

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

2015–16 ANNUAL REPORT HEARINGS

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
WEDNESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2016**

**SESSION THREE
PUBLIC TRANSPORT AUTHORITY**

Members

**Hon Rick Mazza (Chair)
Hon Peter Katsambanis (Deputy Chair)
Hon Alanna Clohesy
Hon Helen Morton
Hon Sally Talbot**

Hearing commenced at 11.45 am**Hon JIM CHOWN****Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport, examined:****Mr RICHARD SELLERS****Chief Executive Officer, examined:****Mr MARK BURGESS****Managing Director, examined:****Mr KEVIN KIRK****Executive Director, Finance and Contracts, examined:**

The CHAIR: On behalf of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, I welcome you to today's hearing. Can the witnesses confirm that they have read, understood and signed a document headed "Information for Witnesses"?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The CHAIR: It is essential that all your testimony before the committee is complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. It is also being broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The hearing is being held in public although there is discretion available to the committee to hear evidence in private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question. Agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting the Parliament to review agency outcomes, and the committee values your assistance with this.

Hon Stephen Dawson.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thanks, chair. I am very excited about this session!

Page 53 talks about infrastructure delivery and the second column, the last dot point talks about continuing to develop the Thornlie line extension. I want to ask, in relation to that: has the project development plan been completed; has the business case been completed; and what is the current estimated cost of that project?

Mr Burgess: Thank you, Chair. Thanks, member. The Thornlie line project, certainly we have not quite completed either the PDP or the business case, but they are very near completion. I do not have a cost that I could put out at the moment because it has not been finalised.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: So, very nearly completed. What time line are you working towards, or when you propose both will be completed?

Mr Burgess: We often take direction, obviously, from government on these things. At the moment both Thornlie and Yanchep would be progressing, probably, through the latter part of this year and early next year in terms of being completed.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Okay, so in relation to Thornlie, can I ask: has that project ever been submitted to Infrastructure Australia?

Mr Kirk: No, not a formal business case. It was put up on a list, I think, as an item, but it has not proceeded as a formal business case, to my knowledge.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Just to be clear in my own head, the project development has not been completed, nor the business case, but it will be done soon. What is the process from here on in? Will it go for a minister to sign off on and then go to cabinet?

Mr Burgess: Typically, what drives the business case in the PDP is government saying to us, “We want that now”, and they are certainly at a stage where, if we got a direction, it could be done fairly quickly, but —

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: You just have not received the direction?

Mr Burgess: Well, we have not got a direction that someone wants to see it right now, put it that way.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Is that the case with the Yanchep extension as well?

Mr Burgess: The Yanchep one is probably more advanced; it has very little work to be done and could be tidied up very quickly.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Okay, but again you have not had the direction to say, “Get it done now and get it to us”?

Mr Burgess: Certainly it is fair to say that; obviously, we have a new minister, but both the new minister and the previous minister asked for situation reports, where we are up to, on both those projects, fairly regularly.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: In relation to the Yanchep extension, has that project ever been submitted to Infrastructure Australia?

Mr Burgess: I think it was the same thing.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The same things, on a list?

Mr Burgess: Infrastructure Australia asked, as I recall, for a list of what are potential projects in Western Australia.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Okay, great. Still on the same page, under “Rail planning activities” and the dot point in relation to technical expertise and strategic public transport planning advice to the Perth transport plan, can I ask: has any preliminary work been undertaken for a tunnel to Morley, which obviously features in that plan?

Mr Burgess: The work that has been done is very high-level. There are no geotechnical assessments, for example, or engineering assessments; it is indicative, concept work—high-level desktop, basically.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: For the work you have done so far, did the PTA have to prepare a submission to government for funding for the planning? Did you have to put a submission in purely for the planning elements, as opposed to the creation or the construction of it later on?

Hon JIM CHOWN: The question is about a cabinet submission?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, it is not. I am not asking for a copy of it, I am just asking if you had to put in a submission to get funding for the planning element as opposed to a separate submission to Treasury for the construction of the project later on.

Mr Sellers: So are we hearing it, member, as: is it standard practice to do that? Yes, okay.

Mr Burgess: So the answer is yes, we have put in a submission to government about a broadbrush estimate of what it would take to do the detailed planning work. We have not got a firm decision on whether that funding is available.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Okay, thank you. That has answered my question. Again, on page 53, I want to ask a question in relation to the Forrestfield–Airport Link project. In relation to the Forrestfield station, what is the current status of the planning for the station and car park?

Mr Burgess: It is largely as it is indicated in the publicly available documents. The station is there with a 2 500-bay car park. Broadly, what is out there in the public domain; we have gone out to various forms of consultation on that. There is more detailed design to continue, obviously, on Forrestfield station. We now have the design and construct—the primary contract, if you like—for FAL on board, and they will be completing that in the coming year. There is obviously early work starting out at Forrestfield early next year.

[11.50 am]

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I guess what I am kind of after is physically, where are we at? So, early work will start in the new year?

Mr Burgess: Yes. There is work out at Forrestfield starting late this year, but at the station site early next year. Similarly, there is work at Belmont station starting late this year—early next year, and work at the central airport station as well in terms of modifying some car park areas at the airport, and starting that work late this year—early next year.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Okay, great. In relation to Forrestfield station again, have you received advice from the WAPC in relation to the number of car parks for the station?

Mr Burgess: We are aware, obviously, of the structure plan for the area. I have not received any advice from WAPC. There is a steering group, which the director general chairs, for the FAL project and clearly there are senior planning people on that steering group. We have examined aspects of the structure plan. I am aware that government probably is making some considerations over the coming year as to what should happen at Forrestfield in terms of the timing of the—I think people acknowledge the structure plan. It is a question of timing, I guess.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: But no formal advice has been received from WAPC in relation to the number of bays or car parks required or likely to be required out there?

Mr Burgess: It is obviously a matter that has been discussed, but at this stage the PDP and the directions we have got are where we stand at the moment.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Just remind me of the number of car parks that at this stage are planned for that station?

Mr Burgess: Two and a half thousand is what is indicated, and 500 at Belmont station.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can I go to the proximity to metropolitan services or accessible services. Has the size of the metro network increased generally speaking over the last three years? Has the public transport network increased generally over the last three years?

Hon JIM CHOWN: Do you mean bus and rail?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Yes.

Mr Burgess: Absolutely. Obviously the extension to Butler was a key event for us.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So the overall footprint has increased?

Mr Burgess: Yes, it has.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So why has the proportion of Perth homes that are within walking distance of Transperth stayed the same over the last three years—that is, 500 metres from a spot?

Mr Burgess: It would be a range of different factors. We have certainly extended various bus routes and put new bus routes in. There has been a very substantial period of bus service growth, broadly 12 million, roughly, service kilometres in the last five or six years off a base of 60-ish, so quite substantial growth. We will end up landing at around 67 or 68 million service kilometres.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is different from what I asked. Yes, there has been that growth; the footprint has grown. If it has grown, why has the proportion of homes that are within 500 metres not increased?

Mr Burgess: I am definitely coming to that. The bus network has grown and the train network has grown, and indeed we will open Aubin Grove early next year, so another key station which, again, changes that dynamic again. Again, in the same period of time, we are all aware of the growth that has happened in Perth. Broadly, half a million more people, you know, 50 000 or 60 000 a year, are coming, and there has been, if you take those rooftop assessments of Perth, lots more houses. So the way that that key performance indicator is assessed, it is off a GIS base, which the Department of Lands runs, and it assesses every PSA, or every Perth street address, and it measures them against a bus stop or a train stop that meets that indicator of, I think, three services or more in the peak direction, as I recall—I think the definition is there—in the peak period. So when you have that combination of lots more Perth street addresses with all those people coming to Perth, balanced against our extended network, it has just ended up, I think as a pure statistical funny outcome, that it has not changed. The two, I guess, have balanced each other out.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So there has been more development but the network growth has not been commensurate with that?

Mr Burgess: Well, there has certainly been very substantial network growth. As I said, it is probably the biggest —

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: But are saying there are a lot more houses and —

Mr Burgess: Perth has seen massive growth, yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: How was the 500 metres determined?

Mr Burgess: As the crow flies, not as you may have to walk.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Why set it at 500 metres?

Mr Burgess: It is a broad-brush measure used around the world that that is sort of an acceptable distance for access to public transport. I take your point of getting down to the technical detail of, “Is there pedestrian access walkway?” It is very hard for the spatial systems as they stand today to measure all those particular walks from every possible street address. We did not used to be able to measure this. We arrived at it probably 10 or 12 years ago with Treasury, who were very keen to have that indicator. It is a big step forward in spatial systems that we can actually even measure that now, but we have not got to the point where we can go from every front door. That sophistication is not in the system yet.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: I wish I had the time to go into the mechanics of that, but we do not. So, 500 metres is determined generally as the measure, but that does not take into account the accessibility of the route. Why then is it still used as a measure for access to and from bus stops, for example? Why are bus routes cancelled when people cannot access the next bus stop because it is not accessible?

Mr Burgess: I do not know whether we are mixing up the term “accessibility” here. We do use it in two different ways. This is access for the whole community, not necessarily people with disabilities. I can remember discussions with OAG and Treasury 10 or 12 years ago. They wanted to understand the spread of our network broadly—that is, did it cover all of Perth, and how much of Perth did it not cover, I guess—versus I think your question is somewhat alluding to accessible bus stops and accessible train stations and so on. A lot of that we do not control, of course. I mean local roads and local footpath networks are not in our control. We certainly some five or six years ago came to a position, a landing with local government and WALGA in particular, which had been a point of contention for many years, as to who is responsible for bus stops. That was an impasse for many years. The state government took a positive step and said that it would take care of the bus stop. We arrived at a memorandum of agreement with WALGA and they broadly brought their church of local governments into the tent, because we had been at odds with each other. The federal standards are not that helpful. They do not talk about local government and state government; they talk about operators and providers and so on. But we managed to make a breakthrough here in WA. The state

government largely took responsibility for the bus stop area and up to three metres of path to connect with the local network. I think you would understand that, to be honest, for a lot of Perth addresses, whilst we do the three metres and sometimes we even do a bit more because it would not make any sense not to do maybe two more metres of path—our guys exercise good judgement—broadly, there are lots of places in Perth, in this great big sprawled city, that do not have great footpath networks.

[12 noon]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is right, and yet your annual report still uses the 500 metres as the measure.

Mr Burgess: It does, and, as I say, that was arrived at working with OAG and Treasury because it was perhaps not about individuals and whether —

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So it is not a good measure for accessibility, is it?

Mr Burgess: It is not—well, it depends on what term of “accessibility” you are using. We are talking about accessibility I guess for the broader community of is there physically a stop with a reasonably high frequency of service within 500 metres. Treasury and OAG were certainly thinking in that context about spread for the whole community. It does not really help that much in terms of people with disabilities.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: In your annual report you talk about the audit of train stations, which you have completed, which is great. In view of the time, is it possible to get a list of those that are noncompliant?

Mr Burgess: Certainly, yes, we can do that.

[*Supplementary Information No C1.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Has that been turned into a plan for roll out for compliance?

Mr Burgess: An amount of it does, but we do not have the current disability upgrades if you are talking about our train stations. The bus side of it is going well, but it is a long-term plan ever since we made that breakthrough with local government.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Last time we met we talked about cutting 150 off that plan.

Mr Burgess: Yes, and if there is any positive side to the economy, it is that we have been able to get some better pricing out of the market, so we are back to doing 600 bus stops this year. It is really about market forces and getting better buying. The bus stops are going well, but it is a long-term plan. We still have a lot of bus stops to go and we will not hit, and nor will any city in Australia hit, the 2017 and 2022 targets for bus stops. On the train side, we had a DDA program, and I think since PTA was created we have dealt with around 11 stations on the heritage lines, but we do not have a current funded DDA program so there is nothing in the current forward estimates to do more at this stage

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So it is just a plan for which ones need upgrading, but you do not have a budget or a plan?

Mr Burgess: Yes, we maintain it, and Mr Kirk’s area maintains our asset investment program, which includes, obviously, the funded items and the current unfunded items. What we see as the priorities we put up in a portfolio sense with our portfolio partners in DOT and Main Roads, and government makes an assessment across its transport portfolio of where the investments are the priorities.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Have we got a number for that audit?

The CHAIR: We have had C1. Shall we call that C2?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can I just add to C1, because I know people have a lot of questions, the lift upgrade that you talk about in the annual report and the bus stop program? Can we have the list of those that are outstanding?

The CHAIR: We will include that in C1.

Hon HELEN MORTON: I have a question about the proximity to bus services. The reports talks about the 84 per cent having been consistent for the last five years. How does that 84 per cent compare with other capital cities?

Mr Burgess: That is a very good question. I do not know of any other capital cities that are measuring this in Australia—put it that way, member. I am not aware of any, but we can certainly check whether they are. I have to say that it is something to be proud of. We probably have, and have had for many years, the most advanced ticketing system in the country, and it is much cheaper than that of any other city in the country. To understand a ticketing relationship, if someone boarded here and got off here or even transferred, we have to know the spatial data of every bus stop and every train station in the city, and where that spatial data sits—which zone it is in out of the nine zones in the system. All of that means that we have fantastic data about people, where they board and do not board and so on. It also means we know exactly where all of those facilities are. For the 14 000 bus stops in Perth, we know exactly where they are, and it allows us to do that comparison with the Perth street addresses. I do not think that exists in any other city in Australia as far as I know.

The CHAIR: I have a couple of questions. I refer to page 32, key activities. It talks about regional school buses. How many students are actually collected from farm gates?

Mr Burgess: Broadly, it is 26 000, but I am not sure that they are all at farm gates. Some would be literally on the edges of —

The CHAIR: I am satisfied with that estimate. Do you have a breakdown of farm gate pickups and schools that are actually attended from those farm gate pickups?

Mr Burgess: It would be very detailed. We could list all the schools we support, if that helps.

[Supplementary Information No C2.]

The CHAIR: What is the sum of the conveyance allowance?

Mr Burgess: It is several million dollars, but I cannot remember the exact number.

The CHAIR: If you have not got the exact number, are you going to find the exact number or shall we take it on notice?

Mr Kirk: I would not have it here, so we will take it on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C3.]

Mr Burgess: Mr Chair, if I can just point out, the reason I say they are not all from farm gates is that if they are a spur, they may not justify a spur, so some of them get dropped off en route; and some of them get collected from a collection point rather than a farm gate. When you say “farm gate”, are you really asking how many are picked up in the country?

The CHAIR: Yes. Also, with that conveyance allowance, can you give us a breakdown of how many parents or carers at each school receive the conveyance allowance?

Mr Burgess: Yes.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I thought I had finished with page 53, but I have one question left over. Page 53 mentions that the PTA has generated approximately \$16 million in income from land leasing. What land was leased out to whom, and at what cost, for each parcel of land? I am happy to take that by way of supplementary information because it looks pretty detailed.

[Supplementary Information No C4.]

Mr Burgess: It would be a lot, member. There are lots of them, both country and city.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Presumably, given that that figure is in the annual report, it is hopefully an easy thing to identify.

Mr Burgess: It is easy enough to do, but there are a lot of them.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thank you very much. Page 67 refers to occupational safety and health, and injury management. The first two questions kind of do not relate to this, but the last question does. What is the value of each bus security contract each year, and when does the current contract for bus security end?

Mr Burgess: I think I have that reasonably ready to hand, member. I have not got it for previous years, but for 2015–16 the contract for bus and we say ferry security—because they occasionally drop onto the ferry and do a few other things as well, but predominantly it is a bus security contract—was \$11.4 million with Wilson Security. In terms of what manpower that provides us, it is effectively 90 FT equivalents and 18 mobile patrols, which are the ones you see driving around with the Hyundais or something like that with the Transperth security signs on the side, often following a bus.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: When does the current contract end?

Mr Burgess: I do not think I have those notes, member, but my recollection is that we went out to the market again not that long ago, maybe a year or two ago.

[*Supplementary Information No C5.*]

[12.10 pm]

The CHAIR: While we are talking about bus security, I note that on page 46 it states that security cages have benefitted Bunbury and Kalgoorlie. Are there other town buses in regional areas that have security cages in their buses?

Mr Burgess: To the best of my knowledge, there are not. There were specific issues in those two locations—Hon Adelle Farina in fact raised that in this forum a number of times for Bunbury; certainly, in Kalgoorlie we had a few issues as well—so, to some extent, they are pre-emptive. We have never experienced a level of security issues in any of the regional centres that we have in —

The CHAIR: What are the criteria for assessing whether they need to have security cages?

Mr Burgess: It would be incident-based; there is no specific threshold criteria as such, so it is incident based and an assessment is done.

The CHAIR: It is complaint-based?

Mr Burgess: It is complaint-based, more or less. Where we have needed to, we have employed some security people in a couple of those locations—Geraldton about five years ago, as I recall. To be honest, the level of security incidents in most regional centres is not what we experience here in Perth.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: On the same issue, has the agency been asked to fund any spit guards for bus drivers? I know there is been antisocial behaviour around the state, but have you actually been asked by the union or anybody else to fund spit guards?

Mr Burgess: Not to my knowledge. There is obviously a bus security committee that we work on with the police and the bus operators and so on. I do not recall the issue of spit guards being raised. Many years ago when this phenomenon first started—I am thinking eight years ago or something like that—we gave every driver a kit, which we had worked on with the police, which was like a DNA gathering kit. To the best of my recollection, they still have those available.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: If you could take that on notice—if a request has been made—that would be great.

[*Supplementary Information No C6.*]

Mr Burgess: I might say, member, that the DNA kit actually worked. We actually had some people pursued, who were caught, because of the DNA kit.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is good to hear. I have another question in relation to the organisational structure, but I take the opportunity now to say well done to the PTA for its TransHedland service that is in operation in Hedland. It is great. The community loves it, so good on you. I know it has been rolled out in other places; it is a very good initiative.

Pages 12 and 13 have the organisational structure. Looking at it, director general, CEO, there are no females on your executive. I know you are relatively new to the job, but I wonder whether you have a strategy or plan to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions in your agency?

Mr Sellers: Thanks for the question. I guess the best way of answering is that since coming to Western Australia in 2009 and picking up the mines department, we massively changed the demographic in the mines department in women in leadership roles, and I have been a strong supporter of it. Quite regularly—humbly, I say—I get invited to women in leadership conferences to speak on things that we have done. No, I have not yet talked that through with anyone in the department, but clearly it would be one of the things that I will work on in time with people as the opportunities occur.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is not to say that the blokes around the table are not doing a good job; it is just something that jumped out at me.

I have one final question. At the top of page 105, is category A incidents, excludes suicides and attempted suicides, and, category B, occurrences. What were the four category A incidents and what were the category B incidents?

Mr Burgess: The category As would either have either been suicides or attempted suicides. It would be best that I confirm that for you, but that is generally what they are. The category Bs could be any mix of things that could have led to a serious—had to the potential to lead to a serious incident. Would you like to take that on notice?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That would be great.

[*Supplementary Information No C7.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: In answer to one of Hon Stephen Dawson's questions before, you talked about a list of potential projects that went to Infrastructure Australia. Is it possible to get a list of those potential projects?

Mr Burgess: I do not think we would have sent it. It would have been a Department of Transport scoop up of the portfolio. I am not sure what the position is there.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: What you talked about was that you had prepared a list of projects to go to Infrastructure Australia, and that was put together with Main Roads and Transport. Is it possible to get a copy of your component of what went to Infrastructure Australia?

Mr Burgess: We were both a little bit sketchy, member, on whether we did or did not.

Hon JIM CHOWN: How about we take the question on notice and see whether we can send it forward or otherwise. We are not making a commitment here in regard to that, but we will look into whether it is available.

[*Supplementary Information No C8.*]

Mr Sellers: For the member's benefit, she was very close to the process, in the sense that across the portfolio we put together a list of potential things to go to Infrastructure Australia. We then

discussed them with the minister of the day. The minister of the day may edit that list or draw a cut-off point in terms of likely ones to go up, so that is really what Mark is talking about. We would put it in the mix, but whether it actually went there or not we would have to check and take it on notice, as suggested.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay. Thank you. That has a supplementary information number.

In terms of that more generally, does the department have a strategic asset management plan?

Mr Kirk: Yes, we do have a strategic management plan.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can we get a copy of that?

Mr Kirk: The strategic asset management plan is part of the budget process, part of the budget deliberations, and, as such, it is treated as cabinet-in-confidence.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Did your department's strategic asset management plan go to cabinet as a cabinet submission?

Mr Kirk: My understanding is that they are submitted by the Department of Transport to Treasury into the budget process. Whether it actually went to cabinet, I am not sure.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So your department, your agency, did not submit it directly to cabinet as a cabinet document?

Mr Kirk: No; it is part of the annual budget process. We submit them to the Department of Transport, which brings them together as a portfolio submission and they are submitted to Treasury as part of the budget process.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So the actual document that you handed over to Treasury?

Mr Kirk: Yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: You have never submitted it to Treasury and so you will not submit it to this committee ?

Mr Kirk: Not in recent years; since the formation of the portfolio Department of Transport, they have all gone to the Department of Transport and have been submitted through the budget process.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: One final go: your agency is not going to submit your strategic asset management plan to this committee?

Mr Kirk: I do not think I can answer that.

Hon JIM CHOWN: I do not think that would be appropriate.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Can I come back to buses or to public transport generally. I noticed in "Transport @ 3.5 million" that there are no plans for any public transport to Gidgegannup; is that true?

Mr Burgess: I think my recollection would be the same as yours, of the "Transport @ 3.5 million"; yes.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So, does the PTA have any plans at all for any public transport to Gidgegannup?

Mr Burgess: Not that I am aware of.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: For now or 10 years down the track—nothing?

Mr Burgess: Those things are evolutionary so I think I can only answer for now, but I do not see anything in the current plans for that.

Hon HELEN MORTON: If some new initiative were to occur in Gidgegannup that required public transport services to enable the public to get there, would it be within your ability to build that into a project—into your forward projected plans?

[12.20 pm]

Mr Burgess: We always respond to changes. If there was suddenly a higher level of development or a new level of development around Gidgegannup, that may well change the mix.

Hon HELEN MORTON: Thank you.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So the current development of 5 000 population has not changed the mix yet?

Mr Burgess: Possibly, when that starts to occur in a significant way, that may change the mix.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: At what point is “start to occur”? Is it when the pegs are in the ground or when the planning permission has been given?

Mr Burgess: Gidgegannup is a fair stretch, obviously, from where we are today. I do not think the taxpayer necessarily—that is whose money we spend at the end of the day; certainly, we work for the government—I think the government is very conscious—we have a finite budget in public transport. It is often about the bang we get for our buck—how many members of the community can we support? There would be a lot of dead running to and fro from Gidgegannup. I think you would probably acknowledge that yourself. So you would want to be picking up very full loads of people.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Even with the closure of train lines, would it be, as you call it, dead running?

Mr Burgess: There is dead running in the sense that you go one way empty, typically. That is dead running.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Have you done any modelling on that?

Mr Burgess: No.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: So maybe there might be or maybe there would not be.

Mr Burgess: I think what the member alluded to—if there was a significant change in urban development at Gidgegannup, you would re-look at the equation.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay. But you would wait until there were pegs in the ground on that development before you started doing —

Hon JIM CHOWN: You would probably wait a bit longer than that.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay. Are there any plans for further upgrades of services to Bullsbrook?

Mr Burgess: I do not have that detail, I do not think it has a high priority, to put it that way, but I am certainly happy to take your question on notice.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Thank you.

[Supplementary Information No C9]

Mr Burgess: Sorry, member, are you talking in the context of 3.5 million or the next five years?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Both.

Mr Burgess: Both.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: As a change of direction altogether, I am aware that CAT services are well patronised, that they are very popular and that they are a very efficient mode of transport. How much does it cost on an annual basis to run, let us just say, the blue CAT.

Mr Burgess: I have not got it broken down. In fact, I cannot remember the total. I used to have the total cost of the CAT services in my head but I do not at the moment.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Is that something we can take on notice?

Mr Burgess: Absolutely. Do you want the blue CAT or would you like each route?

[*Supplementary Information No C10.*]

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Each route would be great, thanks. I used to be a very high user of the blue CAT when I lived in that area.

Mr Burgess: The figure \$12 million sticks in my head, but time flies when you are having fun, you see, and I think that is the figure for 10 years ago.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Yes. Okay.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I had a quick question in relation to PTA and the government's strategic projects and asset sales program. Does the PTA have any land that you currently own that has been earmarked for sale through the government's asset sales program; and, if so, what land?

Mr Burgess: I do not remember the particular bits of land, but we certainly have offered up a couple of pieces of land. As far as I recall, none has been sold yet but we have certainly earmarked them to the asset sales task force.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Could you provide those parcels of land to the committee by supplementary?

Hon JIM CHOWN: Yes.

[*Supplementary Information No C11.*]

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Are there any plans at this stage for the expansion of the ferry services currently in operation on the Swan River?

Mr Burgess: There are, I guess, two answers to that. One is the fairly simple, but recently rejuvenated, ferry service. If you look at the numbers, it is obviously going gangbusters since EQ opened. People love that trip to and fro, so our patronage has gone up substantially with that. That makes the two ferries fully committed, if you like. There is a little bit of extra time required to get into the quay and turn around and so on compared to when we were over at Barrack Street. The two ferries are fairly committed. The *Shelley Taylor-Smith* is approaching the end of what we would think is its good life. It is still a reasonable vessel, but in the near future we would want a replacement vessel for that ferry and the government is aware of that.

That is the simple little commuter ferry between the narrow parts of the river—between South Perth and the city. For quite some years we have been involved periodically in studies or reviews of when is the time for Perth to have high-speed, low-wash ferries to more parts of the river. I have personally been involved in a number of those studies over the last 15 to 20 years. There is currently a bit of work which the member for South Perth is heading up. We are certainly contributing with DOT to some analysis on that as to what options there are for some more ferry services on the river. I have not been involved in the detail of that one so I am not sure where they are up to.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: So there is no concrete plan at this stage? I understand that at the new stadium there will be a jetty that is capable of—whatever the word is—hosting a ferry. There are no concrete plans at this stage to expand the service?

Mr Burgess: I cannot speak for the member for South Perth. I have not been to any of the meetings, so I am not sure where they are up to with that.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Just one final question: what is the cost of a replacement ferry?

Mr Burgess: That is why I say that they are almost two different things. The simple commuter job, *Phillip Pandal* and the *Shelley Taylor-Smith*, they are a couple of million dollars—about \$2.5 million.

Mr Kirk: That is a recent estimate.

Mr Burgess: We bought the *Phillip Pendal* not that long ago, or had it built, rather, so that will be a pretty safe number. That is very different to something much more significant like the Brisbane river ferries. They have got both as well. They have got the little simple ones that punt across side to side but the high-speed, low-wash ones—we have not been to the market—I would not hazard a guess on those.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Do we have the capacity to build them in Western Australia?

Mr Burgess: I am sure we have the capacity.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The *Phillip Pendal*, the last one that we bought.

Mr Burgess: That was built here.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Built here? Thanks, chair.

The CHAIR: Just on the ferries—looking at page 22, I see there has been a significant jump in boardings with Elizabeth Quay of some 51.4 per cent. Are there any other tourist attractions or whatever that the department has identified that could have helped increase the patronage of the ferries?

Mr Burgess: That is why I think the question the member asked is interesting. Perth has not changed fundamentally on the riverscape. Those same attractions—when people notionally looked at it before, there was the jetty at Steve's, Point Walter and potentially all the way down to Fremantle, but that involves quite a long journey. We actually did that when we joined up the Mandurah line and the Joondalup line and closed, therefore, the Fremantle line for a week. Minister MacTiernan wanted us to put a large ferry on and we did. We organised a ferry for a week or so, but it is a long journey. We made that free for those people. It was free, you got a newspaper and a cup of coffee. On day one it was quite full but on day two it was less full. It took a long time; it was about a 70-minute journey. That is some of the work that study group is looking at. What can be done around the speeds on the river? Can there be some dispensations around ferry services? Of course, there are a lot of yachting areas in parts of that river. You have to work out all of those issues to try and make the longer ferry routes more viable. They are some of the challenges.

The CHAIR: Just with the ferries—on page 45 when you look at the Transperth ferries, on board at night the safety factor is 100 per cent. It is up 8.7 per cent on the previous year. What were some of the reasons for the increase?

Mr Burgess: At one point in time, the independent research firm that does the PSM work for us—bus train and ferry—actually said, “You shouldn't bother doing the ferry anymore”, because we had had about several years in a row of 100 per cent satisfaction on the ferry. They said, “Why are you wasting it?” We said, “No, we will keep doing it.” When we actually had the dislocation, if I can put it that way, with the worksite and everything, it was a bit disruptive to the ferry passengers, understandably enough. We had a big construction site there. That was when we picked up a little bit of that dissatisfaction or perceived security threat and so on, but it is back to good days. We have never had that many blips on the ferry service. It is very popular.

The CHAIR: Seeing that there is a 100 per cent satisfaction rate on the ferries, could any of that be translated to trains and buses?

Mr Burgess: The minister actually did a media event on our latest PSM—this year's PSM results—just the other day and we are at very substantial highs: 92 per cent, I know, on the trains. I cannot remember the figure for the buses, but they are at an all-time high or equivalent all-time high. Satisfaction levels with the system are very good and are supported by the Canstar work which the members may have seen, the independent research people—who we have nothing to do with—who every so often do a research project on the best train system in Australia. It has been done

five times—there have been a few gaps where they missed a year—and the Transperth train system is a standout by a long, long way.

[12.30 pm]

The CHAIR: That is very good to know. I refer to page 65, “Reporting of Notifiable Occurrences”. In your commentary, you state that there has been a big jump in category B notifiable occurrences from 156 to 197. What preventive action are you undertaking to try to mitigate that risk?

Mr Burgess: I think the indication there is that the increase was predominantly trips or fall incidents—the 156 to 197. So we have gone up—whatever the difference there is—by 41. Unfortunately, that is the nature of—if you go to our website, we have certainly done a campaign on escalator use. We have tried to do that in a sensible signage sense, and we have even done, I guess, a theme around it. There is a bit of a humorous video on our website that introduces you to how to use an escalator, and it has actually got some pretty good reviews because it tries to make it a bit light, but how important it is as well—not trying to lighten the subject.

The CHAIR: So most of these slips and falls have been on escalators?

Mr Burgess: A lot are on escalators. Some on stairs as well, but a lot are on escalators, yes. We have had some unfortunate incidents on escalators. We have even had some fatalities on escalators. People have fallen down them.

The CHAIR: On page 85, you refer to “The proportion of street addresses within the Perth Public Transport Area which are within 500 metres of a Transperth stop providing an acceptable level of service”. The target of 85 per cent is not quite met, but why would that target not actually be set higher for metropolitan Perth?

Mr Burgess: This is that one, Chair, that I talked to the member about earlier, which is the one where we sat down with OAG about 10–12 years ago, because we did not have a measure of accessibility of the system in terms of being able to get to a stop or a train station. So, we sat down. To be honest, it was just a target arrived at as to what we thought. There was a measure taken. At the time, 85 per cent would have been a bit aspirational for us, and we have just left the target there. It is one where, I guess, we would sit down at some point in time with AOG and Treasury and say, “Is it the right target?” But for the last 10 years, our capacity to expand the network has been challenged by the growth in Perth. So it has probably been thought it is still a reasonable target. It is not aspirational or a stretch at the moment. But what we do not control is, I guess, that constant sprawl and growth around Perth—PTA certainly does not control it. So our challenge is to try to keep up a high level of accessibility against a sprawling metropolitan area.

Hon HELEN MORTON: I refer to the *Prospector* arriving within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. The target was 80 per cent, but the actual was 48 per cent. It seems a really low achievement.

Mr Burgess: Thanks, member. We have been watching it very closely. Obviously, once we are outside the metro area, we are on the Brookfield network. That is the 49-year lease they have from the state government to 2049. So we literally buy track space off Brookfield. I am not making any critical comment here about Brookfield, but they have been doing a lot of work through the Avon Valley, so it has affected both freight and passenger. For parts of the line, they have had single line running, basically. So you have literally had the train go this way and then you have had to hold that train and come back that way. We know what the work is about. It is pretty essential work and it is work that has to be done.

The CHAIR: If there are no further questions, we will end the meeting. On behalf of the committee, I thank you for your attendance today. The committee will forward the transcript of evidence, which highlights the questions taken on notice, together with any additional questions in writing, after Monday, 7 November 2016. Responses to these questions will be requested within

10 working days of receipt of the questions. Should you be unable to meet this due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible beforehand. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met. If members have any unasked questions, I ask them to submit these to the committee clerk at the close of the hearing. Once again, I thank you for your attendance today. Just a reminder to members that the deadline for submitting additional questions is 12.00 pm—midday—Monday, 7 November, as stated in paragraph 8.2 of the procedure policy.

Hearing concluded at 12.34 pm
