

Chairman; Hon Graham Giffard; Hon Alan Cadby; Hon Jim Scott; Hon Peter Foss; Hon Simon O'Brien; Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich; Hon Jon Ford; Hon Ken Travers; Hon Murray Criddle; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Bruce Donaldson

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**New MetroRail -**

Hon George Cash, Chairman.

Hon Graham Giffard, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr R. Waldock, Acting Commissioner of Railways.

Mr R. Mann, Director, City Project.

Mr A. Cartledge, Manager, Project Coordination.

Mr J. Leaf, General Manager, Finance.

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

The CHAIRMAN: On behalf of the Legislative Council Estimates Committee, I welcome participants to today's hearing. Government agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting Parliament to scrutinise the budget papers. The Committee values their assistance in that regard.

For the information of members, it would greatly assist Hansard if when referring to *Budget Statements* volumes or consolidated fund estimates members give the page number, item, program, amount and so on in preface to their question. If supplementary information is to be provided, I ask for cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the Committee's clerk within five working days of receipt of the question. An example of the required Hansard style for the document 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. I will ask the advisers whether they have read, understood and completed the Information for Witnesses form.

WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I table some questions in the name of Hon Peter Foss. I invite the parliamentary secretary to make some preliminary comments, as I understand he may want to expand on some of the answers that are now tabled.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I do not propose to make any general comments on the budget. I am happy to go straight into questions. However, in one of his questions on notice, Hon Bruce Donaldson has sought copies of numerous documents relating to the New MetroRail project. The response to the first question states that various risk assessment reports will be provided by way of supplementary information. Since that response, it has been possible to prepare the relevant reports in time for today's hearing, so I will now table copies of the risk assessment reports that Hon Bruce Donaldson has sought. Hon Bruce Donaldson has also sought a number of other reports that, as has already been indicated, will be provided by way of supplementary information.

Hon ALAN CADBY: Borrowing in 2002-03 was budgeted at \$151 million but the actual was \$85.5 million. Why was the full amount of money not borrowed, what projects were deferred as a result of the lack of borrowing and how much of the borrowing for 2003-04 of \$211 million is a carryover from the previous year?

Mr WALDOCK: For the year 2002-03, the total budget for New MetroRail was \$107.525 million and we are forecasting an expenditure of \$76.727 million. There are a number of reasons for its being underspent, in particular the rolling stock which was budgeted at \$50 million during that period and will cost in the order of \$36 million. The major underexpenditure is to do with the Nowergup depot, which is to the north and the major depot of the New MetroRail project; indeed, work on that started late although we are confident that it will be finished by September 2004. The draw downs have not been at the level expected. Another issue is that we budgeted for \$18.722 million for the purchase of land on the New MetroRail line in the south west. At this stage we have forecast only \$497 000 to deal with our drawn downs for Perth to the WA Planning Commission. We will not be drawing that down until future years as we need it. This is a policy issue in that the commission holds the land until we need it, and we then buy it from the commission. As I said, the two major issues and two major expenditure items are rolling stock and land purchasing.

[12.10 pm]

Hon ALAN CADBY: How much of that has been carried over from 2002-03 to 2003-04?

Mr WALDOCK: It will all be carried over as traditional capital works and our expenditure for next year reflects that.

Hon ALAN CADBY: I refer to page 802. The SmartCard ticketing system has a budget of \$1.576 million. Does that include installation of any equipment; and, if so, what line and/or stations will have these installations?

**Extract from *Hansard***  
[COUNCIL - Wednesday, 4 June 2003]  
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Mr WALDOCK: The SmartCard ticketing system, under the WAGR budget, is estimated to cost \$7 million. The project itself will cost in the order of \$25 million. The figure of \$7 million in the budget is expenditure by WA Government Railways, whereas in previous years expenditure was budgeted under the Department for Planning and Infrastructure. It is a \$25 million project that is currently out for bidding, and we hope to make a recommendation to the State Supply Commission in the next month. The SmartCard ticketing project has many aspects to it, but it will cover all lines and all public transport - ferries, buses and trains. By the end of 2004 we hope to roll out that project, which will be the first in Australia and which will be a fully integrated, contactless SmartCard for the whole of the public transport system.

Hon ALAN CADBY: What will we have at the end of this financial year for the expenditure of \$1.6 million?

Mr WALDOCK: I would have thought very little at the end of this financial year, which is at the end of this month. As I said, we are now in the primary bidding phase and we will soon submit a recommendation. The contract will therefore not be finally negotiated and let until July or August of this year.

Hon ALAN CADBY: Where can I find in the budget papers the borrowings that deal with the Quinns Rock rail extension? I understand that the department will borrow funds from the City of Wanneroo and I cannot find that in the budget papers.

Mr WALDOCK: That project is part of the New MetroRail project that was planned, as members would be aware, as an at-grade crossing. We have had a number of discussions with the City of Wanneroo and we now have an in-principle agreement - although the agreement has not yet been ratified and signed - that the City of Wanneroo will provide \$3 million for a grade-separated crossing to meet the needs of the community. That amount will be shown as a contingent liability on the basis of "if and when" the Government expands the rail system further to Butler. Although there is a great deal of interest in that prospect, it is not in the future capital works program and it will not be constructed until the Government makes a decision. At this stage the project is on an "if and when" basis, which is completely understood by the City of Wanneroo, and is therefore a contingent liability. If and when funding becomes available, we will refund that money to the City of Wanneroo because we would build that bridge anyway if and when the project proceeds.

Hon JIM SCOTT: Why is there no provision in the forward estimates for a station in South Perth?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The Government is considering the construction of a station at South Perth in 2010. The forward estimates go to 2006-07 and it will not be before then.

Hon PETER FOSS: It is not on the web site either.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: There you go!

Hon JIM SCOTT: What facilities will be provided for cyclists who use the southern rail service? Will such facilities include easy access to rail stations and platforms, secure cycle storage areas and cycle areas on rail carriages, and have these items been budgeted for?

Mr WALDOCK: We have made a number of decisions on cycling in conjunction with local cycling bodies and associations. The new railcar sets are unique by Australian standards. They are three-car sets with triple seats in the front and rear carriages that are normally folded to allow multiple bikes on both sides. As I said, for the first time in Australia, we have the best carriages for accommodating bicycles on trains. A policy has not yet been formulated, but members would be aware that we currently allow bikes to travel on trains at both off-peak and counter-cyclic times. Peak period is an issue; there is just not enough capacity on our trains for bicycles. There is also the issue of staining and the like on clothing during peak loading periods. Although we will continue that policy, when we have greater capacity we will review it with a view to extending it to peak periods if we can; however, that decision has not yet been determined.

In relation to at-station amenities and facilities, we are putting in place cycle storage facilities at all stations. We made an announcement at the weekend regarding secure train stations. In the order of 60 per cent of all our train stations on the New MetroRail line, as on the northern line, will be secured by fencing. Within those fenced stations, car parks will have an area for storing bicycles. That is a major initiative that is happening and will continue to happen. We are moving more and more bicycle lockers off platforms. There appears to be a potential issue of terrorism, bombs and the like. It is fair to say that there should not be any large locker area close to where people congregate and to that extent we are reviewing that policy. However, the member can be assured that all stations will have secure areas for cyclists.

In terms of amenities, we are offering cyclist accessible stations. We are endeavouring to make all stations totally accessible to pedestrians, to the disabled and to cyclists. There are some issues of which members would

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be aware at South Street and Leach Highway for cyclists who travel on the rail reserve across most major streets. Those issues are being considered by Main Roads, WA Government Railways and the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, and we hope to have a position on that in the next few weeks.

[12.20 pm]

Hon JIM SCOTT: What is the current state of planning for the sinking of the Fremantle line; when will the planning and finance for this proposal need to be finalised to enable it to link with works on the Perth-Jandakot line; and will the Government provide any funding or loans for the sinking of the Fremantle line to assist with its early completion?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I will ask Mr Waldock to expand on that a little, but we do not have any plans to sink the Fremantle line.

Mr WALDOCK: There are no plans. We are working with the local councils to develop high-density dwellings around the railway stations. We will shortly announce a major development on our land near Claremont Station which potentially will cater for 100 dwellings or 200 people. We are also looking at Grant Street, Swanbourne, for development opportunities in the future. We will be trying to improve urban densities around major transport nodes.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Is the Mandurah railway going ahead according to the planned timetable, or, in terms of the 2003-04 budget that we are now considering, have some components been delayed, thereby pushing out some parts of that project beyond the previously planned timetable. Is everything on track?

Mr WALDOCK: There have been some adjustments in the budget following the mid-year review, but the estimates as detailed are to the best of our knowledge accurate. We are very confident of meeting those expenditure time lines. The project is on track. We will be letting contracts for three major packages at the end of this current year: package A, the major part of the railway from the Narrows to Mandurah; and package F, the city aspect of the railway. The first package will cost \$300 million and the second \$248 million. In the latter part of this year we will also be letting the contract for the Mount Henry and Narrows bridges, which is package E. We are confident of meeting those time lines. We are confident that 2006 will see a railway to Rockingham and 2007 a railway to Mandurah.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Earlier in today's proceedings when commenting about \$200 million worth of cuts to road funding in this State, the parliamentary secretary indicated that that area and others simply had to give way. He made no apology for the fact that he placed priority on boosting the health budget by hundreds of millions of dollars, and those areas would have to suffer. Why has this railway been quarantined in preference to other areas, when the parliamentary secretary has claimed that the Government is vigorous about putting money into the health budget?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The question goes to priorities, and this Government has given a strong commitment to build this railway. As a result of our strong commitment to build this railway and the great interest and demand from the community for this railway, we are proceeding with it, and the budget has not been reduced. We are confident that the budget as published will deliver the project on time, and that is something that reflects the importance -

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Everything else has to take a back seat?

Several members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, members. We will run out of time. I need succinct questions and answers.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I think the matter has been addressed.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I was interrupted mid-sentence and had not finished what I was saying. Like the previous Government that gave a commitment to this railway project, we have given a commitment to this railway project and it will be constructed on budget.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: At page 801 of the budget papers, it is noted that \$300 million is to be spent on rolling stock for the New MetroRail project. Can the parliamentary secretary provide some detail of the progress and expenditure for the rolling stock works?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The budget allocation for the provision of rolling stock for that project is \$300 million and the largest part of that amount is for the design, manufacture and commissioning of 93 electric railcars, which are valued at \$239 million. The other significant part of the total expenditure is for depot facilities to be developed at Nowergup north of Currabine and at Mandurah. The Nowergup depot is valued at

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\$36 million and the depot at Mandurah is valued at \$10 million. The remainder of the overall rolling stock budget is for project management, special support services and the provision of a drivers simulator. The contract to deliver the railcars is well advanced and the contractor is on program. The contract was awarded in May last year and on 19 May 2003 the contractor commenced the manufacturing stage of the contract. The Neerabup depot construction has commenced and is due for completion in January next year after which time the contractor will store the newly-completed railcars in the depot. The railcar delivery timetable and the completion of the infrastructure is structured around the time for the commencement of train services, which are Clarkson and Greenwood in September 2004, the Thornlie line in December 2004, the Esplanade in September 2006, Thomsons Lake in November 2006, Rockingham-Waikiki in 2006, and Mandurah in December 2007.

Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH: I thank the parliamentary secretary for that comprehensive response.

Hon JON FORD: I have a general question regarding the management of the new rail project. Can the parliamentary secretary provide some detail about the manner in which the new rail project is being managed and who is ultimately responsible for the proper control of the budget for this project?

Mr WALDOCK: The New MetroRail project comes under the total management and financial control of the WA Government Railways Commission. The Government has established through Cabinet a steering group, which is made up of a number of senior bureaucrats. I chair it as the Commissioner of Railways and it includes the Commissioner of Main Roads, the Director General from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Executive Director of Strategic Planning at DPI, the Deputy Crown Solicitor, two executive directors from the Department of Treasury and Finance, both in the budget and finance areas, and the Chief Executive Officer of the Western Australian Local Government Association. That group meets on a monthly basis and goes through all the issues relating to the New MetroRail project that are of a strategic and financial nature. However, control and accountability is the responsibility of the Commissioner of Railways.

[12.30 pm]

Hon KEN TRAVERS: I refer to page 801. I have a couple of questions about the upgrade and extension of the northern suburbs line. Firstly, I understand that the new rail carriages mean there will be a need for longer platforms. Is the cost of extending the platforms on the northern suburbs line included in the infrastructure component of the New MetroRail budget, and will that be completed in time for the arrival of the new trains? So that I can be consistent, I formally ask: will the Clarkson station be completed and open on time; and will the Greenwood station be completed on time for the arrival of the new trains? My last question may require some research, and the parliamentary secretary may want to take it on notice. I remember a sign on the freeway indicating that the Greenwood station would open during the time of the last Government. I cannot remember the date on the sign, but I noted some comments by the member for Kingsley that were recently reported in the local Press. What did those signs say and what was the cost of putting up and taking down those signs?

Mr WALDOCK: I am aware that at one stage there was an announcement that the Greenwood station would be finished in June 1999. Of course, that has always been constrained by the lack of railcar capacity. Five three car sets will be allocated to the extension to Clarkson. By the end of next year, we will have five new railcar sets available to service the Greenwood extension of the northern suburbs railway to Clarkson, plus all the platforms will be extended. That contract is under consideration. Bids have closed and we are in the process of recommending a preferred bidder. All the platforms will become six-car platforms to enable us to service peak conditions by joining two three-car sets. That is happening. I assure the member that by September next year, services on the northern line will include the new stations at Greenwood and Clarkson. Services on the Thornlie line will commence with the completion of the new station by September next year. That station will also have five three-car sets allocated to it.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: The works in progress table on page 801 contains a total allocation for the New MetroRail infrastructure of approximately \$1.1 billion. Can the parliamentary secretary table a detailed breakdown of the cost estimates for each of the section packages in that project?

The CHAIRMAN: Is that information available for tabling now?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I believe so.

The CHAIRMAN: That document is now tabled.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Does that include each of the sections?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Yes, it does.

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Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Thank you. The works in progress table shows that \$112.83 million has been allocated to that project for 2003-04. On 15 May the minister announced that the contenders for package E, the Narrows Bridge to Glen Iris section, would be managed by Main Roads. Will any of the funding be provided by agencies other than the Western Australian Government Railways Commission; and if so, will the parliamentary secretary provide details of that?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The short answer is no.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: The works in progress table shows an allocation of \$1.1 billion for infrastructure. Package E involves the relocation of the northbound bus ramp on Canning Bridge to allow 54 peak-hour buses to enter Kwinana Freeway. I am interested in traffic flows. Can the parliamentary secretary or his adviser explain and justify the requirement for running bus services from Canning Bridge to the central business district alongside a train system?

Mr WALDOCK: The issue is one of transfer penalty. At the Glendalough railway station at Scarborough Beach Road, people have a choice of staying on the bus and moving into the city or transferring to a train. A similar choice will be available to people moving into the city from the Fremantle corridor and Booragoon area along Canning Highway. They will be able to stay on the bus or transfer to the rail station. We expect that the majority of people will choose to maintain the bus seat, particularly as they would otherwise move onto a train at the last station before the city, would be fairly full. Of course, in accessing the train they would also experience some waiting time. We will maintain bus services, which will have priority access to the freeway through a flyover at Canning Bridge.

Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE: Page 803 refers to the Western Australian Government Railways Commission's capital contribution to meet equity needs. The budget forecasts a borrowing estimate of \$1.183 billion in the four years to 2006-07. Can the parliamentary secretary give details of this projected borrowing, its purpose and the estimated interest payable for each of those financial years? I am happy for him to table the information or put it on notice.

*[Supplementary Information No 28.]*

Hon PETER FOSS: I have a number of questions. We will not be able to get through all of them, but I hand them to the parliamentary secretary. How much does the New MetroRail budget provide for the removal of contamination? A press release indicated that it has been catered for. How much has been provided? The Government recently carried out two lots of drilling. The second round was conducted to further assure the Government about the existence of contamination. What has been found, and when will the results be made public? The minister said they would be made public. Does the Government have any reason to believe that the various contingencies allowed for in relation to drilling may not be correct?

Mr WALDOCK: The budget contains a contingency for issues such as contamination and building damage. I ask Richard Mann to speak. He is the director of the city rail project, and has done a great deal of work on the geotechnical side.

Mr MANN: My response is specific to the city section, which is north of the Narrows Bridge. We have recently completed two phases of geotechnical investigation. That has identified the presence of what is likely to be a quantity of around 3 000 cubic metres of acid sulfate soil on the foreshore area. It is similar to the material that was recently treated as part of the Ozone Park development, also on the foreshore. That will require special treatment. The quantity is about 50 per cent less than what our contingency allows for that type of material on the foreshore area. It is well within the budget estimate. Our investigation has not identified any other significant quantities of contaminants along the route, although there is some minor presence of peat at the railway yard end of the project. Again, that is well within what was provided for in the original estimate.

[12.40 pm]

Hon PETER FOSS: Were any buried objects found?

Mr MANN: Yes. We expected to encounter on the foreshore area the old William Street wharf and an old sheet pile retaining wall constructed in the early days of reclamation. We knew about the potential to encounter old wells in the city, and we recently discover four old wells installed generously by the City of Perth in 1895 on the corner of William and Hay Streets for drinking water. They appear to be well above the profile of the bored tunnel alignment. Some potential existed for some old structure on the foreshore associated with the old wharfs along William Street prior to reformation. All those aspects are provided for within the budget, and are specifically addressed within our contract documentation. So far, the investigation has been very positive, and we have not discovered anything unexpected.

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The other issue raised in this place previously is the presence of ground anchors along William Street with which many people are familiar. This is based largely on the investigation of plans and anecdotal evidence. Based on this evidence, we have designed a profile that passes beneath those redundant ground anchors. Again, it has been a positive investigation.

Hon PETER FOSS: How much has been allowed for in the budget for resumptions in the central business district? It was stated in May that the department would immediately send out "notices of intention to take" to owners of property needed in the CBD for the railway. Has this occurred? How were the owners notified prior to it being announced in public? Is it still the intention that the properties be vacated by 1 March 2004? What properties are affected and what are they currently used for? Is there any difference between the amount estimated for compensation and the amount contained in the budget for the project?

The CHAIRMAN: Does Mr Mann have a copy of the question to read from? If it is necessary to provide supplementary information, please let us know. We will note it at the table and it can be provided in due course.

Mr MANN: I believe all the questions can be answered. The "notice of intention to take" was advertised in *The West Australian* approximately two weeks ago. Prior to that, copies of the notice and some relative documentation contained in a package describing the acquisition and compensation process was sent to all interested parties, including landowners and tenants. Prior to that, all landowners and tenants were sent three letters: two from the WA Government Railways Commission and one from the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure advising of the process. I confirm that vacant possession by March 2004 is in accordance with our schedule. The properties affected are all in the precinct bounded by the Murray Street mall, William Street, Wellington Street, and the post office, Albert Facey House and the Commonwealth Bank building. The budgeted amount for acquisition, including compensation to landowners and businesses, appears in the WA Planning Commission budget. There is no difference between the estimated amount and the budgeted amount - in fact, the budgeted amount is the estimated amount.

Hon PETER FOSS: I have a query further to Hon Jim Scott's question about the absence of the South Perth station in the estimates. The station is also absent from the web site, which deals with all the railway line and beyond. Is it planned by the Government to build the South Perth station? If so, I refer to my second "D" on the prepared questions. Are the travel times shown on the web site based on the fact that Leda is not planned to be opened, and what variations to those times will occur if Leda is opened? To what extent are the boarding numbers at Thompsons Lake on the web site related to route change or model changes and increased population estimates? Why is South Perth not on the web site at all? Why are the projected boardings at Canning Bridge so small? Is it envisaged that not many buses will transfer at Canning Bridge? What are the estimated travel times for a bus from Canning Bridge to the city along the freeway during the construction and upon completion? Has a study been done for travel times on the freeway - if so, can it be tabled? Is it still planned that there not be a bus reserve lane stretching the length of the freeway from Canning Highway to the Narrows Bridge, and is it still the case that the freeway will not be widened?

Mr WALDOCK: The master plan submission made it clear that although the Leda station was included in the budget, its timing was subject to development. It is an issue that has exercised a number of people in WA Government Railways, at local council level and in the Department of Housing and Works. Leda has been budgeted. It will be provided, but its timing will be subject to milestones being met. Those milestones will ensure that a sensible urban design will allow for maximum walk-ons, and that housing lots will be sold in time for the railway station to be opened in 2006. If not, we could have a situation that no-one would want to see; namely, a completed railway station sitting in a vulnerable area in terms of vandalism with no patrons. We are planning to have it opened at the end of 2006. It is very much subject to the developer working with the Department of Housing and Works to ensure that lots are developed and housing is built and people will use the train.

Hon PETER FOSS: The question was about the effect the station will have on travel time.

Mr WALDOCK: The projected travel times in the submission included Leda. In terms of estimating the boarding numbers at Thomsons Lake, my understanding is that the master plan delineates the Kenwick alignment as opposed to the direct alignment in relation to Thomsons Lake. The all-day and peak boardings projection at Thomsons Lake has increased substantially. I suspect that as much as anything - I would need to ask our friends at DPI, as the master plan is a DPI document - this relates to the model change, particularly concerning time elasticity because of shorter running times.

South Perth is not in this project, which finishes in 2007. The South Perth station will be a separate project with separate funding. It is outside the scope of this project.

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Canning Bridge boardings are projected at only 970. A great number of those boardings will not be travelling into the city. Canning Bridge will be used very much as an opportunity to be part of the spider web network we are developing. They will be students boarding to travel to Curtin and Murdoch Universities. It is not a large number of boardings. They will be very much boardings across the system rather than boarders travelling directly into the city. Having said that, the bridge has no parking and limited bus transfers. That is why 970 is the figure.

The estimated travel time of buses from Canning Bridge to the city along the freeway will unquestionably be affected during the construction phase. We are looking at different issues, such as using higher occupancy vehicle type lanes. Issues will arise during construction. We hope to have the construction phase reduced to a six-month period, but implications will arise. Upon completion of construction, buses will be gated both onto the freeway and off the freeway onto the Narrows Bridge. We think that will minimise delays at both ends. However, there is no doubt that on the remainder of the freeway, bus movement will be slower than it would be in a transit way. That will have an impact on travelling times for buses travelling into the city at peak hours.

[12.50 pm]

The CHAIRMAN: Hon Peter Foss has handed in a list of his questions. I will give the next call to Hon Kate Doust. Time is against the Chair, so I assume that any questions unanswered are now on notice.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: Can we identify the questions on notice?

The CHAIRMAN: Mr Waldock ranged fairly widely in his reply; therefore, he should accept that document as the questions, consider what has been answered and provide additional information required to satisfy the general intent of the document. That way there will be no doubling up.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: I do not want to have a subsequent argument about whether an answer is a proper answer.

The CHAIRMAN: I will be the judge of that in due course. I believe Mr Waldock understands what I have said. His officers have answered the questions put to them in a fair and reasonable manner. However, some questions were not answered. Mr Waldock and his senior officers can answer them in the same manner as has already been done. We cannot ask for more than that.

Hon KATE DOUST: I refer to the fifth dot point under the capital works program on page 801. I was pleased to see that under other expenditure, work had been done on the *Prospector* and the *Australind* train services. Will the minister provide details on the exact upgrades of both lines and some of the benefits to the customer in improved travel times?

The CHAIRMAN: The earlier question from Hon Peter Foss will be answered in supplementary information.

[*Supplementary Information No 29.*]

Mr WALDOCK: The *Prospector* and *AvonLink* railcars are now under construction. The first two railcars have been built. A total of nine powered railcars will be built - seven for the *Prospector* and two for the *AvonLink*. Construction is advanced. The service for the *Prospector*, with all cars being available, will commence in September this year. It is a \$50 million investment, and I am sure everyone will agree that it will be an exciting product to launch later this year. The *Australind* has had significant refurbishment in a midlife mechanical overhaul and a refit of carpets, seats, signage and livery. We are giving the *Australind* a new midlife look. We hope the unit will be replaced in the next five to six years.

Hon ALAN CADBY: The travelling public, particularly in the northern suburbs, have concerns about their safety on trains because they must stand on the journey between Whitfords and Perth during peak hours. Will the move to a 2 x 3 set train provide seating for all? If not, have studies been done on how many people from each station will need to stand? If the minister says it is as safe to stand as it is to sit, is it likely trains will comprise all standing carriages in the near future?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: We do not anticipate that seating will be provided for all. We do not have studies on how many people will stand. Suffice to say, far fewer will need to stand when the new carriages are in operation. No, we are not moving to all standing carriages.

Hon ALAN CADBY: Is it correct that in an investigation of the northern railway, the department has done no analysis of passenger numbers?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The member should put his question.

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Hon ALAN CADBY: I am asking it. No analysis has been done. The department knows the number of seats that can be provided and the passenger numbers. It is a matter of a simple subtraction. Surely an analysis has been done on the number of people who must stand.

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The question the member asked in the first instance was about seating and standing. Now he is trying to argue with me that we have not done any work on patronage. That is a different question.

Hon ALAN CADBY: No, you know -

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The member should not interrupt. On the question of patronage I will ask Mr Waldock to respond.

Mr WALDOCK: With the finalisation of the New MetroRail in 2008 our estimate is in the order of 160 000 to 170 000 patrons a day. We are working currently on 100 000 patrons a day. The new train sets will more than double the existing capacity. In empirical ratios, that leads us to understand that there will be significantly more room on the system when the new metropolitan rail project is completed.

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: I refer to the total funding package for New MetroRail. The previous Government left \$340 million from AlintaGas asset sales.

Hon KEN TRAVERS: What?

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: If Hon Ken Travers was not aware of that, he should look up some records.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is being directed to the parliamentary secretary through the Chair.

Hon BRUCE DONALDSON: It was left in a trust fund to assist with the Mandurah rail link. Where is that money shown in the budget? I refer to the line items of borrowings and internal funds and balances under capital contribution on page 803. Has the AlintaGas asset sales money been used to buy the railcars? Where has it been factored into the overall cost of the new rail system?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD: The line item for government equity contribution contains the AlintaGas contribution. However, the contribution was listed in 2000-01; therefore, the amount of \$56 million is not contained in these papers because it arose earlier. The amount of \$19.4 million is estimated for 2007-08. That out year is not in this budget. It is contained in the figures for the years on either side of the period contained in these papers.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the parliamentary secretary, Mr Waldock, Mr Joyce, Mr Cartledge, Mr Mann and Mr Leaf.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*