people who are involved in the towing industry. I want to try to ensure that we keep organised crime gangs out of the towing industry. As the member knows, the police have a contract with a company that, if we like, oversees the towing of vehicles. The police officers phone a number and the person who runs the company phones a tow truck operator.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I do not want general dialogue about what tow-truck drivers do or do not do; I want to know how the savings will be achieved. The minister said that he does not have a business case for it. How has he arrived at a figure of \$8 million when he has no business case and he cannot tell me how those savings will be achieved?

[10.30 am]

The CHAIRMAN: I will take this as a further question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member does not want to hear the answer that the member for Midland thought I am going to give her.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I do; I really want to hear it.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member is not interested in how we intend —

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I do not want a rant about tow-truck drivers and crime gangs. These are financial estimates, not the time for rant.

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I remember only too well when the member for Midland was sitting on this side of the house.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The minister is still ranting. Will the minister answer the question? Is the minister incapable of doing that?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am happy to answer the member's question. I might have said about the member what she said about me when she was sitting on this side. It is the normal dialogue that members on that side put to ministers on this side.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Mr Chairman, would you ask the minister to answer the question?

The CHAIRMAN: I am about to do that. If the member keeps interjecting, she is giving the minister a reason to continue.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I have already said that a business plan has not been put in place yet. The police will be working on that. As soon as they have finished, we will highlight it to members opposite in the Parliament. The member asked whether there would be a need for legislation for this to be put in place. There will be a need for legislation, and it is being worked on at the moment. The first drafting is being put in place at the moment and that will come to the Parliament. Regulations will probably need to be attached to that legislation. That legislation is in relation to the hoon legislation, but it will be separate legislation.

The member asked me a question and I am trying to give her an honest answer. The hoon legislation and the activities of the hoons will reflect on costs and cost savings within the police department. The member would be aware that as from July this year there would be a minimum of 15 000 vehicles a year being towed from the roadside. The reason for that is the legislation that the member's government put in place.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Can the minister answer the question about the two other line items I referred to about general operational savings and 2.5 savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: This is a Treasury estimation; it is not a business case.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I asked the minister that question and his answer was no.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I refer to the heading "3% Efficiency Dividend" on page 561 of division 44, which includes the three line items that the member for Midland referred to. What are the implications for police operations as a result of making these savings? We have just been talking about them. It is the same point.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member will get the same answer.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I asked the minister what are the implications for police operations from making these savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I do not get where the member is coming from. I do not understand what the member means.

Mr P. PAPALIA: How will police operations suffer from making these savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They will not suffer because we will have additional —

Mr P. PAPALIA: How does the minister know that when he does not know where the savings are coming from?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I told the member where the savings are coming from.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, the minister did not do that. He admitted that he does not know because there is no business plan.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I told the member where the savings are coming from.

Mr P. PAPALIA: These figures came from Treasury, not the police. How did the police know?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I said that the savings were identified by the police and Treasury. I have already told the member that they will not affect front-line services.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister said that these are Treasury figures, not police figures.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is not what I said. The member should check the *Hansard*. I told the member that the figures have been identified by Treasury and police when working out what the three per cent savings will be.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: How will the police achieve these savings? That is what the member is asking.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They have found those savings in those areas.

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Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: What is the practical result?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The practical result is that the commissioner will run —

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Will there be 20 fewer motorbikes?

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Midland.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I said that there would be fewer motorbikes.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I refer to the line item “Changes to the Mix of Additional Police Officers and Police Staff”. How will that achieve \$6.2 million worth of savings? Does it mean that the additional staff are less capable than police and cost less? Is that where the savings are made?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am glad the member asked that question. I was hoping this question would be asked because the question of the mix is one of my favourite ones. This is something that the commissioner was very pleased to see. When the Labor government made its promise of 500 additional police officers and 200 additional support staff over five years, we made the same promise, and I accept that. The commissioner said that he would prefer a mix. It would help him not only financially, but also in running the department. Under this mix the 350 additional fully trained, fully sworn police officers—the cream of police officers—will carry out front-line duties. The 150 auxiliary police officers will be used in areas where at the moment fully trained, fully sworn police officers are used; for example, guards in the watch-house.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: We should have had two schools of custodial staff.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They were part of the 150, and I will explain that.

Mr P. PAPALIA: How does that relate to the \$6.2 million worth of savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will answer the question. I am getting interjections from the right, and I did not hear the member for Midland’s comment. I will answer the member for Warnbro’s question, because it is important. The 150 auxiliary officers will be special constables. They will have certain powers.

Mr P. PAPALIA: How will that result in savings?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They are not paid the same as fully trained, fully sworn officers.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is enough.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will answer the question.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is enough, thank you.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member does not dictate what answer I give. The member asked the question.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister is making a speech; he is not answering the question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Mr Chairman, I would like to complete my answer.

The CHAIRMAN: Please do, minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The reason I do that is that I do not want members opposite to put their spin on what I say and then make out that what I said is untrue. I want to complete my answer and I have every right to do that.

The CHAIRMAN: Please do so, minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Those 150 officers will be very useful to the commissioner for so many purposes. Apart from being used for guard duty in the watch-house, they can be used for carrying evidence from one place to another. They can be used in so many ways to carry out duties that we do not want fully trained, fully sworn police officers doing. I do not want to use them as couriers. I will give a classic example.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No thanks.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member asked the question and I will give the answer. The member will like this. Some members opposite might appreciate it. Currently, if a traffic warden is not able to turn up for duty either in the morning or afternoon to see children across the road, the police are often called on to man that crossing. Under police protocols two officers have to be sent—a patrol car and two officers. That is a waste of police time and is not very efficient. In future, an auxiliary officer will be able to do that job on his or her own. They will not be doing front-line duties and will be able to take over the important job of making sure that children safely cross the road.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Your behaviour is insulting.

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They are the sorts of duties auxiliary officers will be doing.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: One of the items under the heading “Economic Audit” at page 562 states —
Cost Recovery from Police Presence at Special Events

Can the minister explain what the cost recovery from police presence at special events refers to? Being a person who attends Subiaco Oval on a regular basis, I would like, if possible, some enlightenment from the commissioner. If there is a big game at Subiaco Oval, such as the derby or other major event, how many police officers would be assigned to work at the oval? What sort of savings will be made, and can that cost be given back to the event organisers for sport, rock concerts or whatever?

[10.40 am]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: In answer to the last part of the question, I am advised that between 15 and 20 officers are assigned, for instance, to the AFL for a Saturday game. However, the introduction of a user-pays scheme for sporting and concert events is not unique; it already happens in other jurisdictions, such as New South Wales and Victoria. I give a commitment that this scheme will apply only to commercial events; it will not apply to Skyworks, Australia Day, charitable events or any event other than commercial events. There must be a police presence at big concerts to which thousands and thousands of people turn up. Is it fair that those police be taken away from other areas of policing to do that job? Event organisers and companies make a lot of money out of these events, and because it works well in other jurisdictions, it will allow the Commissioner of Police to have some additional funds coming in. It will pay for the overtime of officers who work at those events. Currently, the police budget pays all those extra overtime hours. It is unfair that everybody, through the police, pays for that. I do not believe it will put an awful lot of money on the price of a ticket; it will be minimal.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Is the commissioner of the opinion that a police presence is required at those events or could the work be done by security officers? The point I am making is that some people are of the view that police should be at all events where a lot of people congregate. I am wondering whether the commissioner has the same view.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I did not quite hear the last part of the question, but I think the member said that he believed the police should be there.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Most people would like to see a police presence at a major event.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Wherever alcohol is served at these events, there must be a police presence because the police are the only ones who have the power to deal with people who are drunk, unruly or exhibiting antisocial behaviour, and to deal with violence—which often occurs at these events—and with any drugs that are carried in, sold, passed on or taken. Security guards are not in a position to deal with those issues; only the police have that power. That is why it is essential for law and order in WA that police be present at those events, whether they be sporting or entertainment events. I am 100 per cent supportive of the commissioner’s request to be able to charge a fee for those officers who attend. It will be a reasonable fee—cost recovery, basically.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I take it that the organisers of those events, therefore, will not be able to save those costs by not having police officers in attendance and instead having their security people manage security at the event.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As the commissioner quite rightly reminded me, if alcohol is served at the event, the police must be present because the police have responsibility for that. However, I have met with some of the event organisers and all they wanted was to ensure that they were consulted about our proposal to charge them for a police presence. After that meeting I believe they accepted the fact that it was not unreasonable for police to charge for a police presence at those events. I think the general public would prefer to have police officers at both sporting and entertainment events, because they have the power that ordinary security guards do not have, and it is not reasonable to expect security guards to carry out the duties of a sworn police officer.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I take the minister back to page 561 and refer to the three per cent efficiency dividend. The first heading refers to changes to the mix of additional police officers. The minister talked earlier about auxiliary police officers. I think he told us today that he anticipates that these officers would work in the watch-house; they would transport evidence so that the chain of evidence would not be broken; they could act as traffic wardens; and, presumably, after what the minister has just said, they would also attend special events. I think the minister has also said that the power of special constables would be conferred on them under the Police Act; is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, they would be given the limited power that the commissioner deems appropriate. As I understand it, the commissioner can limit the power of a special constable to certain aspects.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: Under the Police Act a person sworn in as a special constable effectively has all the power of a police officer. How will a special constable be circumscribed or restricted?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will bring legislation to the Parliament to amend the Police Act. It will specifically deal with auxiliary officers and will give the commissioner, quite rightly, the right to decide the power that those auxiliary officers should have.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The minister is telling us that in order to restrict the scope of power of auxiliary officers, there needs to be legislation, presumably to amend the Police Act, and he will introduce it to Parliament in due course; is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes. It is my hope to introduce that legislation in the fairly near future, obviously because I want the police commissioner to have the necessary legislative tools to confer that special power on auxiliary police officers.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question. Until such time as auxiliary officers have that power, will there be auxiliary officers in the interim? For example, custodial officers in the watch-house are currently sworn as special constables; is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, but they are not employed under the Police Act.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No. They are in fact public servants; is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is correct.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question. The status of public servants means that they are subject to public sector disciplinary measures rather than the disciplinary measures under the Police Act; is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is correct.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: In addition to that further question, is it true to say that the arrangements for medical coverage if they are injured, for example, would not be the usual arrangements for fully sworn and fully trained police officers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am informed that they are covered if they are injured while they are on duty, but if they are off duty they are not covered. That is different, and that is why we need to amend the legislation to deal with all those matters.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Until such time as the legislation is brought into Parliament and passed, it will not be possible to accommodate the savings that are listed in the budget papers.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We have already seen some savings, obviously with custodial officers. However, I get the member's train of question and I will say two things. One is that it is my intention to bring in that legislation as soon as I can. Being realistic, I hope I will be in a position to introduce it into Parliament in the two-week sitting in June; but if not, it will be August, certainly with a view to getting the legislation through Parliament before the end of this calendar year. Once that legislation is in place, the commissioner will have all the necessary legislative powers to do what he believes is necessary to give those auxiliary officers that power. At the moment there are no auxiliary officers in training, and none will be put through any training course until the legislation is passed.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: As public servants, therefore, they will be paid less and their training time will be substantially less.

[10.50 am]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is the member referring to public servants or auxiliary officers?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Auxiliary officers. Effectively, they are public servants.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The commissioner has just confirmed what I totally believe; that is, there would be less training—12 weeks rather than the 26 or 28-week training period for auxiliary officers—and the auxiliary officers would not have to meet the very strict fitness test set for police officers. They would have to be fit and healthy, but they would not have to be at their peak, like our police graduates. They would be paid less, which has always been the assumption, as they are not on front-line duties as are our fully trained and fully sworn police officers. The other advantage in having auxiliary officers is that they could apply to becoming fully sworn police officers.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The minister would not have the money to pay them! Anyone can apply! I have a further question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member is missing the point.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: I do not think I am.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member is! Once they have done a certain amount of time as an auxiliary officer, they will have been trained and had experience in a lot of the background work done by police officers in police stations and other areas. With the limited powers they will have, that would give them —

Mr P. PAPALIA: Why not make them police officers and train them properly?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The commissioner specifically preferred the mix because it gives him more options.

I would like to finish the last answer, which is important. We were talking about the fact that auxiliary officers could transition to be fully sworn and fully trained police officers. They would have had some background experience from working in the stations alongside police officers. They would have undertaken a certain amount of training, but they would still have to meet the criteria to become fully sworn officers. However, if they do that and the commissioner believes that they are fit enough and they have the right qualifications to be a front-line, fully sworn police officer, I would assume their prior experience would be accepted and they would then have to undergo further training. They will have the opportunity to move from being an auxiliary officer to a fully sworn officer. It is one avenue available to them. It is a bit like the situation with the cadets that we have at the moment.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Is it correct that, like cadets, the auxiliary officers will have the blue shirts and a badge, even if it is somewhat different from that of fully sworn police officers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: So, at a distance, a member of the public may well think that an auxiliary officer is a fully fledged police officer? Like cadets, will they be getting officers' lunches at the station and driving police cars?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I cannot believe for one minute they would be doing that.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Is the minister aware that police cadets are doing that now? They are driving police cars, and in one recent incident I understand that a cadet officer crashed a police car.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I was not aware of that.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Is that something that the minister wants to suspend?

The CHAIRMAN: I will take that as a further question, member for Girrawheen.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is not something that I, as the minister, or the police commissioner would condone. Police cadets can be very young —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: That is what is happening, minister.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I do not know that is happening. The member is saying that. I am certain the commissioner will take note of the member's comments today and, if necessary, deal with them. The member needs to come up with something to substantiate those comments. Certainly, the cadets who I have seen working have been doing a great job. They show respect and are shown respect, and that is important. I have seen quite a few cadets who have done their training as cadets and have gone into the Western Australia Police Academy to train with the other recruits and have come out top-class police officers.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I again refer the minister to the three per cent efficiency dividend referred to on page 561 of the *Budget Statements*. In response to my previous question, the minister advised that the amounts in the forward estimates were figures that Treasury had come up with—clearly this was a couple of months ago. Given that WA Police needs to implement these budget cuts, what work has it done on how they can be achieved and what documentation, if any, has WA Police provided to the minister on how these efficiency dividends can be achieved?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I think I have explained in great detail a certain part of that, which is what we have been talking about. Part of the savings result from having the mix of fully sworn and fully trained officers —

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: My question was: "What documentation, if any, has WA Police provided to the minister on how these efficiency dividends can be achieved?"

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member will see in the budget papers that —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: We would not have asked, if it was there.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Elementary maths would indicate that 350 fully trained officers will cost X, and 150 auxiliary officers will cost less per person than 350 fully trained officers because they are support staff. That is the mix that the commissioner wanted.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: For example, under the 2.5 per cent saving referred to in procurement services and contracts, zero detail has been provided. Has WA Police provided the minister with any detail on the line items

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listed under “3% Efficiency Dividend”—for instance, has anyone from WA Police said, “This is what we changed and reduced, and this is the saving that we can achieve”?

The CHAIRMAN: I will take that as a further question from the member for Midland.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is the same question. We are still waiting for an answer.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member for Midland will get the answer. I just wanted to confer with the commissioner. I want to give the member an accurate and honest answer. The percentage of two and a half per cent came from Treasury, which does a lot of the procurement. Treasury believes that those savings can be made, and I understand that the commissioner has accepted —

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Does WA Police believe that the savings can be made, and if so, what documentation has it provided to the minister to indicate that?

The CHAIRMAN: This is another question from the member for Midland.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is the same question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The documentation that was put forward and that went to the expenditure and economic review committee —

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am talking about the response after the EERC.

The CHAIRMAN: If the member for Midland gives the minister a chance to respond, she may get her answer.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am trying to answer the member’s question. The member for Midland knows the system. She has been a minister. The system is very simple.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I know that the minister is obfuscating. I know that WA Police will have done work in response to what Treasury told it two months ago and the minister is obfuscating.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, I am not at all. That is unfair and I will not accept that.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: What happened to the minister’s concept of open and transparent government?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is what the member is getting, here and now. I have already said this at least half a dozen times! Treasury and WA Police got together to look for possible savings. Treasury assisted WA Police—that was the idea—and the commissioner was very happy for Treasury to assist. Part of the savings was in those procurement areas. Once WA Police and Treasury got together, they agreed there were these possible savings. All these things are only possible savings, because nothing in this world can be guaranteed, other than death and taxation. At the end of the day these are possible savings, and that was accepted by WA Police and Treasury. That was then put forward in a comprehensive paper to EERC, which looked at the savings that were being put forward as part of the three per cent efficiency dividends. It was accepted by EERC and then it went to cabinet as part of an overall document, and that is what we have in the budget papers today.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The minister has still not answered my question. I want to know what has happened since then. We have the headings in the budget papers and we know what was agreed, we know what Treasury said, and we know what happened a couple of months ago. What we want to know is what work WA Police has done to indicate it can achieve this. Is the answer “none”, because the minister is saying that maybe this will not be achieved?

The CHAIRMAN: I am very aware of the time and we have been over this a few times already. I suggest that if the member for Midland requires more detail she place the question on notice. I am going to give the member —

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am entitled to ask for supplementary information, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: If that is what the member for Midland is doing.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Would the minister provide me, by way of supplementary information, a detailed breakdown within each of those headings of how the figures of \$8 million, \$5.8 million, \$7.2 million and so forth can be achieved?

[11.00 am]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, I would prefer the member put it on notice. That would give the police a bit more time.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I take it that is a no.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is a no. If the member wants to put the question on notice, she has a right to do so. Some of the information that she is looking for goes into quite a lot of detail. In fairness to the police —

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: We do not need pictures.

The CHAIRMAN: I would take that as a no from the minister. I suggest that the member place the question on notice.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: My question relates to page 561. I refer to the line "Item 152 Capital Appropriation". There is quite a significant jump from the estimated actual in 2008-09 to the budget estimate for 2009-10, being \$148 million. Could the minister explain the increase?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I can give the member some information on that. The figure of \$148.268 million is made up of speed and red light camera upgrades, \$30 million; major aircraft replacement program, including a new helicopter, \$24 million; Perth metropolitan radio network expansion and regional radio planning, \$20.1 million; new police stations and upgrades, \$15.2 million; and the Perth police complex, \$14.6 million, which is the amount allocated in this year's budget. There is more in future years because we want to get the Perth police complex built within the next three or four years. The figure of \$148.268 million also includes the information and communications technology project continuation, \$13 million; South Hedland Police Station, \$8.8 million; additional accommodation needed for staff, \$6 million; west metropolitan district accommodation upgrade, \$5.6 million; counterterrorism initiatives, \$3.1 million; police station upgrade program, which is part of the 2007-08 and 2009-10 budgets, \$2 million; Pilbara district police complex, \$1.9 million; custodial facilities upgrades, \$1.6 million; Derby Police Station, \$700 000; scheduled equipment replacement program for years 2010-11, \$500 000; and Kimberley district police complex, \$400 000. All those figures make up the \$148.3 million. That is the money that is likely to be expended in this next financial year, 2009-10.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I refer the minister to the table at the bottom of page 561 and the three per cent efficiency dividend. In his answer relating to the general operational savings earlier, he included the Secret Harbour police station, suggesting that that would somehow be part of the general operational savings. How will that impact on police services in Rockingham, noting that effectively we are taking away police and services in the southern part of Rockingham and the northern part of Mandurah? The minister indicated that it was related to the police hub concept and that was why he was not going ahead with the Secret Harbour police station. If that is the case, can the minister explain when there will be some sort of police hub that will take up the slack in the provision of the service in that area and how it will be done?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member has asked two or three questions. Firstly, he said that police numbers will be taken away from Rockingham and Mandurah. That is not the case.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am talking about the region that was going to be serviced by the police station.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: At the moment police officers from Rockingham and Mandurah service that area. They service Secret Harbour and the adjoining areas. The police do not see a police station at Secret Harbour as a priority. At the end of the day, the member and I know that it was only promised during his by-election to try to help get him elected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is not true.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is true. It has never been identified by the police as being an area of priority.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It was in the forward estimates.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It was in the former government's forward estimates, not our forward estimates. It was put in there to help the now member for Warnbro—and I am very pleased to see he is here —

Mr P. PAPALIA: On behalf of those communities in Secret Harbour in the south and in the northern suburbs of Mandurah, which were going to be serviced more directly by a police station located in that region, how will that be rectified by taking a police station away? Will the minister augment the police stations in Mandurah and Rockingham with more personnel so they can provide constant patrols or a presence on the ground in those suburbs?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We are not taking a police station away. There was never one at Secret Harbour.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister knew it was going to be built, though.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: At some stage.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, this year.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Until the police changed their mind and felt that they wanted the money spent elsewhere. We are not taking away a police station.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Yes, he is.

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, we are not; there is not one there. How can we take something away that is not there? That is very simple. The member knows and I know that the Secret Harbour area is policed by officers from Rockingham and Mandurah. It would be much more appropriate to have a hub there at some stage that will assist Rockingham —

Mr P. PAPALIA: Where is the hub going to be?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We do not know yet; we are still looking.

Mr P. PAPALIA: What year?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I cannot give the member a year.

Mr P. PAPALIA: There will be a hub but the minister does not know when it will be built or where it will be.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The commissioner and his officers are looking at where the most appropriate location would be. It might take them six months or so to come up with an ideal location that would service those areas as a hub. The member can rest assured that we will do everything we can to ensure that more police officers will patrol the area of Secret Harbour than would have been patrolling that area with a new police station in Secret Harbour. The member and I know that it was only promised to help him get elected.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer the minister to the third dot point about three-quarters of the way down page 574. It is stated that the increase in liabilities is attributable to the increase in salary and wages. Is there any provision within that figure for any possible wage increases for the enterprise bargaining agreement?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that there is a provision but we are not able to give the member a figure at the moment.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No figure is mentioned anywhere in the budget estimates. Is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is correct.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: If there is a figure for wage increases, is there also some offset for any conditions or trade-off of conditions accommodated in savings included somewhere in the general operational savings, or somewhere else in the budget papers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, there is not. I take it that the member is basically talking about the EBA with the police union.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am sure that the member is already aware that the negotiations are currently being conducted by the Treasurer as Minister for Commerce with the police union through the commissioner's office. I will not try to jeopardise those negotiations in any way.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Given that the minister said that the negotiations are being conducted with the Treasurer and that he does not want to prejudice those negotiations, has he at least facilitated a meeting between the Treasurer and the police union? I understand that the police union cannot get a meeting with the Treasurer.

[11.10 am]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am not aware of that and I will certainly look into it.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: As a further question, the figure in the dot point is \$6.6 million. That is not the amount that the minister is saying has been included in the budget for the purposes of wage increases.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Which one is the member referring to?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The third dot point on page 574 of the *Budget Statements*.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The \$6.6 million does not relate to wage increases.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Where in the budget papers can I find some provision for the prospective wage increases?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is not in there yet because it has not been negotiated.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: That is what I wanted to know.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: There is the member's answer.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: In keeping within the tight budget constraints, that is something for which the minister will have to go back to the cabinet and the cabinet expenditure review committee to get additional money, if and when additional money is agreed upon with the union. Is that correct?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I understand that that is the way it works.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: Even the \$9.5 million that has been offered is not accommodated for in this budget.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member is asking a very detailed question about the wage increases that are being negotiated. I will ask our finance specialist to answer that question.

Mr P.M. de Mamiel: As the member may know, a general provision is put into the forward estimates for wage increases that usually relate to the consumer price index. I do not know what that figure is off the top of my head but those provisions have been made for in the budget. Obviously, if the union negotiates a higher increase than the provision, it will go back to cabinet for approval.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question on that, through the minister. Where is the provision for that made in the budget papers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The provision for the additional—is the member talking about —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The CPI increase that we have just heard about.

Mr P.M. de Mamiel: It is shown in the general appropriations; it is not identified separately.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Thank you.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I refer to “General Operational Savings” at the bottom of page 561 of the *Budget Statements*. In 2008-09, \$4.7 million was saved, and there are savings in greater amounts across the forward years. Was any part of that \$4.7 million in savings achieved by cutting overtime; and, if so, what proportion of the \$4.7 million was achieved by cutting overtime?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that there was no cutting of overtime in relation to this efficiency dividend saving.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: As a further question, on page 562 under the heading “Economic Audit” is a line item for external integrity checks for government regulatory bodies. What are those bodies, and who will now meet those costs? It will be a saving of \$715 000 in this year’s budget.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: These integrity checks are provided by police as an integral part of the current licensing regime under the Liquor Control Act. This process is pivotal to a safer community and the provisions of rights, obligations and privileges associated with the granting of a licence. What we are looking at is the costs. The idea is for the police to fully recover the costs for the checks through the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor and the liquor and gaming industry for the provision of integrity checks, in line with the government’s full cost-recovery policy.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: From whom will the costs be recovered? Will the Department of Education and Training, for example, be one of those bodies that might now have to pay?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Not the Department of Education, I am advised.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Will it be paid by bouncers, volunteers or scout groups? Who will pay?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will ask the Commissioner of Police to answer that.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yay!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I want the commissioner to feel loved and needed in here today. He is extremely capable at answering questions.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: He is more precise than the minister. We will get some information.

Dr K. O’Callaghan: The integrity checks referred to in the budget papers are industry checks and refer to applications for liquor licensing under the Liquor Control Act and applications for security licences under the Security and Related Activities (Control) Act. As the member knows, the police clearances are now done separately. That line item does not refer to those. We are talking only about industry applications for integrity checks.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Perhaps, by way of supplementary information, the minister might provide the new schedule of fees for those groups.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They have not been determined yet, so we cannot give the member that information.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister has put some specific amounts in the budget, as has already been alluded to. Indeed, \$715 000 is provided for this in the current budget. How can an amount be determined if the minister does not have some idea of what the exact schedule of fees will be?

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that we know the overall cost but do not have a breakdown of the individual fee.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The point is that the \$715 000 is savings to be found either by cutting costs or charging extra. How was the exact amount of \$715 000 arrived at if the government does not have a specific schedule of what the additional fees will be or of the services that are to be cut to save \$715 000?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will ask Mr de Mamiel to answer that.

Mr P.M. de Mamiel: We already know what the total cost of the unit is that provides the service to the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor. What we have not determined at this point is the volume that we actually put through. It varies from year to year. When we create a fee, we usually look at an average over time. We know that it will save us \$715 000 in one year; it is just that we have not worked out what amount that should be per unit or whether we should charge the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor the total fee and let it work out what the fee will be. It will be its fee to the industry, not ours. We are trying to recover the costs through that department.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Through the minister, if I can, I want to check that I understand this correctly. The \$715 000, I take it, is the current cost of the operation and that cost will be fully recovered but the mechanism of recovery is yet to be determined. Is that correct, minister?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The former Minister for Police has hit the nail right on the head.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I refer to the first dot point under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency” on page 563 of the *Budget Statements*, which states —

Detailed analysis and planning will continue in 2009-10 to ensure that preparation for the replacement of the Regional Radio Network is further advanced ...

What is the government doing about the future replacement of the regional radio network, particularly in my electorate of Swan Hills?

[11.20 am]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As I already said, the statewide radio network is being replaced in three phases. Phase 3 relates to extending the radio network to the wider regional areas beyond Dunsborough, Lancelin and Northam. In 2009-10, \$1 million will be provided for detailed analysis and planning of the regional radio network replacement, covering the balance of Western Australia, to ensure that preparation is further advanced and an appropriate situation is developed. It is essential that we fund the regional radio network because good policing depends on it. We are trying to do what we can in this budget to keep the funding flowing.

Mr P. PAPALIA: When will any work be done on expanding the regional radio network? Apart from planning, when will the system be enhanced and in place?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that it will take two years to get the system up and running. The planning will be done, and wherever possible new facilities will be put in place this year, but I am advised that it will take two years.

Mr P. PAPALIA: In two years, what area will be covered?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: East to Northam and south to Dunsborough.

Mr P. PAPALIA: What will that cost, and is it in the budget forward estimates?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: A sum of \$20.1 million has been allocated for the 2009-10 budget for the police mobile radio network expansion and regional radio planning.

Mr P. PAPALIA: In the last answer the minister gave, he mentioned Northam and Dunsborough, but he did not mention Lancelin. Will Lancelin be included in the two-year time frame?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, the plan covers Lancelin as well. It has always referred to the triangle between Lancelin, Northam and Dunsborough.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Is the minister saying that the amount of money for 2009-10 and the following year will fully meet the cost of rolling out that radio network right across the area from Lancelin to Northam to Dunsborough?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that that is the case. There is also \$1 million for planning for extensions outside of that area.

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Mr M.J. COWPER: I refer to the section headed “Emergency Management and Coordination” on page 568 of the *Budget Statements*. I note that there has been an increase of some \$8 million in the net cost of the service. In 2009-10 the budgeted amount was \$24.473 million, but the estimated actual is \$32.528 million, which is an overrun of some \$8 million. I notice that the budget amount for 2009-10 will be increased by a further \$2 million to \$34.333 million. Can the minister provide us with an understanding of what caused the \$8 million blow-out? I also note that an additional 68 full-time equivalents have been assigned to this area. Can the minister give some background about where those full-time equivalents will be located?

Mr G. Italiano: I trust that I understood the member’s question. The estimate at the start of the year is based on a resource percentage that the agency estimates will be expended on a certain output. During the year there can be movements or points of emphasis and additional resources are allocated. Extra exercises could be created, or a series of things may occur. We then carry out an activity survey of the output during the year that provides us with more information about the amount we are actually expending on that output, and there can be variations. This is not a blow-out in the budget, but rather the agency has extended more of its percentage of effort than it expected to in that area. A range of things have occurred during the financial year. We have been involved in some counter-terrorism exercises, and additional full-time equivalents have been allocated to emergency management.

Mr M.J. COWPER: The number of full-time equivalent employees has increased from 180 to 248, which is an increase of 68 personnel. Where are they located?

Mr G. Italiano: The full-time equivalents are not necessarily based in a specific portfolio. It represents the percentage of the effort across the agency. Some people are engaged in emergency management in districts, and some are engaged in emergency management in specialist crime et cetera. It represents the percentage of the agency’s overall output.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Would it be safe to say that there has been an increased effort in emergency management coordination in the light of last week’s Auditor General’s report?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I do not know whether it is due to the Auditor General’s report. These measures have been put into place, as I understand it —

Mr M.J. COWPER: Not as a result of the report, but rather in keeping with it.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I think this shows a bit of proactive anticipation on the part of the Western Australia Police. They have obviously looked ahead since the last budget, and found it necessary to allocate resources and full-time equivalents in certain areas for emergency management.

Mr M.J. COWPER: It is very comforting for the people of Western Australia.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I could not agree more. Their safety is our priority.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer the minister to the fourteenth dot point on page 563, which refers to the public sex offender register. Can the minister confirm that it is the government’s policy to make the sex offender register public, that it will need legislation to do so, and that some states have indicated that they will no longer share data with Western Australia if the register is made public? Will that not have huge implications, because it will mean that paedophiles will flock to Western Australia because they can do so with impunity?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I can see the member’s press release already. In answering the question of the member for Girrawheen, I will list some of the things that are happening in this area. The police anticipate an increase in child sex abuse complaints through mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse. In the first four months of this year child sex offences —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I did not ask about that. I am just asking about the public sex offender register.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am giving the build-up to it.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I do not want the build-up—just the facts, man, as they say in the classics.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am so intimidated by the member!

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am interested in the public sex offender register.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is a very serious matter.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I know it is very serious. Only this government takes it very seriously. As the member is aware, the Attorney General recently met with police and instructed them that a proposal for a public sex offender register be produced by police, highlighting the top 40 or so child sex offenders, which could be displayed for public information. This project is being run by the Attorney General, not me as Minister for Police. The discussions are still going on about who should or should not appear on a sex offender register that may be open to members of the public. The Commissioner of Police and the Attorney General are both aware of

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the implications of having open slather on a sex offender register. We do not want to see vigilante groups taking the law into their own hands, but we want to warn parents and the public about serious offenders. For instance, it would be reasonable to suggest that a sex offender who breaches his reporting conditions be placed in the public arena, so that the public can be aware that that person has not reported to the police about a change of address or a change of occupation. The police want to know where child sex offenders are, what job they are doing, where they are going or whether they are going to an entertainment place. If they breach the reporting conditions, it is reasonable to assume that everyone will want to know where those people are.

[11.30 am]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Although, as I understand it, the Attorney General will introduce the legislation, does the minister accept that it has implications for the police? It is a national scheme. Is the minister aware that other states have concerns and that if we go ahead and publish information, they will no longer share their intelligence or their information with Western Australia.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have never been told that by any of my counterparts in other states.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Has the minister been told by the commissioner or any of his officers?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It has been explained that it is a concern.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes; thank you.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will finish my answer—is that all right with the member for Girrawheen?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Certainly, but the minister has answered my question.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Not quite. I think the member needs a bit more detail. It has been explained to me that other jurisdictions in the eastern states, for instance, may not be prepared to share information on known sex offenders or paedophiles. That would be a concern to me and, I think, to the Attorney General. That is something that he and I will take on board when considering what we do about legislation regarding publishing the name of any sex offenders. As I say, the priority will be—I do not think this will interfere with any arrangements between eastern and western jurisdictions—for the names of people who breach their reporting conditions to be publicised. At the end of the day, no matter where we are—in the eastern states or Western Australia—the public want to know where serious sex offenders are located. They need to know who they are if they are not reporting to police. I know there is concern that some people may go underground to try to avoid having their names published. The main issue is that the names of those offenders will be published if they go to ground or if they go missing or in any way breach their reporting conditions. That is a given as far as both I and the Attorney General are concerned.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I draw the minister's attention to page 575 and to the entry "Employee Benefits", which is a service cost. Within that cost of services for employee benefits, are there any additional benefits whatsoever in this budget for Government Regional Officers' Housing accommodation for officers in regional areas? If so, what are the details of any additional benefits? Is pre-housing provided anywhere now or will it be into the future?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: There is an additional allocation for GROH accommodation of \$4.1 million.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: That would be the cost of rent increases. I want to know whether there are any further benefits for officers in terms of what they pay or whether they pay more.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: There is no change to what they pay.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Can the minister provide me with a copy of the Western Australia Police Strategic Accommodation Plan that is mentioned on page 563? It is on the issue of accommodation, where reference is made at the sixth dot point. The minister said that there are to be no changes. Reference is made here to the Western Australia Police Strategic Accommodation Plan. I am wondering what is in that plan and I thought the best way of finding out would be to get a copy of it.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: What the member is reading does not include GROH.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Is that accommodation for police stations, not housing accommodation?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes. That is necessary because of the additional police officers, auxiliary officers and support staff who will be taken on over the next five years.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Can the minister provide me with a list of the district allowances, and what they are for accommodation? The minister can do that by way of supplementary information if it is not to hand. I am interested in employee benefits for officers working in the country.

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Mr G. Italiano: Each officer in regional WA is charged rent according to the age of the property, as well as other various matters, that he or she is in. This budget does not show any changes with respect to how those charges will be imposed. Officers who pay less than full rental are subsidised in various locations in Western Australia by the agency. This budget does not show any changes to the extent of the current subsidies.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Is the minister aware of the National Party commitment that it would reduce costs for essential officers, and that it specifically refers to police officers. The National Party also said that, as part of its election commitment, after a period of years accommodation will be free for officers who stay at locations. What, if anything, is the police service doing to implement those National Party promises?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am not aware of that commitment.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I can provide a copy to the minister; it is called "Housing Our Workforce".

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is that from the National Party?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Yes. It has a picture of the member for Central Wheatbelt in the corner.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am told that some people are aware of that commitment, but I was not. There is no provision for that in our budget.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I did not get a commitment on my request for supplementary information, which is the full list of district allowances paid to regional officers as part of their employee benefits. I have provided the full list of district allowances in the past; it is not confidential information.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We will provide that as supplementary information. I have asked for the full list of district allowances for police officers. I am sure we can do that within the time frame.

[Supplementary Information No A3.]

[11.40 am]

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Girrawheen, is your question related to supplementary allowances?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No. However, I should be on the list.

The CHAIRMAN: The member's name appears regularly on the list.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I refer to the thirteenth line from the bottom of page 572, which states "Property Receival and Exhibit Storage (PRESS) Facility". Will the minister please outline the benefits of the government's investment in this facility initiative?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The problem with the existing facility is that it is inadequate and has occupational health issues. The property management systems are outdated and they result in some delays in providing material exhibits to courts. That has happened in the past, and we do not want it to continue. Members have probably seen reference to this in the media when problems have arisen.

Given the importance of these matters, funding was allocated to facilitate improvements, including a replacement warehouse facility in Belmont, which will be occupied and operational by the end of May 2009—we are almost there; and the development of a new property barcoding and tracking system to be deployed to business units and police stations throughout WA Police, and it is expected that this system will be in place by the end of November 2009. The practical benefits of these initiatives include a secure storage facility for found and seized property items and material exhibits for core presentation; a new tracking system to enable improved storage and retrieval of the items held at the facility or in transit from one location to another; and, of course, an improved provision of material exhibits to courts for items to be used in the judicial process. I hope that answers the member's question.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: These provisions were foreshadowed by the previous government, which is demonstrated by there being no allocation for them in the current budget. Will the minister provide the specific delivery and completion dates of the various stages? The minister indicated that the physical facility will be up and running this month, and I take that as correct.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The facility in Belmont will be operating at the end of this month.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Is that the physical facility?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister referred to some of the systems that need to be implemented to make it work, such as barcoding. When will the barcoding be operational?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: In November 2009.

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Mr J.C. KOBELKE: If that is the case, why is no money allocated in the 2009-10 financial year if expenditure will be incurred in this facility's operation? The question from the member alluded to page 572 and there is no money allocated to expenditure in the 2009-10 financial year.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will ask Mr Italiano to answer that question.

Mr G. Italiano: The explanation is that the equipment and system changes will be purchased in this financial year. The changes to take place in the new financial year will not have specific project costs associated with them. It is the time it takes to roll out the system.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Madam Chair, the normal practice of estimates committees is to have a 10 or 15-minute comfort break.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No, we are fine.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member for Girrawheen might be, but I am thinking of my advisers and other members. When we were on the other side, we always allowed a 10 to 15-minute comfort break. I am trying to ascertain from members of the committee whether they would seek a 10 to 15-minute comfort break.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: We would like to proceed.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is something the committee can decide. The member might like to continue, but it is up to the committee to decide.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: People can slip out.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I cannot and my advisers cannot. The member for Midland knows that; she has been on this side of the house. We always gave the member, when she was on this side, a comfort break.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: That is not correct.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am asking for a comfort break for my advisers.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Madam Chair, normally a longer period is allowed for this particular portfolio. The time has been cut down. We made the necessary preparations. As my mother used to say, "Go to the toilet before you leave the house." If the minister did not do that, it is his problem. I think we need to proceed. We have a reduced amount of time and we have a lot of issues we want to raise.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the member for Girrawheen for her comments. I put to the committee the minister's proposal for a comfort break for his advisers.

Several members: Yes.

Several members: No.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe the ayes have it. The committee will suspend for a comfort break for 10 minutes.

Meeting suspended from 11.45 to 11.55 am

The CHAIRMAN: I draw the attention of members to the time. We have two other divisions to get through.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: We are aware of that. That is why we did not want the break, Madam Chair.

The CHAIRMAN: If all members are happy to proceed, we will continue with division 44.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I refer to page 570, and the item "Traffic Law Enforcement and Management", and also to the dot point on page 563 referring to the digitisation of speed and red-light cameras. Can the minister give us the background on why we need new cameras and how they will improve the capacity of the police?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As the member would be aware, every year there are approximately 3 000 crashes in Western Australia that result in either death or serious injury, and speed is at the core of those crashes. About 30 per cent of traffic accidents causing death or injury are speed related or have speed as a factor. Like the previous government and the former Minister for Police, the member for Balcatta, I have a big commitment to road safety and to saving lives on roads. It is quite clear that our existing cameras are well past their use-by date. They are not efficient cameras any more inasmuch as they are wet-film cameras, and it takes a long time to develop and process photographs. Therefore, I have managed to get the government to agree to a fund of \$30 million in next year's budget for the digitisation of cameras throughout Western Australia over two years. This is for not only Multanovas, but also fixed, red-light cameras. There will be an increase in the number of cameras that we have today.

Mr M.J. COWPER: How many?

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: My intention is to have more than double the number of cameras. It has been proved in other states and other parts of the world that although more cameras initially produce more revenue in the first few years, people tend to learn the error of their ways and become more responsible when they are hit in the hip pocket and with demerit points. Although there is an increase in revenue after a period, there is then a drop-off in revenue because people learn that they do not want to keep paying fines, and so they tend to then drive within the speed limit. It has been found that after those initial years there is a decrease in revenue and a decrease in the number of deaths and serious injuries. That is the whole purpose of the increase in cameras; it is not for revenue raising as such.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Further to that, how many additional Multanovas will there be?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As I said, it is my intention to have at least double the number of cameras that we have at the moment. If we could have more, I would prefer to have more than that. However, the minimum number of additional cameras that I want, both Multanovas and fixed, red-light cameras, is double the number we have at the moment. As the member knows, it is at our many intersections that deaths and serious injuries occur, so we certainly need more cameras there. We need some point-to-point cameras on freeways and long highways because they would stop people from driving at excessive speed, particularly on highways where very often there are deaths.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Will these new cameras have the capacity to deal with the problem of motorcycles having only one numberplate?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes. I do not know whether all will, but some will have the capacity to photograph the front and back of motorcycles. I am still considering the option of putting the registration number on the front. I do not accept any argument that says they cannot be displayed. If we can put men on the moon, I am pretty sure a registration number can be displayed on the front of a motorcycle. I think the problem in the old days was that the registration numberplate on motorbikes ran along the front mudguard, so it was potentially a cutting edge. There is nothing to prevent us from putting a composite registration plate or even a sticker on the front of motorbikes. When the member for Midland was the police minister, she was seen on a motorbike.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am very well aware of the naivety of the minister's comments.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Naivety?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It may seem simple and I wish the minister very good luck.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: If I do bring legislation into the Parliament and it happens in some way, will the member for Midland accept and support it?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Absolutely!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: In that case I will be more successful than my friend the member for Midland was, will I not?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Certainly, but the minister should start by talking with his counterparts in the other states, the federal government and those people who manufacture motorcycles.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I fully support the minister in getting the money in, but he has said nothing so far that has not been put on the public record by previous ministers for some years. I would like to use our estimates hearings effectively and properly and get the minister to explain how the \$30 million will be spent. If he does not know, can he give us some idea of the mechanism that will be used and the standards that will be set? I hope he is aware that extensive scientific information has been gathered together and reports given to government in the past six to 12 months. Will the minister continue this camera build based on that information and can he give us some understanding of the methodology for determining where the spend will be?

[12 noon]

[Mr P.B. Watson took the chair.]

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I accept what the member for Balcatta has said about the reports of not only WA Police but also the Office of Road Safety and the Road Safety Council. Those organisations have had a particular interest in the Enhanced Speed Enforcement Committee, which has played a role in this as well.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: That the minister has abolished.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: What a stupid comment. I have never abolished —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Who is developing the business case?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The police are doing that.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: Yes, and why not the committee?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The committee was not going to do that. The committee was going to get an outside contractor to do it.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The police have called for a tender, and it has been delayed.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I wanted to get that moving, which is why it was decided that the police would do it. WA Police is the most appropriate agency to do it. The police will be handling all of this. WA Police will award the contracts if we contract out in this area.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Can I get some specifics from the minister? Has the minister given any indication on what outcomes he wants from these new cameras?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is a good question, and I will give the member for Balcatta an honest answer. The outcome that I want, as the Minister for Police and as the Minister for Road Safety, is an awareness among those people in our society who speed that we have at least doubled the number of cameras, not only Multanovas, red-light and fixed-light cameras but also point-to-point cameras, which are an integral part of this.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Has the minister read any of the reports that have been prepared on this?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes. I am not going to mislead the member for Balcatta; I have not read a lot of the reports in detail because I just have not had the opportunity.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister's answer so far has been full of vague generalities, which is a good starting point. So much detailed work has been done in the past year or two and I want to know if the minister is basing his bill on that information, and if so, what directions he is giving on what the outcomes should be. The issues relate to whether this is done in government or contracted out, or whether other government agencies may be able to work with WA Police on this. They are political decisions on which, quite rightly, the minister can give directions. Is the minister giving any directions on the type of bill he wants, how it will be structured and which government agencies will be involved?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is a good question from the member for Balcatta and I will give a genuine and honest answer. I am looking at the possibility of contracting out the infringement notice area of speed enforcement fines. That is for various reasons. One reason is that I do not want fully trained and sworn police officers to process the digitalised films from these cameras.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I accept that, minister, and that makes sense. Let us move on, because we are short of time. Is the minister also going to contract out the bill or just the processing?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have not made a decision yet. That is the honest answer. I am looking at the options.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The initial report gave a range of mix of cameras and indicated what the results would be for improved road safety. The numbers were quite specific. Has the minister formed a view on what that mix should be?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, I personally have not. I would take advice from the Office of Road Safety on that. I am sure I have some of the answers in my folders here, if we ever get on to road safety today. Some optimum outcomes are projected for a certain mix of cameras, but I do not have it in front of me.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The business case was supposed to indicate how to spend the money to deliver that outcome. It is open to you, as minister, and appropriate and proper, to give directions on whether the business case had to meet all or some of those criteria in the plan for improved speed enhancement. Has the minister done that, or is he going to do that?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have not given written instructions to anybody. I have spoken with the Office of Road Safety, which the member knows very well. I have spoken with the Commissioner of Police and his senior officers, particularly with the assistant commissioner who is in charge of traffic, and we are working along those lines at the moment. They know the sorts of areas that I would like them to look at. The member is quite right —

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister indicated that WA Police would contract out the development of the business case to buy the cameras. Has the minister instructed that that business case will follow through on the scientific evidence that has been presented by the Enhanced Speed Enforcement Committee headed up by the Office of Road Safety?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: WA Police has not done that. We are still talking about the best way to go. When the member for Balcatta was the police minister, he had regular meetings with the police commissioner and other senior officers. I do the same, and we are working through that at the moment to know exactly which way to go. Now that the money has been allocated for the coming financial year, and once it is passed through this

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Parliament, we can start to spend that money. However, in relation to the business study and the direction I want to go as Minister for Police and for Road Safety, we are right in the middle of those discussions.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Finally, minister, what are the time lines?

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Balcatta, could you address the issues through the Chair?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I am following up on the same issue, Mr Chair.

Can the minister give indicative time lines for the business case contract, when the business case will be finalised and when he hopes to let the contract for the purchase of the camera systems?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member asked three questions. I cannot give the member finite dates because it would be irresponsible of me to do so. I can give a general answer, but it is a genuine answer.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I would just like to know the minister's targets for when he hopes to achieve these outcomes.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As soon as practicable. I want to see those cameras out on our streets and highways as soon as possible because I want those people who continue to break our laws —

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Would the minister be happy if that were within 12 months?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As the deputy commissioner has just informed me, two of the new cameras are being trialled. They have not been commissioned, but they are being trialled, so that is stage 1, if I can put it that way. I was aware of that, and I am glad that the deputy commissioner reminded me of it.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: Minister, technical trials in different forms have been going on for three years. What is the minister's deadline or his target date for implementing this whole new system to enforce speed limits on our roads?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I have already answered that question. My target date is as soon as absolutely possible.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: That is not a date.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I cannot give the member for Balcatta a date. I cannot say that it will be at six o'clock on the twelfth of never in such-and-such a year! That would be irresponsible. I am giving the member a genuine commitment that I want those cameras out on the roads as quickly as possible, because the sooner they are out there, the sooner the people who flout the law and drive at excessive speeds will take notice.

[12.10 pm]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer the minister to the election commitments at the bottom of page 561. It relates to the reopening of country police stations. In December the minister announced a reopening of Cranbrook, Wickopin and Dumbleyung Police Stations. Can I confirm that they are not yet open?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, they are not yet open.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Is there an intention to reopen the other stations that are not open—Trayning, Menzies and Gascoyne Junction—and, if so, when?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: At this moment there is no commitment to reopen those stations.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: In fact, there is a commitment but there is no intention. Is that not what the minister means?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: As the member is aware, the commissioner has the authority to open and close police stations. The Labor Party did not kick up a fuss when it was in government; it allowed all those police stations to be closed without a lot of conversation with the commissioner. I am very grateful that the commissioner listened to me, when I became the minister and we became the government, about reopening at least some of those stations.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Can we just move on, minister?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No; the member is going to hear my answer. The commissioner agreed that the three police stations that the member mentioned were able to be reopened and it was feasible to reopen them. It is not feasible to reopen some of the others, certainly not in their present form, because they are not suitable as working police stations. Until we get into the future and we see what the population trends are in those areas, it will rest with the commissioner to discuss the issue with me.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer the minister to the figures on page 561. There is money allocated in 2009-10 and in the forward estimates period starting from 2010-11. Is that money, totalling \$8 million, for all three police stations or does it include stations such as Mount Magnet?

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Those amounts are to reopen and run those police stations.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Is that money for the three stations?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes, that is for the three stations.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Given that many of those resources are located elsewhere within the district and will transfer back to the stations, by way of a supplementary question, can I get a breakdown of what costs are likely to ensue from the reopening of those three stations?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member has the information.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I do not have the breakdown for computers, vehicles, housing et cetera. I want a breakdown of how those costs are calculated.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will check whether we can provide that.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Of course the minister can do it; if it is in the budget, it must have been done.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is the member aware that a parliamentary question has been asked about this already? Did she ask it?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: No, I am not. When can an answer be anticipated?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We can provide that information by way of a supplementary answer.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the member let us know the supplementary question?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I want a breakdown of the costs associated with opening Dumbleyung, Wickepin and Cranbrook Police Stations and how those costs are calculated.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the minister happy to take that supplementary question?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It goes a bit further than the original question but I am happy to provide that information.

[Supplementary Information No A4.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: What are the plans for Mount Magnet Police Station?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is being replaced in the next financial year.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question on this issue. The Carnarvon police justice complex was completely axed under the budget. Is there any intention to replace it?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I understand that there are no funds for it. I am visiting Carnarvon in the near future at the request of one of the member's colleagues, the member for North West. He wants to meet with me to discuss any possibilities of having a police station built there. I agreed to meet with him and the shire president next month or the month after. when I go to the north west.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: He is a very dedicated member; I am sure that you will get along fine.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is true. I actually get on very well with the member for North West. He is a very decent and honourable member. I am very happy to meet with him, together with the shire president, who wants to meet with me. I have agreed to meet with them and listen to what they have to say and any proposals that they want to put to us. If they do put up a proposal, I will bring it back and discuss it with the commissioner.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question on capital works. The amount in the budget for the Perth police complex is a lesser amount than what the police sought. Is the minister able to say whether any modifications are being made to the complex by virtue of the fact that the police are getting less than they sought for the complex? By what date does the minister anticipate that it will be finished?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: That is a good question, and I will give the member an answer. What I cannot answer, I will get our financial expert to answer. He has the details of that. There is an allocation of \$113 million in the police budget for the Northbridge complex. A submission will go to the expenditure review committee in a couple of weeks that will address what was perceived as being some shortfall and how that can be dealt with. Members have had a commitment from me and the Premier that that project will go ahead. I can assure the member that it will. If she wants any further detail, I will ask Mr de Mamiel to provide it.

Mr P.M. de Mamiel: In its wisdom, Treasury has decided that it would no longer show the expense component of a capital works project in the budget papers, which makes it difficult to work out the total cost of a project. What we find in the budget papers now is just the capital component. The budget for the police complex is \$113 million. That is all I can say. There are other projects in the budget that have an expense component. That expense component has just gone into total appropriations.

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Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a further question about that. From what the minister said, there will be a further submission to ERC to top up those moneys.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: A further submission will go to ERC in two weeks, I think, to show the allocation of funding for various works in relation to the police asset. I am hopeful that the ERC will accept that proposal. I feel confident that it will. I can tell the member quite confidently that the Northbridge complex will go ahead. It will go ahead because—never mind me giving a commitment to it—the Premier has given a commitment to it. If the Premier commits to it, I can assure the member that it will go ahead.

[12.20 pm]

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, as the Chairman, I can ask a question. I refer to the line item on page 561 “Re-Opening of Regional Police Stations” and the provision of \$2 million. The staff for Cranbrook Police Station will come from the Albany district. Has the government given any money to the police in Albany to cover for the loss of policing staff from the Albany regional district to cover the other areas?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Those police officers were moved to Albany Police Station. When the other stations are reopened, the original officers who were relocated will be moved back. I can give the Chairman some assurance that that does not mean that Albany will miss out on or have a huge reduction in the number of police officers, because some of the additional 300 or 350 officers that we will employ will be allocated to country areas. They will not all stay in the metropolitan area. I would assume that some of those extra officers will be allocated to Albany Police Station and the other police stations in that region.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the minister assure me that the Albany district will not be short-staffed because the government has reopened Cranbrook Police Station and other police stations? Will the minister provide a categorical statement that there will not be fewer police in the region, as that is not what I have been told by the local people?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am informed that none of those officers were from Albany Police Station. They were from Mt Barker and Tambellup.

The CHAIRMAN: They were from the Albany region.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Sorry, I thought the Chairman meant Albany Police Station.

The CHAIRMAN: No; the Albany region.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: They will go back to the stations that were closed—those that are needed. The member will get the benefit of the extra full-time equivalents that we are taking on.

The CHAIRMAN: Have those FTEs been allocated?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Not yet, no.

The CHAIRMAN: So there will be a shortfall.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, because more police officers are taken on —

The CHAIRMAN: I am not talking about what will be done in the future; I am talking about what is happening now.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: It is not happening now. Those police stations will not reopen next week. It will take some months before they can be reopened. Over the course of those months, we will take on extra police officers. I am hopeful that there will not be a shortfall. In fact, the intention is to have an enhanced police presence in not only the metropolitan area, but also all regional areas, including Albany.

The CHAIRMAN: Has the government budgeted for the FTEs?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Yes. There will be 350 fully sworn and trained officers.

The CHAIRMAN: In the next four years?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The next five years.

The CHAIRMAN: So we might have to wait for five years until we get those people.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I do not think so. The intention is not to suddenly have 500 extra police officers in the fifth year. They could not all be trained in that time. A staggered approach must be taken to training police recruits. We are doing very well with our police recruits. We are getting to the stage at which we do not need to rely on overseas officers to come here. We still have two transitional classes of officers who will be completing their recruitment process in the next two or three weeks.

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The CHAIRMAN: Can I confirm that no FTEs have been allocated to cover for the loss of officers from the Albany district?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: There is no loss. I can ask the commissioner to explain it in more eloquent detail than I can. I am more than happy for him to do that.

The CHAIRMAN: I am happy with the minister's answer.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: The minister might provide an answer to my question by way of supplementary information, because it is quite detailed. The fourth dot point from the bottom of page 571 is the reprioritisation of capital works to the information communications and technology program. On page 573, the estimated expenditure for that program is listed as \$13 million in 2009-10 and \$11 million in 2010-11. Is the minister able to provide me with a list of the capital works programs that have been reprioritised and the amount? I am happy for the minister to provide that by way of supplementary information.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am advised that that should not be a problem at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the member tell us what supplementary information he wishes to be provided with?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I just read it into *Hansard* and clearly gave the page numbers, if that is acceptable.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the member repeat it.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I refer to the reprioritisation of capital works on page 571 of the *Budget Statements* and the amounts for those works of \$13 million in 2009-10 and \$11 million in 2010-11 shown on page 573. I am seeking details about which projects have been reprioritised and the amounts of money being shifted to create that.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: We can actually give the member that information now. We do not need to provide it as supplementary information.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: We do, because we do not have much time.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Mr Italiano can provide that information in a very short time. He will not waffle, as the member for Girrawheen suggests I do.

[*Supplementary Information No A5.*]

The appropriation was recommended.