

Chairman; Mr Dan Barron-Sullivan; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Mr Gary Snook; Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Murray Cowper; Mr Mick Murray; Mrs Judy Hughes; Mrs Carol Martin

Division 40: Commissioner of Main Roads, \$739 501 000 -

Dr S.C. Thomas, Chairman.

Ms A.J.G. MacTiernan, Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr M. Henneveld, Commissioner of Main Roads.

Mr R. Phillips, Manager, Budget and Program Management.

Mr J. Marmion, Executive Director, Construction and Maintenance Services.

Mr P. Woronzow, Executive Director, Finance and Commercial Services.

Mr D. Snook, Executive Director, Road Network Services.

Mr G. J. Norwell, Executive Director, Technology and Environment.

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

Mr S. E. Potter, Policy Officer (Roads), Office of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind members at this stage that the agreement was to continue this division until 11.30 am, which is obviously at the discretion of the committee. At this stage on the call list I have the members for Leschenault, Moore, Victoria Park, Stirling and Murray.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: I want to talk about one of the National Party's better-known metropolitan roads, the Perth-Bunbury highway. On page 701, under "Works in Progress", the Perth-Bunbury highway is identified as being almost a \$500 million project. Estimated expenditure for 2006-07 is \$69 975 000 - nearly \$70 million. Is it possible now, or by supplementary information but preferably now, to give an indication of how much of that \$70 million is for land acquisition and how much is for actual road construction? Is the minister also able to provide figures for the annual expenditure on that project right through to completion?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I will check on the question about land acquisition, because land acquisition to date has taken place through the WA Planning Commission. However, land acquisition for the coming financial year will be undertaken by Main Roads.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: It comes out of this budget though, does it not?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Yes. I am sorry, the land acquisition that has taken place in the past, as I understand it, is not included in that \$70 million.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: If it does not include land acquisition -

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: No, it does include land acquisition.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: I was going to say that if it does not, I would love to know what \$24 million was spent on last year.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Most of that was on land acquisition, plus quite a bit of design work with environmental consultants. Various cockatoos and other bird species have been spotted along the highway, so money has been spent on environmental consultants. It is a huge project.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: How much of the \$70 million to be spent next year will actually be on building some road?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Perhaps we will take that question on notice and we will have a look at what the land acquisition costs were expected to be for last year. However, it is interesting to note that the feds, for all their pontification and raving on about how they are driving the project, have allocated only \$15 million this year. The federal government, obviously, is not terribly serious about getting the road started early. It has allocated only \$15 million in the budget for this year.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: By way of supplementary information, obviously if the minister cannot say now, will the minister break down the \$26.1 million that has been spent to date, showing how much was spent on consultancies, how much on the environment and all that sort of thing; then break down the \$70 million for 2006-07 so that we can see what all that is for; and then give us an annualised projected expenditure right through to completion of the project?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I will give the member some figures for the next two years. We are expecting to spend \$155 million in 2007-08, compared with the commonwealth government's \$60 million.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: Is that \$60 million in addition to the state government's \$155 million for that year?

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Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: No, I am sorry, ours is \$95 million and the commonwealth's is \$60 million. Then in the following year total expenditure will be \$49 million, and \$92 million in the year following that.

[10.50 am]

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: Will that \$92 million be the last expenditure on it?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: No, there may be further expenditure after that, but there is often expenditure after a road is completed. The target date for completion is 2009.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: Why is money spent on a road after it is finished?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The last payment is often made after the road is completed, and very often performance bonds are held, particularly on a project like this, and are settled a year or two after the road has been completed and opened for business.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: By way of supplementary information, can the minister provide the breakdown of expenditure to date and projected expenditure for 2006-07?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We will provide the member with some projections for 2006-07 by way of supplementary information.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the member moves on to a further question, can we confirm exactly what will be supplied?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We will supply as supplementary information a broad breakdown of the expenditure for 2005-06, and a breakdown of what is proposed to be expended in 2006-07.

[*Supplementary Information No A20.*]

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: When the planning was being done for this road I can recall being advised by Main Roads that the construction was being done to freeway standard, because ultimately it was intended that it be a freeway-standard road. Is it still the case that the construction will be to freeway standard - I refer to the road construction and lighting - or has it been downgraded to motorway standard?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It will be freeway standard as far as Pinjarra Road, and then country highway standard south of Pinjarra Road.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: So Bunbury will not actually be getting a freeway-standard road all the way through to the City of Bunbury?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It is getting a country highway-standard road at a cost of \$500 million.

Mr D.F. BARRON-SULLIVAN: Was it originally planned by Main Roads, when the project was first developed, to have a freeway-standard road all the way through?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It was never intended that it be a freeway-standard road. It will be a four-lane dual carriageway.

Mr G. SNOOK: I direct the attention of the minister to real country and regional Western Australia, north of Perth, in the wonderful electorate of Moore. I refer the minister to the third dot point on page 694, under "Major Achievements For 2004-05", referring to the Brand Highway. My question is in two parts. In relation to the six passing lanes that were budgeted for, can the minister advise the year in which they were initially budgeted for and the year in which they were completed? Under "Service 4: Road-Use Safety Improvements" on page 693, the following statement appears -

Main Roads aims to provide an accessible road system in a safe environment for all road users in a growing and diversifying economy.

In view of this, why has the minister not programmed and funded additional passing lanes in the 100-kilometre section north of Gingin, which does not have one single passing lane?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: There is a mistake in the dot point referred to by the member on page 694. It should not refer to the stretch between Dongara and Geraldton. Those six passing lanes are actually between Eneabba and Geraldton. That work has been done, and we have now identified another eight locations on the Brand Highway where we want to build passing lanes. Currently, \$2.4 million is being spent on improvements for Brand Highway, including two passing lanes. That work is being done now. An additional \$1.6 million, including funds from the Safer Roads program, will be spent on further passing lanes on the Brand Highway in 2006-07.

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Mr G. SNOOK: Can the minister indicate the locations of the passing lanes on which the money will be expended?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I can provide that by way of supplementary information.

Mr G. SNOOK: Are those figures in the budget?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: They are included under the Safer Roads program allocations.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the minister define what she intends to provide as supplementary information?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I will provide the locations of the passing lanes that will be built in the coming financial year on the Brand Highway.

[Supplementary Information No A21.]

Mr B.S. WYATT: Firstly, I congratulate Main Roads on the Gerard Street bridge in Cannington, which was a major achievement for 2005-06. It will form an integral part of what we hope to do in that area. I thank the minister for that. My question also refers to my electorate, and the Leach Highway-Orrong Road flyover. That has been a safety nightmare for quite some time. I was hoping the minister might be able to give me an update on that project. I refer to the fifth dot point on page 690.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I know this road very well and I have been pushing to have this intersection dealt with. It was the number one black spot in the metropolitan area for many years, but because of the scale of the project it was not able to be dealt with by normal black spot funding. It also needed to be dealt with for the road transport industry. The intersection created enormous blockages for the transport industry based in Kewdale. This has been a pet project of mine for some time, and I am very pleased to say that John Holland is on the job. It is a huge project, costing \$26 million. We are hoping that it will be completed in December this year. It will be a great achievement. That intersection has been crying out for attention for over a decade, and Main Roads has really driven it. Since the government has been improving the capacity of Main Roads, key projects are now being internally designed. This is one project for which the preliminary design work was carried out in house by Main Roads personnel. It is a great project, and, hopefully, the member for Victoria Park and I will be out there together opening it towards the end of this year.

[11.00 am]

Mr D.T. REDMAN: My question relates to the capital works programs detailed on page 700. The second last paragraph of the preamble states -

The expansion of the road network focuses on meeting the road transportation needs of future generations that cannot be met by improving the existing network.

As the minister is well aware, I am particularly interested in the regional road component of the government's planned road upgrade and maintenance. Can the minister provide details of the breakdown of the \$383.4 million cited in Parliament last week as the rural road component of the budgeted \$570.8 million to be spent on roads in 2006-07?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We are happy to provide that by way of supplementary information. We will be using the standard definition of "regions", not the National Party definition.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: That is fine; I understand that. Will the minister please also detail the capital works projects included in the \$383.4 million cited as the rural road component?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Yes. I am more than happy to. That figure, as I said, is both for maintenance and construction. One of the most extraordinary things is the member's leader racing around saying that the Pilbara has received nothing. In fact, the Pilbara has received \$62 million for the Karratha-Tom Price Road. He also said that the Kimberley has received nothing. In fact, the port access road, Gubinge Road, has received funds. There are upgrades to Derby Highway. Those roads were long neglected by the previous National Party-led administration. Although the National Party is saying that it will take Bunbury and Margaret River out of the definition of "country" as a practical matter, it has also taken the Pilbara and Kimberley out of the definition of "country".

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Certainly not.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It has become very wheatbelt-focused and not country-focused.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the minister provide details of the information to be provided?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I will provide a breakdown of spending on regional roads as defined by the government and the opposition in the 2006-07 budget.

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[*Supplementary Information No A22.*]

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Hon John Bowler mentioned last Tuesday in Parliament that \$682 million was to be spent on country roads. Can the minister give me an understanding of why there appears to be two different figures?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: In Main Roads budgeting, it all depends on what is put in. The figures I quoted are hard dollars. Depreciation, capital user charges and federal expenditure have to be taken out. The figure I use, which I think is a clearer figure, is one that takes out all the stuff that could possibly be contested.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Is the minister happy to provide details of what the \$682 million refers to?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The member needs to ask Minister Bowler. I do not know whether he cited that figure. I believe it included funds from the commonwealth.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I refer to page 701 of the *Budget Statements* and the new Perth-Bunbury Highway. Firstly, can the minister advise how much of the land acquisition required for the project has been completed, as opposed to how much is yet to be acquired? Secondly, what is the estimate of the increase in value of land in the Peel region over the past 12 months that will be needed for the Peel deviation?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: What does the member mean by that?

Mr M.J. COWPER: The cost of land in the Peel region has increased by approximately 30 per cent in the past 12 months. Is there any provision for that increase in land values? Thirdly, how much has this government set aside for the payment of claims?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We have already been asked questions that we have said we are prepared to answer. We can provide details of how much of the \$69 million or so that is in the budget that we are holding for land acquisition and how much we are holding for construction activities and for planning activities. We can give the member an idea of the cost of construction. At the moment, the area between Safety Bay Road and Lakes Road is almost 100 per cent in government ownership. Between Lakes Road and Old Coast Road, which is a distance of about 55 kilometres, there is about 20 kilometres in government ownership. There is also about 35 kilometres in private ownership. We are expecting to have all the land acquisition completed by August, although, obviously, some of the negotiations will continue beyond then.

[Mrs D.J. Guise took the chair.]

Mr M.J. COWPER: On the same point, will the minister please advise how much of the private land that has been acquired was acquired through negotiation?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The number of agreements that have been reached is 15. That is the figure from some weeks ago.

Mr M.J. COWPER: Fifteen out of how many?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Out of 55 owners. I want that figure updated because the figures I have were prepared some weeks ago.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I want to see the project completed as soon as possible. There is some concern in my electorate that there is still yet to be some proper and fair valuations on land in the area. I am keen to see what allocation has been made for the recent increase in land values.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The member needs to bear in mind that most of the land that has been acquired is based on its rural value. The sorts of property increases that the member is talking about concerns land that has the potential to be developed for residential purposes.

Mr M.J. COWPER: That is not the case at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This is not an opportunity for a debate across the chamber. Does the member have a further question?

Mr M.J. COWPER: The land values in the area have gone up. Is there any allocation for that?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We will pay what is the fair price for the land. In the Mt Lawley case, the court reaffirmed the probity and propriety of the principles of land valuation. We purchased that land at a price that indicated its development potential had it not been set aside for that particular reserve.

Mr M.J. COWPER: How much has been set aside?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I have told the member already. The problem is that this member has come in late and we have already traversed this matter with his predecessor. I have said that we will provide details, by way

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of supplementary information, of how much of the money provided in the budget this year has been set aside for land acquisition and what has been set aside for construction and other activities.

The CHAIRMAN: That information will be provided to the member when the supplementary information comes out, I would suggest.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: I refer to the works in progress listed at page 701 of the *Budget Statements*. I refer to the South Western Highway. It is good that the section of South Western Highway from Bendall Road to Donnybrook has been completed and that the section between Donnybrook and Balingup has been completed. I assume that the government made South Western Highway a priority road as a result of the issues that have arisen. The previous member worked very hard to ensure that those projects were done. Will the minister provide an overview of the works program on South Western Highway from Bridgetown north to Waroona?

[11.10 am]

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: First of all, there is the Bridgetown bypass, which is the first project in the sense that we are sequencing up from that point. We are coming to a resolution about what to do with the railway reserve. The bypass will not commence until next year because of the railway reserve issue. The next project is the construction of passing lanes between Hester Hill and Bridgetown, which is under way at the moment. The other projects are to widen the road between Waroona and Harvey and between Wokalup and Roelands and to build passing lanes on those sections. In addition, we are doing other works on South Western Highway for which we have set aside \$5 million. I will ask Desmond Snook to outline what we will be doing with the \$5 million Safer Roads program money.

Mr D. Snook: The extra \$5 million that will be spent on South Western Highway in 2006-07 from the Safer Roads program will be used to reconstruct and widen a priority section of the road south of Donnybrook, which was identified by Main Roads in consultation with the forestry industry producers. It was endorsed by the South West Road Users Group earlier this year. It is anticipated that work on the ground will commence towards the end of 2006 and that the project will be completed by mid-2007.

Mrs J. HUGHES: I refer to the Mitchell Freeway and pages 698 and 699 of the *Budget Statement*. It is stated that construction of the Mitchell Freeway from Hodges Drive to Burns Beach Road is anticipated to commence early 2007. Will the minister advise whether that project is on track and its expected completion date?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We made it clear to Main Roads that we want construction on this road to commence by the end of this year. Main Roads understands that. Three companies - McMahon Holdings, John Holland Group and Leighton Contractors - are in the process of preparing tender documents. We expect to award the contract by 12 October. I have tried to have the contract awarded a bit earlier. Certainly the contract will be awarded by October and, with a bit of luck, the earthworks will commence by the end of the year.

Mrs J. HUGHES: What is the expected completion date?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The end of 2008.

Mr G. SNOOK: I refer to the second dot point on page 698 of the *Budget Statements*, which relates to the Lancelin-Cervantes section of the coastal road link between Perth and Dongara. I note that the minister has regularly stated in this house that Indian Ocean Drive, the road between Lancelin and Cervantes, will commence in 2007-08 and that it is stated that funding has been allocated to commence the construction works in 2007-08. Will the minister indicate where the budget amount appears in the forward estimates?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The expenditure is not detailed.

Mr G. SNOOK: The *Budget Statements* state that the funding has been allocated.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Funding has been allocated, but the money does not appear as a line item in this year's *Budget Statements*. I am advised that \$48.4 million has been allocated to the forward estimates from 2007-08.

Mr G. SNOOK: That is not reflected in this year's *Budget Statements*.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It is included in the bulk figures, but only the 2006-07 figures appear as separate line items. There is the view that we should start the road from the north rather than from the south. I think that the Shire of Dandaragan came up with that proposal. What does the member for Moore think about that proposal?

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Wanneroo might have a view on that too!

Mr G. SNOOK: My view has always been that the road should be a once-off construction exercise similar to the construction of Brand Highway. The money allocated in 2007-08 should be used to lay the gravel right

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through and the bitumen should flow afterwards. In that way, we would get a better value for our dollar, mobilisation costs would be less and the economic and environmental outcomes desired by the community and the state would be achieved. If people do not like driving on gravel roads, they could use the alternative route. Most of us in the bush have grown up using gravel roads. If the project runs through as has been outlined and is expected to be completed in 2010 or 2011, we would get a better value for our dollar by spending the first allocation on the gravel.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: That is the big expense. The bulk of the expense is laying the gravel. Most of the money would have to be spent to achieve that end.

Mr G. SNOOK: From my experience, we could achieve a gravel road with the outlay of such moneys.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I do not think so. If it were possible, I would love to do it. I do not think that that would work; nevertheless, we will throw that idea into the mix with all other the proposals that are coming forward. If we use the traditional structure, does the member have a view on whether construction should extend down from Cervantes or up from Lancelin?

Mr G. SNOOK: I hold the view that the road needs to be built and that serious money must spent on the project.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: In order to add that road project to the list, which project would the member have us remove from the list?

Mr G. SNOOK: With the amount of money that the minister fortuitously has at her disposal, and given that we have been told about the state's wonderful booming V8 economy, finding the money should not be a problem. It is about having the support to get it done. The minister has the support of all sections of politics.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: My question relates to capital funding allocations on page 701 of the *Budget Statements*. I specifically refer to Muirs Highway. I acknowledge that funding for the Mt Barker northern bypass was previously allocated and that that funding will be coming forward. Indeed, a relative small sum of money, \$583 000, has been allocated for the Nyamup to Strachan section at the other end of Muirs Highway. I refer the minister to her comments last year during question time, when she acknowledged that Muirs Highway is a very dangerous road, and talked about lifting its priority from the Main Roads perspective. Why does Muirs Highway not have a high priority in the capital works program in this budget?

[11.20 am]

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We are working through some more detail on this matter. It is certainly my intention that more will be spent than just the sum that is allocated in this budget. We are proposing to do more work on that road using the Safer Roads money. We are finalising those allocations. I remain committed to getting more work done on that road. In the past we have focused on the Manjimup end of that road. This time we will be focusing more on the Mt Barker end. As soon as we have sorted out all our allocations under the Safer Roads program, there will be some positive announcements.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I thank the minister for that.

Mrs C.A. MARTIN: One of the items mentioned under "Capital Works Program" on page 700 is the planning and construction of new roads to extend the existing road network. It refers also to the major widening of existing roads. One of the items listed under "Works in Progress" on that same page is the widening and sealing of the Derby Highway spur. Will the minister please advise the status of that project?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Since we have come to government, we have completed about 14 kilometres of that road widening project. Another six kilometres of that project will be completed this financial year. Mr Marmion will give some more detail about that matter.

Mr J. Marmion: Work on the additional six kilometres of this program will commence after the contracts have been awarded, which is expected to be done in late June. Those works will start in July and be completed by September-October. That six kilometres is additional to the nearly 14 kilometres of work that has already been done to progressively widen that road from Great Northern Highway to the Derby Airport turnoff.

Mr M.J. COWPER: I refer again to the Perth-Bunbury highway project, which is listed under "Works in Progress" at page 701. The total cost of that project has increased from \$340 million to \$350 million and is now up to \$500 million. Is there any provision in that amount for the north Mandurah access road? That is the section of road that connects Mandurah to the end of the freeway.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: An amount of \$10 million has been allocated for the access road into Mandurah.

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Mr M.J. COWPER: I understand that the cost of the north Mandurah spur is in the vicinity of \$60 million to \$80 million.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I think the member is talking about a different road than the one we are proposing. The Commissioner of Main Roads will explain it.

Mr M. Henneveld: The amount to which the member is referring is for the connection that will come off the Perth-Bunbury highway. It is called road A. It is the access road that comes into Mandurah. The member is right; the cost of that road is the amount the member has mentioned. The \$10 million is for a road that will provide direct access closer to Mandurah; that is, more towards Pinjarra Road. That is Gordon Road.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: That is Gordon Road, yes. We have made it clear that this is a very large project. However, there are competing needs around the state; therefore, at this point we cannot allocate the additional amount for the northern access road. However, a perfectly adequate road for the time being will be provided via Gordon Road. It is a question of balancing the needs of all the communities across the state. We cannot put all the money in the roads budget into one area.

Mr M.J. COWPER: The City of Mandurah has raised this concern with the government. I acknowledge what the minister has said; there are competing needs. However, it has also been stated that if the north Mandurah access road, as it is known locally, is not completed, Gordon Road will fail. Is there any light at the end of the tunnel as far as going ahead with that project in the future, given that Gordon Road will fail?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We are looking at all the traffic projections and how all those intersections will work. That work will continue while we are doing the job of getting the contract up and running. As the member can imagine, the first priority is to get the project under way. It will take a number of years to complete the project. That will give us time to review the traffic loads and the impacts of that road. There are always competing needs. The City of Bunbury is now saying that because we are building the port access road, it needs the outer ring road. Every time we build a road in one community, another community says it needs another road. It is obviously physically impossible to do all these projects at once. However, it is certainly the case that once the work on the Perth-Bunbury highway has started, we will have a number of years in which to review the roads in and out of Mandurah and ensure that adequate provision has been made. Of course, every local authority would like to have all the roads to which they aspire built at once.

The CHAIRMAN: I am conscious of the time, given that there is a gentleman's agreement that we will deal with division 41 at 11.30 am. I am also conscious of the fact that members want to have a break. I have remaining on the call sheet the members for Moore, Stirling, Kimberley and Collie-Wellington. I want members to be aware of that fact, because time is moving on.

Mr G. SNOOK: I refer to page 701. One of the items listed under "Completed Works" is lime sands heavy haulage route stage 1. Given that the demand for lime sands in the wheatbelt has not decreased - in fact, it is probably increasing - and given also that these routes are still being used for heavy road train traffic, why has the minister not allocated more funding for the vital upgrade of these routes?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: We will be allocating some money to the agricultural lime routes. Precisely how much, and which routes we should be spending that money on, has not yet been determined. In my recent discussions with the councils, we have been focusing - as the member would be aware - on routes 1 and 2, which have been the prime areas of need. We have indicated to the Shire of Dandaragan that we would also consider assisting with maintenance on route 3. However, we have also pointed out to the Shire of Dandaragan that it needs to do two things. For a start, it will now be receiving substantially more money under the Roads to Recovery program, because there has been a considerable increase in that funding. These are local roads, after all. We have indicated also that there is now a new strategic regional fund. I cannot remember the exact name of that fund, but it is a new slush fund that the feds have set up for investing in their favourite projects. Therefore, given that these roads are in conservative seats at both a state and national level, and given also that these are strategic regional roads, these would be ideal roads for which to apply to the federal government for assistance.

Western Australia got nothing out of the first \$93 million that was allocated from this fund, so it is quite clearly our turn to get some of that dough. I would have thought an ag lime road would be just the thing to appeal to the transport minister, Warren Truss, and I have urged Dandaragan to put its claim to the federal government. I have kept \$2 million aside for some additional expenditure on tyres, grain receival and ag-lime routes this year. We have not decided how to distribute that money, but we will certainly look at the case. I urge those councils to act as they are extremely well placed to get additional moneys from the federal government. It looks as though Dandaragan will do quite nicely out of Roads to Recovery.

[11.30 am]

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Mr G. SNOOK: Thank you, minister. I am aware of that. You mentioned additional federal money. Are you referring to the one-off Roads to Recovery payment or to additional money?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: There are two things, the additional Roads to Recovery money plus the strategic regional fund, which has been set up to fund regional roads. There can even be a region in a city. However, they are roads of regional significance. They can be local government roads or state government roads, although the state government cannot apply for the funds even if the road is a state road.

Mr G. SNOOK: We tried to get some of that money for Indian Ocean Drive a couple of years ago.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I think this is a relatively new project; it is a different pool of funding. I would have thought the ag lime routes were ideally suited because they are local government roads. They are very much roads for farmers, through farming districts, and they help provide a farming product. As I said, on that basis they are likely to appeal to the federal minister for transport. I have strongly urged the Shire of Dandaragan to avail itself of that fund. Applications closed on 1 May, so I hope the shire got its application in. It might even be possible to get the feds to accept a late application.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: My question relates to the capital works program on page 701. I am wondering why the minister did not consider the Toodyay town bypass as a project for this coming financial year, given that 6 000 trucks per annum pass through the town's main street. Secondly, what is the estimated cost of building the Toodyay bypass?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Stage 1, the Goomalling-Toodyay road, is estimated to cost \$9 million in today's dollars, and stage 2 is estimated at \$20 million, so it is a total of \$29 million. The main driver for stage 1 was the cartage of ag-lime through Toodyay. Because we gave priority to ag-lime route 2, which provided an alternative, and put the money into that, some of the urgency for the Toodyay bypass was dealt with in that way. Effectively, some of that traffic has been diverted from Toodyay by ag-lime route 1. Perhaps Mr Marmion would like to comment on that.

Mr J. Marmion: That is my understanding, minister. There is still a section of ag-lime stage 1 between Bindoon Hill and Toodyay that would require upgrading before stage 1 of the Toodyay bypass would be an economic proposition, given the upgrade would have generated the additional traffic that justified it.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: There were people in the community who opposed the bypass and wanted us to go with route 2. We had a community process and we gave the priority to ag-lime route 2. This road is like any other. There are many roads that we could improve throughout the state and we have to prioritise according to need. Different governments have different assessments of the priorities. We are giving quite a bit of priority to roads into ports. We are building the Bunbury port access road, the Broome port access road and the Albany ring road. We cannot do it all at once. We have assessed the relative need for the road referred to and decided it is not up there, whereas upgrades on South West Highway and Muirs Highway are warranted.

Mrs C.A. MARTIN: I refer to page 692 and the second dot point under "Major Achievements for 2005-06", the Cape Leveque-One Arm Point Road. This is a brilliant idea. It is a top-down approach whereby the community will benefit from the road, first and foremost, and it allows all-season access to the upgraded airport. What is the allocation this year? I know the minister has made a long-term commitment to it, and I thank her for that.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: This year we are hoping to do a 16-kilometre section between Bobbys Crossing and Lombadina. We hope to get that done in the dry season in August-September. That will cost \$2.3 million. Last year we did the section south of Lombadina. Over and above that \$2.3 million there is another \$4.9 million in the budget to continue that road. I would be interested in the member's views on this because there is a variety of opinion about whether this road will be a good thing. Some people in the communities are concerned that the increase in access will undermine their community. They take some benefit from the relative isolation afforded by the fact that the road has traditionally been a challenging road. They are concerned there will be more tourism. Some see that as a good thing as they can utilise tourism to create employment. Others see that as a bad thing. I am interested in the member's view on that.

[11.40 am]

Mrs C.A. MARTIN: My association with the peninsula communities has been in excess of 30 years, and we have always had a range of views on the road. We recently found that only 500 extra people can be accommodated on the peninsula, simply because of the infrastructure needs and that sort of thing. The need to monitor that road is the real issue and also the need to monitor where people are because of it being Aboriginal reserve lands and people getting access permits. All of those issues come into the final decision. A small group is up there because the original homeland movement was about going home to heal, yet there is a huge

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community at One Arm Point, the current community plan of which is one of the best business plans that I have ever seen. As I said, my association goes back a long way, and 25 years of that has been as a community development practitioner.

The CHAIRMAN: That is fabulous and the member can continue that conversation with the minister at another time.

Mrs C.A. MARTIN: There are a number of views about it, but that road is needed; it saves lives.

The CHAIRMAN: We look forward to hearing about them somewhere else.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: My question relates to first dot point under “Major Initiatives For 2006-07” on page 695 of the *Budget Statements* that is headed “Black Spot Program (State)”. I support the black spot program 100 per cent. Is there any ability to pre-empt the accidents that happen on black spots? Many people say we act only after the event. Is there any way of recording near misses in a statutory way so that a case can be built to prevent these accidents and near misses occurring?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I understand that issue. It is possible for black spot funding to be based on safety audits. Therefore, while a lot of it is based on accidents that have occurred - as you say, that is waiting for the problem to occur - it is also possible to base it on safety audits. I have some concerns about some safety issues up there - for example, one of my pet projects is the Marble Bar road - and have promised to take the commissioner and the RAC up there to drive along that road so that they can see it, and I am sure that they will do a very good safety audit after that.

Mr D. Snook: There are two ways that we identify projects with the state black spot program. One is by the crash rate and the other is by road safety audits. Road safety audits are done in a structured way. There is a certain procedure to go through and it is done with a team of people, usually with three experts who go out and identify the potential of a certain site for crashes to occur. A rigorous process is used for road safety audits to identify state black spot projects, particularly in the regional areas of WA. It is a well-trying practice.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: My question relates to page 687. Under “Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators” a line refers to return on construction expenditure. Can you give me a very general comment on how those figures are made? I assume the figure of 1.4, which is the 2006-07 target, is not a good figure when compared with the 3.04 figure of the previous budget. Are these performance indicators? A note on the right-hand side refers to significant variation between previous estimates and the current target and gives a reason for that. What is the nature of that performance indicator?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: It is a bit weird, but we cannot get the benefit until the road is complete. For example, two of the biggest projects in 2006-07 will be the Perth-Bunbury highway and the Karratha-Tom Price road. Neither of them will be completed by the end of 2007. Therefore, the network benefit of those roads will not come on stream. I think it is an unreliable figure because there may be a year when major projects are not being finished. I noted with interest that the member for Murray was opposed to the Tonkin Highway and said that we should take money out of that road. I must make sure that that goes to the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale, which was very keen, as was the member for Serpentine-Jarrahdale, to have that road finished. For example, in 2005-06, when a road like Tonkin Highway was coming on stream, there is a big network benefit coming up -

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Does Tonkin Highway come under regional roads? This outcome refers to economic and regional development.

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I know the member is constantly redefining things, but Byford is part of the Peel region and there are real benefits for that area. That is an example. The other is the southern transport corridor, which is now a completed regional road that provides benefits. Although there will be big expenditure in 2006-07, those roads will not be completed. Therefore, the network benefit will not be experienced over this year.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I accept that.

Mrs J. HUGHES: One of the main distributor roads coming to the northern sector is Wanneroo Road. Are there any planned works for Wanneroo Road?

The CHAIRMAN (Mrs D.J. Guise): A very good question; I am glad the member asked it, especially as I have not seen my \$10 million in this budget, minister! I am so glad the member asked that question!

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Given that the state goes from Wyndham to Esperance, we need to share the money around and every member and every council would like their areas to be the repository of all of the funds. However, the Mitchell Freeway extension is a major project and we have jumped through hoops to get the Marmion Avenue road realignment done. Therefore, the entire budget cannot be spent in the member’s area.

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The CHAIRMAN: I am sure we will see it there next year?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: The member will be pleased to know that \$10 million has been set aside for 2007-08 for a single lane section south of Joondalup Drive.

The CHAIRMAN: Very good.

The appropriation was recommended.

Meeting suspended from 11.54 am to 12.05 pm