

Deputy Chairman; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Adele Farina; Hon Jim Scott; Hon Louise Pratt;
Hon Peter Foss; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Norman Moore; Hon George Cash

Division 48: Public Transport Authority of Western Australia, \$519 993 000 -

Hon Jon Ford, Deputy Chairman.

Hon Ken Travers, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr R. Waldock, Acting Chief Executive Officer.

Mr J. Leaf, Director, Finance and Contracts.

Mr A. Cartledge, Manager, Project Coordination, New MetroRail.

Mr R. Mann, Director, City Project, New MetroRail.

Mr P. Joyce, Principal Policy Officer, Office of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr R. Farrell, Principal Policy Officer, Office of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Legislative Council Estimates Committee, I welcome you to today's hearing. Government agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting the Parliament to scrutinise the budget papers on behalf of the people of Western Australia. The committee values that assistance.

It will greatly assist Hansard if when referring to the *Budget Statements* volumes or the consolidated fund estimates, members give the page number, item, program, amount, and so on in preface to their questions.

If supplementary information is to be provided, it is to be delivered to the committee's clerk within five working days of receipt of the questions. An example of the required Hansard style for the documents has been provided to the parliamentary secretary's advisers. The committee reminds agency representatives to respond to questions in a succinct manner and to limit the extent of personal observations.

For the benefit of members and Hansard I ask the parliamentary secretary to introduce his advisers to the committee, and for each adviser to please state their full name, contact address and the capacity in which they appear before the committee.

At this time, I would ask each of the witnesses whether they have read, understood and completed the Information for Witnesses form.

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do all the witnesses fully understand the meaning and effect of the provisions of that document?

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the parliamentary secretary like to make an opening statement?

[12 noon]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Only a very brief one, Mr Deputy Chairman. I acknowledge that this is the first time that the Public Transport Authority has appeared before an Estimates Committee. It is a new and exciting organisation. For seven years I have asked the same question, but I will not be able to ask it myself this year. I was not always happy with the answers I received. However, this year I am pleased to announce that the construction of the Clarkson railway station is on track, and that the station will be opened in October this year. That is something I am very pleased about. Construction of the Greenwood station is also under way. That station will open in November. Again, after having asked questions about that for seven years, I am very pleased to finally be able to give such positive information when sitting in this position.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: My first question relates to what is known as the new Narrows Bridge; that is, the duplicate of the original.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The narrow Narrows Bridge.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: No, the second Narrows Bridge that duplicated -

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes, but it is the narrow Narrows Bridge.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Fine; we know which bridge we are talking about. I understand that this bridge was not originally designed to carry rail. However, it will carry the northbound track of the south west metropolitan railway. Have any issues or problems with the foundations of the new bridge come to light? If so, what are they? What independent advice has the Government received to be confident about the structural integrity of the bridge to carry rail? Will the Government please table that advice?

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Hon KEN TRAVERS: I ask Mr Waldock to answer that question.

Mr WALDOCK: The second Narrows Bridge - that is, the duplicate Narrows Bridge - was not initially designed for our trains. In fact, it was designed for light rail, but not for our trains. We did an enormous amount of assessment and evaluation. As part of package E, which covers both bridges, we determined that it did need some strengthening. The strengthening work is part of the package E contracts. Significant assessment was carried out not only by us but also by the contractors in their own right. I can certainly table that information.

[Supplementary Information No 43.]

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I thank Mr Waldock for that information. My next question relates to the median section of the freeway, which will accommodate the railway. I note that the freeway median reserve was widened south of Glen Iris some years ago. I understand that was done specifically to accommodate the rail reserve. Of course, between, say, the Narrows Bridge and Glen Iris there was no widening of the freeway median reserve. Indeed, if there had been it would have pushed the freeway into the river in certain places. When the freeway was widened, what advice did the Government receive on the safe width of the gap needed to accommodate the railway? What advice has the Government now received on what is the safe gap width? When did the Government - that is, whichever Government - receive advice that those safety requirements, if safety drives it, had changed on that matter?

Mr WALDOCK: Some of that question will have to be put on notice. The widening that the member referred to south of Glen Iris was part of a contract that we entered into with Main Roads. That was funded to Main Roads to allow for the wider median strip. At the time, it was based on traditional rail separations and our Westrail standards. That was the case. That was later re-evaluated, certainly between the Canning Bridge and the Narrows Bridge. I will detail that in the response. We looked at world practice and at what could be accommodated within international and Australian standards. We in fact tightened the median. It involved two different time periods. An investment was made early on to widen the median south of Glen Iris. That was part of the Kwinana Freeway enhancement project undertaken by Main Roads some years ago. At a later date, particularly with the direct alignment, it was reviewed again and subjected to thorough investigation, and it was considered that we could in fact narrow the median, which we did.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: With the information that is to be provided on the parts of the question that will be taken on notice, particularly on the advice that was given to the Government and when it was given, I ask that the author of that advice also be provided.

[Supplementary Information No 44.]

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I will again refer generally to division 48, although I could find a reference if required. I understand that the Government is confident that the railway will be sufficient to accommodate all passengers who currently use the freeway via another mode of public transport - typically buses. However, because the railway is now going from the Canning Bridge to the Narrows Bridge in the median strip that is currently occupied by the dedicated bus lanes, what are the points of origin and the route numbers of the buses that will be displaced when those dedicated bus lanes are no longer available? I appreciate that this question might have to be taken on notice if the information is not immediately available.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I think a question on notice has been submitted that addresses that same issue.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It was not a question that I asked, but if it is there, that would be good.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The member's colleague Hon Barry House asked quite an extensive question on this matter. I recommend that the member read it, but, in brief terms, there will be no change to the bus services that operate over Canning Bridge or join the Kwinana Freeway at Canning Bridge as a result of southern suburbs railway.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: What about bus services that join the freeway south of Canning Bridge and use those dedicated bus lanes? That is the other information I am after.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Those joining the freeway south of Canning Bridge will feed into the new stations.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Is it possible to get a list of those bus route numbers, such as the 8878 that goes through Willetton, and where they come from?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Yes, we are happy to take that question on notice.

[Supplementary Information No 45.]

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Hon ADELE FARINA: I refer to capital works on page 795 of *Budget Statements* and the city project mentioned on the last line. Can the parliamentary secretary advise what is planned for the area above the new platforms under William Street?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The William Street platforms will be an underground extension of Perth Central Station and have provided the opportunity to revitalise the run-down and under-performing part of the Perth central business district. The city project has provided the catalyst for the redevelopment of 8 000-plus square metres of the precinct bordered by Wellington Street, William Street, the Murray Street Mall and the Commonwealth Bank, the post office and Albert Facey House buildings. Development Concepts Pty Ltd contemplate a mixed use for the site, with lower level retailers taking advantage of the people movement generated by the station and a mix of office and residential space above those retail outlets. The redevelopment of the post office building represents an exciting opportunity for a link through to Forrest Place, which Australia Post is keen to pursue. In consultation with the Heritage Council, work has commenced on a conservation plan for the retained heritage buildings on the site to describe how they will be incorporated into the future development. I think that generally covers the question.

Hon ADELE FARINA: My next question refers to the same item number. Can the parliamentary secretary advise how the works involved with the Esplanade station will improve the connectivity between the CBD and the Swan River foreshore?

[12.10pm]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The Esplanade station provides a very exciting and unique opportunity to improve the links between the city and what is one of our great assets and icons; that is, the Swan River and its foreshore in that area. The city project includes the removal of the William Street traffic bridge, which is now occurring; the realignment of Riverside Drive west of Barrack Street to an east-west orientation, which moves it away from the river; and the reconfiguration of road links further west from William Street. That will result in approximately three hectares of foreshore area west of Barrack St being freed up by late 2006, when the city project is complete. Most of that, obviously, fronts onto the river. The removal of the traffic bridge allows for further configuration of road links in the future, including possible additional below-ground links to release up to a further two hectares of foreshore area. This is a real opportunity. One of the things I have always found is the inability of the city to be connected with the river, compared to a city like Boston, where people can walk out of the city onto the river. Planners will say that bridges and other physical structures provide barriers. With the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre also drawing people down there, there will be a great opportunity to reconnect the city with the river foreshore area.

Hon ADELE FARINA: I refer to the SmartRider ticketing system to be introduced in early 2005, one of the major initiatives for 2004-05 listed on page 792. What is the progress of this new system, and what impact will it have on passengers?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: A trial of the SmartRider system has already started at the Stirling railway station. It involves some 450 patrons. I understand that it is progressing well, and will hopefully iron out any potential settling-in problems. The system will be introduced in early 2005, but some work is still to be done on a final implementation date. The system will replace the present magnetic strip tickets used on buses, trains and ferries. Although the old system has served us well, it has now reached the end of its life. The new system will allow people to buy a ticket and, instead of having a zone 1, 2 or 3 ticket, they will just have the one smart card loaded up. When the ticket is used, the appropriate fare will be deducted from it. There is greater flexibility in that regard. People will be able to tag on and tag off. That will certainly make it a lot easier to identify people who are not paying the correct fare. It will probably pick up some of the people who have been buying two-section tickets and getting away with it. It might pull some of those into line, so there will be some benefits there. That will be worked through a global positioning system.

Hon JIM SCOTT: I refer to the final dot point on page 749, which reads -

Detailed planning for priority east - west public transport routes in the Southern Metropolitan area. This initiative will focus on the preparation of development plans and cost estimates for public transport infrastructure to support high frequency high priority east - west bus services in the Southern Metropolitan area.

Are there any requirements for additional buses to provide that service, on top of the current contract with Mercedes, which is continuing to supply buses? If not, when does the department intend to obtain those vehicles and to have them providing that service?

Mr WALDOCK: We have a contract with Mercedes for 848 buses. Although it is being rolled out, there has been a delay over the past year as we have moved to new chassis and gas-powered buses.

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Hon JIM SCOTT: That was going to be my next question.

Mr WALDOCK: In the future, all our buses will be gas powered. We have seen a major change, but there has been a hiatus. The bus contract will be rolled out over the next six or seven years. At this stage, I know that the Department for Planning and Infrastructure is planning for significant east-west bus routes. Certainly, the increase in service kilometres in the budget for next year is fairly modest, so we will not see anything in the next year or so. However, there are plans for how we can better connect Perth and improve east-west type services.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I remind members that this division deals with the New MetroRail. I will allow, as Hon Simon O'Brien has said, questions about buses related to the rail, but not specific questions about buses.

Hon JIM SCOTT: I also have a question about infrastructure. Mention was made of people paying the right prices for tickets. As a constant user of the North Fremantle station, I have noted that when I travel to football matches, there is always a huge line of people for one ticket machine. They are unable to purchase tickets in time to get on the train or they jump on the train without a ticket.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I hope that Hon Jim Scott never does that!

Hon JIM SCOTT: I would never do that. I get there on time. However, I have noticed that it is pretty hard for people. Clearly, we cannot have people on the trains to check tickets because no-one can move on those trains. Is it intended to provide another ticketing machine at that station, or will people sell tickets at the station when matches are held?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I will ask Mr Waldock to answer that. As I have said, one of the key issues is that people will be able to buy a SmartRider card. Currently, for some people it is a one-zone trip to work, but it is a two-zone trip to a football match. The SmartRider technology will make it a lot easier for people.

Mr WALDOCK: The question has been partly answered. The contactless smart card technology, which will be implemented early next year, will be very fast loading. There will not be any requirement for people to buy a ticket if they have a smart ticket. Indeed, we will promote the SmartRider above and beyond cash tickets. We hope to have market share of about 70 per cent and hopefully more for football matches. Although we recognise that we could do with extra ticketing machines, our current Wayfarer ticketing machines are old. We are not investing in new ones; we are moving into new technology. At present I am a little surprised because, for football matches, we put people on at both Fremantle and other stations to manually assist with getting return MultiRiders, as well as one-way cash tickets. However, we will look at that again.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The Public Transport Authority handles buses, so if members want to ask questions about buses, I am sure that we will be able to answer them.

Hon JIM SCOTT: In that case, further to the east-west bus issue, how many of the 848 buses in that contract have been provided currently, and how many of those buses are gas powered? I believe Mr Waldock said - perhaps he can confirm this - that from now on the rest of the buses will use compressed natural gas.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I wonder when the member will have his car converted to liquefied petroleum gas, as I have. However, I will ask Mr Waldock to answer that question.

Mr WALDOCK: I will take that question on notice to some extent. The majority of the bus fleet delivered to date has been Euro 2 diesel. I think about 348 diesel buses have been delivered, so from now on all the new buses will use CNG.

[12.20 pm]

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: A section of that is on notice.

Mr WALDOCK: Yes, the existing number.

[*Supplementary Information No 46.*]

Hon LOUISE PRATT: I have a question about accessible public transport upgrade programs. I note in the budget the expenditure committed in the last year and an increase in expenditure in the coming year. What level of progress will that enable us to make in providing greater access for people with disabilities?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: There are a range of accessibility issues. Obviously, all of the bus fleet is accessible, and the trains and the new stations will be accessible. However, I will ask Mr Waldock to provide a bit more detail on that for the member.

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Mr WALDOCK: There is little doubt that Western Australia leads Australia in accessibility of all public transport. Transperth won both the Prime Minister's award and the Premier's award some three years ago for that specific reason. Certainly, from the start, all of the 848 buses are fully accessible, with kneeling operations.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: That is the new ones, yes.

Mr WALDOCK: It is the new ones. All our new railcars, including regional ones, are fully accessible, with wheelchair facilities. In fact, all our 21 new Transwa coaches, which were purchased and have been operating over the past four months, are fully wheelchair accessible as well. Certainly, we have made an enormous commitment to and investment in accessibility of our rolling stock. With our infrastructure, we are working through all of our stations. We have 57 stations, and the number is growing. All new stations in the past five years have been fully accessible. We have a program with an allocation of about \$3 million a year to go through some of the older stations, for which no major capital works were planned, to make them accessible as well. We are fully committed to accessibility.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: On the new trains and at the new stations there will be an audio loop as well. It is not about just physical mobility but also a range of other disabilities that will be addressed.

Hon PETER FOSS: The parliamentary secretary may recall that in order to secure the vote of the Greens (WA) to guarantee the passage of the railways Bill that authorised the construction of that part of the railway that will go into the city, the Government undertook to construct a railway station at South Perth. As the total cost does not include a station at South Perth, is it fair to say that the undertaking to the Greens will not be carried out as part of the construction? What excuse does the Government have for not honouring this undertaking, which gained a vote in the Parliament? Was it the Government's intention at the time it gave the undertaking that it would construct this station? If so, why has the Government changed its mind? Does it intend to give an explanation to the Parliament? If not, what was the reason for giving the undertaking? If the South Perth station were constructed, what effect would it have on the travel time to the city from stations beyond South Perth?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The current budget does not extend to the time lines necessary to answer the member's question. I am sure that if people who were given those commitments believe that we are not meeting them, they will raise it with us.

Hon PETER FOSS: Is the Government going to construct it?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: The time line that was involved in that commitment is outside the terms of this budget and its forward estimates.

Hon PETER FOSS: There was a time line on that commitment, was there?

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It was not the real reason anyway.

Hon PETER FOSS: No.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Recently there have been some claims - somewhat scurrilous, dare I say - that there are nothing but cow paddocks in the southern suburbs.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Who made that claim?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Some people. I refer to the general capital works program line on page 795. Can the parliamentary secretary advise how many people will be serviced by the southern suburbs railway?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: As much as it hurts me to say this as a member for the northern suburbs, the southern suburbs have become the growth corridor, although there is still significant growth in the northern suburbs. However, there is no doubt that the latest figures indicate that that growth in the southern suburbs has certainly picked up. That is not to say that there is not significant growth in the northern suburbs, but the southern suburbs have now taken over. The population in the area is expected to grow by an additional 700 000 by 2031. The figure I had for the current population of Western Australia is 1.8 million, but I think the figure is now closer to 1.9 million. In fact, I think I saw something yesterday from the Minister for State Development predicting that now that net interstate migration is favouring Western Australia, the population may reach the 2 million mark before the end of this year. Many of those people who are flocking to Western Australia because of its low unemployment and exceptional economic development are settling in the southern suburbs, so the growth in that area is significant. The population in the southern corridor is expected to grow from a 2001 figure of 351 400, to a 2006 figure of 395 400 and to a 2011 figure of 441 100. It will represent about 25 per cent of Perth's population. The Mandurah-Peel region's population is growing at twice the rate of that of the rest of Western Australia. Its projected population increase is 136 per cent between 2001 and 2031, compared with a range of 29 to 72 per cent in other areas. New land sales at Wellard Village are very positive around the proposed railway

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station. That is a sign of people flocking to the area as a result of proper infrastructure being provided. People see the fast, direct route as a connection with a viable alternative place to live in Western Australia, because they will have access to a good public transport system.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: The capital works program is recorded on page 795 of the *Budget Statements*. I refer to the completion of the Thornlie extension for \$51.3 million. Is that the entire cost including the cost of the station and other infrastructure? Does the extension largely proceed down an existing rail reserve; and, if so, what would it cost to extend the rail line past the proposed new Thornlie station to the previously planned stations at Nicholson Road and Ranford Road? If memory serves me correctly, Ranford Road would have been the most used station under the former Government's plan. How much would it cost to do that little bit extra, especially in view of the very large cost to get the extension to Thornlie, and why is the Government not doing that?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I will hand over to the officers, but I am intrigued. The Government is attacked for spending too much on the rail system, yet the member is now suggesting that we spend more money to extend the rail system further.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: We have attacked the Government for spending money in the wrong areas for very little return. Here there would be a massive return.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: We will end up with a fast, direct route that will save some \$15 million per annum in operating costs and will provide a significant saving in time and significantly increased patronage.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It will not be for those people who would have used those stations, who are my constituents.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Between Glen Iris and Thornlie the saving is in the order of \$170 million. Perhaps one of the officers may give a more detailed answer about the cost of extending from Thornlie through to the other areas. My understanding is that although the track runs along an existing rail corridor, a separate passenger line would need to be built there because urban transport cannot be run on a freight line. It is not easy to do and it would require separate lines.

[12.30 pm]

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It could be done on the Fremantle line.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Even under the other previous proposals, it would have been a separate line.

Mr WALDOCK: The full investment for the Perth to Thornlie line will be in the order of \$102 million. A great deal of that money, though, will be spent on the existing line to Kenwick for an upgrade to the station, and a new station, plus a number of grade separations. No detailed assessment has been done on what it will cost to go further with the rail line, but Andrew Cartledge may have a ballpark figure based on the costs per kilometre.

Mr CARTLEDGE: In the supplementary master plan that was done and finished in August 2002, the option to extend the railway to Nicholson Road was examined. It was decided not to proceed with the building of the railway beyond Thornlie as a single railway track, because the costs involved in taking the railway that little bit extra - another kilometre and a half or so - to Nicholson Road were not justified given the patronage that would accrue. I do not have the precise figure with me. I think the other part of the question suggested extending the rail to Ranford Road and beyond. That work, if it were done today, would cost well in excess of \$150 million additional to the work that is now being done to Thornlie.

Hon JIM SCOTT: I also have a question about the possible expansion of rail services. One of the existing rail lines that runs south of Fremantle station is currently used only for freight. In the past there has been talk about a possible extension of rail services south of Fremantle, particularly for some of the new developments that are taking place in that area. I understand that one of those developments, the South Beach development, will possibly take up part of the rail reserve. Given that there will be a large increase in freight traffic in that area, does the department have a position on whether this area of rail reserve should be taken up by urban development at a time when there may be a need to extend the passenger services plus deal with that increase in freight traffic?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I guess that is probably more a question for the officers from the WA Planning Commission, but I will ask Mr Waldock whether he is happy to give any further information that he can from the Public Transport Authority's point of view.

Mr WALDOCK: Again I support the parliamentary secretary's comments. It is certainly part of the future planning being undertaken by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the WA Planning Commission. The question raised two issues. Firstly, the domestic electrified rail going initially to South Beach is not on the forward program. We have considered that issue previously in terms of patronage, impact and

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costs. It would require double-tracking and electrification. It would also give rise to a number of significant planning issues of access to Fremantle boat harbour and recreational activities in that area. Therefore, there are no plans for electrification of that section. The wider issue of freight has been looked at very closely by the Freight Network Review undertaken and coordinated through both the minister's officers and officers from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure. While there have certainly been some concerns about buffer areas and buffer zones, they do not believe at this stage that there are any major issues, although noise attenuation and vibration will always be of concern and will need to be fully considered. However, I understand they still believe all the freight tasks can be undertaken with the current alignments and reserves.

Hon JIM SCOTT: Although there is no current proposal to extend the passenger service further south, does the possibility exist of that service operating further south or has the department given up any thought of using that corridor?

Mr WALDOCK: Can we take that on notice and direct it to the DPI?

[Supplementary Information No 47.]

Hon ADELE FARINA: The major initiative for 2004-05 on page 795 is the development of the intermodal facilities at Kewdale freight terminal. Will the parliamentary secretary provide details of that initiative and the role of the Public Transport Authority?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I thank the member for the question. It is all part of the Government's vision for how the transport systems in the greater Perth area should operate, obviously with a strong commitment to the use of rail. The PTA has called for expressions of interest for redevelopment of the terminal, because many facilities are at the end of their life due to age and to accommodate some activities identified in the freight network review. Following receipt of the submissions, negotiation is under way with Pacific National Ltd for redevelopment and expansion of the existing intermodal freight terminal, which will include a new terminal for Fremantle in-services, an inland container port to provide storage and servicing of containers utilised in the Kewdale-Welshpool area, a store of containers for Fremantle port inward and outward movements and expanded rail freight related warehousing terminals for delivery of new vehicles. I am sure that members will be well aware of the problems with empty containers being transported in and out of Fremantle port and the amount of traffic that generates. That is an issue we have sought to address. Some people believe the answer to that is to build more roads. We will transport containers in and out by rail and provide better coordination and logistical planning for the movement of containers. This is all part of that comprehensive response. Space is being reserved within the Kewdale complex for future competitive terminal operations.

The stage 1 development application is expected to be submitted within the next two months. This will be the first of a number of stages that will accommodate replacement of out-of-date infrastructure, future growth and the facilities to service Fremantle port as identified in the freight network review. Stage 1 will include the Fremantle in-services terminal, the first part of the inland container port and some additional warehousing. That is part of our comprehensive response to better managing the issues at Fremantle harbour rather than just spending millions on building roads that will be detrimental to the community.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Rubbish.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: That is why Hon Norman Moore is a 26-year veteran.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: That is right.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: He is stuck in the past.

Hon ADELE FARINA: I refer to page 793. What is the early feedback from the introduction of the new Transwa country passenger coach fleet?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: They are fantastic coaches and have been very positively received. I will let Mr Waldock bask in the glory of their success.

Mr WALDOCK: Although we do not have the final customer satisfaction figures to date, early feedback from Donovan Research, a market research company, is that there is about 98 per cent customer satisfaction with the new coaches. Last week some Canadians who have travelled the world took the time out to say that the coaches were the best they had ever travelled in. There was, therefore, excellent feedback. Our coaches are pretty much the leading edge in comfort. They have DVD entertainment, the latest videos, personal airconditioning, digital closed-circuit television, hearing loops and other facilities for disabled people. We are very proud of the fleet and we think it is a fine investment for the future.

[12.40 pm]

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Hon ADELE FARINA: Well done!

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Congratulations!

Hon NORMAN MOORE: That was an excellent answer, Mr Waldock. Can you tell me how much it costs taxpayers per annum to subsidise the operation of that fleet?

Mr WALDOCK: I am more than happy to take that question on notice. I think it has already been noted in the Chamber that country rail operations have a significant subsidy, but we will advise of that.

[Supplementary Information No 48.]

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Will the parliamentary secretary tell me where the new railway line will go after it comes north over the Narrows Bridge and heads into William Street? Where will it start to go underground and what proposals are there for it to go underground?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: There is a question on notice on this matter. I am happy to ask Mr Waldock to give more detail on it, but I refer the Leader of the Opposition to the answer to a question on notice asked by Hon Barry House, which provides a fair bit of detail on how much of the rail line will be cut-and-covered tunnel and how much will be open-cut tunnel and the like.

Hon PETER FOSS: The answer to the question on notice appears to indicate that it is to be left open for economic reasons.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I will ask Mr Waldock to answer the Leader of the Opposition's question and then we can move on to other questions.

Hon PETER FOSS: It is the same question really and Mr Waldock has already nodded yes.

Mr WALDOCK: I am more than happy to answer the question and give details of where the portal goes into the ground. However, Richard Mann, the project director, is with us and I am sure he would like to give a detailed answer.

Mr MANN: The railway will swing to the east between the freeway carriageway just to the north of the Narrows Bridge, cross under the southbound carriageway to the south of the point where the existing bus lanes go under that carriageway and move across the foreshore about 100 metres to the east of the freeway. It will drop into a portal, go into a cut-and-covered tunnel, move along the foreshore in front of the new convention centre, swing around the crucible at the south-east corner of that building and align with William Street at the existing William Street traffic bridge. The new esplanade station will be constructed to the south of the intersection of Mounts Bay Road, The Esplanade and William Street. The railway will leave in a bored tunnel from the northern end of that station box, essentially up and beneath William Street, swing to the east just north of the intersection of William and Hay Streets, enter the William Street platforms, which are between Wellington and Murray Streets, and curve around to the west, coming up in the Perth rail yard to join the existing Joondalup lines.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I thank Mr Mann very much for that excellent answer. Will the new railway be under a covered tunnel as it comes off the Narrows Bridge and goes around in front of the convention centre?

Mr MANN: The first 100 metres after going into the portal will be completely enclosed. There will then be a section 140 metres long below ground level that will be open-roofed to the air for ventilation purposes. It will then go back into a closed tunnel just before entering the new esplanade station.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: How long is the open slot?

Mr MANN: It is 140 metres.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I note from the answer to a question on notice that the contractor is responsible for all design and construct risk associated with bored tunnels, other than underground man-made obstructions. I ask firstly what sort of man-made obstructions are contemplated may be encountered? I further note that the answer to the question states that the contract price includes a provisional sum allowance based on a provisional quantity and tender rate should any such obstruction be encountered. Therefore, what is the amount for the provisional sum allowance included in the contract price? I assume it will remain payable even if no obstructions are found that must be removed; that is, the contractor keeps the amount for shouldering the risk. What if the cost of dealing with a man-made obstruction exceeds the provisional sum allowance? Does the contractor have any comeback to the Government for more funds beyond that dealt with in the provisional sum allowance?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I ask Mr Mann to answer that question.

Mr MANN: The first part of the question was the nature of the obstructions expected. Two types are dealt with in the contract. There are obstructions in the foreshore area that we know exist and we expect to hit. The

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contractor takes all risk for those. These include the old William Street Wharf, which is buried out there somewhere, an old retaining wall and the old Spring Street drain, which was also encountered during work on the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre. The main unknown man-made obstructions that are most likely to be encountered are the ground anchors under William Street, which are temporary supports for building basements. The tunnel is designed to pass underneath the known envelope of ground anchors. There is some risk that they may be encountered. If that is the case, the contractor will be paid the direct cost of striking those ground anchors. That will be paid at a daily rate, as is tendered in the contract. The contractor takes the risk for tendering the rate, and the PTA takes the risk for the quantity. Five days have been allowed for encountering ground anchors, and a further three days for encountering other man-made obstructions not provided for elsewhere under the contract. If delays are associated with hitting those obstructions, and if those delays on the critical path cause an extension of time entitlement, the contractor will be entitled to the cost of the delay. In response to the final part of the question, PTA wears the ultimate risk for the quantity of obstructions actually encountered - they will be paid. If no obstruction is hit, there will be no payment to the contractor.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I understand the ground anchors are bits of concrete with cables in them. Could they be described for members? Are they still functional or are they used only during the construction phase of the building? Do they remain functional in securing a building forever? Is it a matter of encountering one and hammering through it and disposing of the rubble?

Mr MANN: The ground anchors are typically finger-thick strands of wire twisted together. They are drilled into the ground diagonally, typically about 15 degrees below horizontal. The strands of wire are encased in 100 or 150 millimetre diameter grouted blocks. It is effectively a grouted tube in the ground. They are temporary, and are de-tensioned after the basement walls are constructed. It is a method that could be used for our stations if the contractors so decide. The anchors support the basement walls. Once the basement floors and roofs are constructed, the ground anchors serve no structural purpose. Cutting through the ground anchors presents no difficulty with the structure they are attached to; however, they may cause a problem in fouling the head of the tunnel boring machine, which would require intervention and someone to go out to the front of the machine and remove them. It is a potential risk to bored tunnel operations.

Hon ADELE FARINA: The first dot point under major initiatives for 2004-05 on page 794 reads -

Review of bus routes to maximise service delivery and efficiencies in rural Western Australia.

I fully support this initiative. Will the parliamentary secretary provide some details about what the review will entail and where the deficiencies currently exist?

[12.50 pm]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I will ask Mr Waldock to reply.

Mr WALDOCK: I had my other hat on. It was not to do with Transwa; it was to do with regional passenger services. We are now moving through all the key country towns where we provide subsidised services and reviewing all the routes to see whether they meet community expectations. If they do not, we will obviously look at plans for the future. Recently, as the member would be aware, we have worked with the City of Bunbury on all the regional passenger services and have put forward a significant initiative for improved services. We are now rolling that out, firstly to improve services, but also to look at the whole contract relations for the future.

Hon ADELE FARINA: Will that review extend to school bus contracts and services?

Mr WALDOCK: School bus contracts are quite separate, of course, but that is an ongoing dynamic requirement for educational institutions, both private and government. It is an ongoing planning assessment. It has been well publicised that, although it has been a fairly difficult period, there has been a 100 per cent sign-up of all school bus operators who have had an average 15.8 per cent increase in their rates. We are moving forward. We now have very strong contract arrangements. We can now plan for the future knowing just how we will offer the services, provide better services in some places and rationalise services in others.

Hon GEORGE CASH: Who prepared the contract between the contractor and the State, and was the it vetted by private lawyers?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Which contract?

Hon GEORGE CASH: The contract that Mr Mann referred to. I was thinking about the rail as it comes off the Narrows area.

Mr MANN: The contract is based substantially on the Main Roads design and construct template which was developed in very strong consultation with private lawyers. Our document based on that template was prepared

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under the auspices of the State Solicitor's Office, Western Australia, with full-time assistance from that office, and was reviewed by the State Solicitor.

Hon JIM SCOTT: It is stated on page 792 that for the fifth year in a row the Perth public transport patronage has increased, and that is backed up by the figures on previous pages. Has that been looked at as a rate or a percentage increase? Has patronage increased per capita as well as in total numbers?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I expect we will also see there will be a significant jump in patronage in the northern suburbs with the additional stations, parking facilities and rail carriages. We have been waiting for some time now for that artificial cap to be removed. There will be a significant jump again when those new services come on. One of the other things that came to my attention as part of New MetroRail was the significant increase in capacity that will occur on the Armadale, Midland and northern lines. The demand is there; we just do not have the capacity to carry those people at the moment.

Mr WALDOCK: For the past three years all public transport has been averaging an increase in use in the order of three to four per cent. Although it might sound modest, only we and South Australia have had increases in public transport numbers over the past few years, which highlights just how difficult it is at times to win customers. There has been solid progress, albeit the rail system has been limited in any growth, mainly as a result of peak capacity. We are reminded of that on a regular basis.

In answer to the other part of the member's question, it is fair to say we certainly are not winning the war for the market share, because the number of car trips is growing substantially. Western Australia is, at best, stagnant. Most places in Australia are stagnant, at best, or negative. The challenge over the next 20 years is to change people's behaviour and to increase the number of people who use public transport. The challenge is not in absolute numbers but in total market share. It is hoped that much of this Government's investment in public transport will help that.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: Although the TravelSmart program is not under the management of the Public Transport Authority, I mention again that the program has had positive results. It certainly has had a wonderful impact on me. I now ride my bike, use public transport more frequently and do a range of other things rather than use my vehicle. It has had a very positive impact on me.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: The capital works program on page 795 of the *Budget Statements* refers to the delivery of 18 three-car rail sets. My question follows on from a question that was just asked. This matter has been carried over from the past few years. I wonder whether there have been any further developments with regard to what I am about to ask. I understand that a rapid five-minute service will be provided during peak hours. Will all those services originate from Mandurah? From what I understand, it is expected that there will be about 500 boardings a day from Mandurah. I would not have thought that means a three-car rail set will travel to Mandurah and back again every five minutes. I would like the parliamentary secretary to comment on that matter, which relates to my next question. Where will those 18 three-car rail sets be housed overnight? Will some trains start their journeys from halfway between Mandurah and Perth? Will some start from Mandurah and some from Perth, for example? Of the type of three-car rail set that will be purchased, what is the passenger capacity, both seated and in total, including standing passengers? With regard to the passenger figures that have been considered over the term of the project so far, what is the likelihood that many of the trains travelling from Mandurah to Perth will be at full capacity when they get to South Street, Leach Highway and Canning Bridge stations in the morning?

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I am glad the member acknowledges the future success of the rail system. I will ask Mr Waldock to provide an answer. If the member is having problems conceptualising how the system may work with trains starting from different areas, I am happy to take him to the northern suburbs and show him Whitfords station.

Mr WALDOCK: I will put Mr Cartledge on notice as well. Three-car train sets will be stored at Nowergup and Mandurah. Trains will be housed at both ends. They will be the only depots for the new fleet. The member is right about the number of train movements. Thomsons Lake and Warwick will be the key high-frequency areas in which significant loadings will occur. Between 12 and 16 trains an hour will run along those lines during peak periods, whereas about six or eight trains will travel through Mandurah during peak periods. Additional trains will travel through those key points at which there are very heavy loadings. The member would know of the "Whitfords Flyer". It is the same thing: additional trains will be run during those peak periods. The numbers of seats and the capacity of each train certainly are greater than the current cars. Andrew will have the exact numbers.

[1.00 pm]

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Mr CARTLEDGE: I do not have the precise numbers but approximately 560 people fit comfortably in a three-car train. That is based on an approximate 60-40 split; that is, approximately 320 people stand and 240 people sit in a train loaded to its designed capacity. Continuing on with Mr Waldock's comments, in the morning, depending on the time, trains will leave Mandurah station in the peak hour. Further up the line, between 12 and 16 train services will commence from Thomsons Lake. Those trains will run through to Whitfords. Through a newly designed railway timetable there will be a Whitfords to Thomsons Lake shuttle train service, which over the length of the north-south railway access will carry the largest number of passengers. Broadly, there will be six or eight train services in each direction between Mandurah and Thomsons Lake each hour during peak times. The number of services will increase from Thomsons Lake to Perth. The number of services will be balanced between Perth and Whitfords.

The last part of the question related to where the trains will be kept. The 18 trains referred to in the question is the number of railcar units that will be delivered this financial year. It is a continuation of the delivery process. The trains will be mostly stored at Nowergup. There will be 93 new railcars. Approximately two-thirds of the fleet of railcars, including 24 of the existing two-car trains, will be stored at Nowergup overnight and during off-peak times. The balance of the new railcar fleet will be stored at Mandurah in order to provide the first train of the day travelling north from Mandurah.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: To put the member's mind at risk, should someone have to stand during the journey from Thomsons Lake to Perth, by using the fast, direct route, the standing time will be approximately 16 minutes. If the discredited Kenwick deviation were used, a person would have to stand for 28 minutes. Using a bus under today's conditions, a person would have to stand for 23 minutes. I accept the member's comment that we will see a successful demand for the service. I assure him that people will be standing for at least 12 minutes less as a result of using the fast, direct route from Thomsons Lake rather than the Kenwick deviation.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: We will all be paying for it.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: No, it will save \$15 million a year in operating costs.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, members! We have now completed division 48. I thank the parliamentary secretary and his advisers for their assistance to the committee. We will resume to consider division 35 at two o'clock.

Sitting suspended from 1.03 to 2.00 pm