

GRAHAM FARMER FREEWAY TUNNEL - RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY

281. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the risk management study into the opening of the Graham Farmer Freeway tunnel.

- (1) Did the study recommend that provision be made for people in wheelchairs and other pedestrians with impaired mobility, including ramps for movement into the emergency corridor?
- (2) Were the ramps available on the day of the opening?
- (3) Why was it necessary to provide the ramps when every emergency exit was staffed by a marshal?
- (4) Now that the tunnel is open, what provision has been made for people with mobility impairment who need to access the emergency exits, as marshals are not at every exit?

Hon M.J. CRIDDLE replied:

We continue to have questions regarding the tunnel. It must be the best piece of infrastructure in Perth.

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(3) It was not necessary to provide ramps on the opening day as every emergency access was staffed by marshals.
- (4) Access to the emergency corridor is required only if the tunnel is to be evacuated. In respect of an emergency evacuation of the tunnel, overseas research shows that in the event of an incident in a tunnel, motorists are reluctant to abandon vehicles. However, they are prepared to modify their actions when receiving instructions from the appropriate authority. The evacuation of the tunnel is therefore likely to occur only following the arrival of the emergency authorities. In this case motorists would normally be directed along the breakdown lane to exit out of the tunnel portal. There is no impediment to people with disabilities exiting the tunnel in this way. The emergency simulation exercise undertaken earlier this year, which included people with disabilities, demonstrated that the emergency authorities would assist evacuees to access the emergency corridor.