

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 – REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS –
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE – 31 AUGUST 2022**

QoN001 – page 3

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Minister, can I just zero in now and basically ask what have you actually done? Presumably, given the importance of this and the amount of effort you say you are putting in, there would be a list of the projects that have been completed and there presumably would be a list of projected projects that you would complete, say, over the next two financial years. Are they available?
The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Yes, we can certainly table those. But obviously through February, March and April of this year, as has already been highlighted by the secretary and the deputy secretary, large parts of the network were significantly impacted. We will get you a list of what we have on hand before the end of estimates.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has a strategic approach to natural disasters and embedding resilience across the road network. This includes a suite of programs for preparedness, recovery and resilience activities across the regional transport network, including local, regional and state roads. Examples include the \$312.5 million Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package, Vegetation Management Bushfire Resilience Projects and the State Road Natural Disaster Rehabilitation program. These programs are funded in partnership between the NSW and Australian Governments.

In response to recent natural disasters, Transport for NSW has directly supported local Councils whose assets were hardest hit in the February/March flooding, with 230 staff supporting response and restoration.

Transport for NSW continues to work closely with Local Councils as well as the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation, in order to restore the NSW road network and free up local government resources for emergency works. This includes embedded support to Councils with relevant expertise, capability uplift aimed at expediting delivery.

QoN002 – page 3

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Thank you, including what you have done and what you plan to do over the next two financial years. I also ask about the funding allocation, Minister. Can you inform us of what that is?
The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: For?
The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: For the resilient transport network program.
The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Is this in regards to the \$312.5 million that we announced through the betterment fund or are you referring to what we have spent in the 2021 financial year?
The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Both. I am asking what was your allocation and expenditure, and now what is the proposed allocation. How much money has been allocated for this?

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 1.

QoN003 – page 3

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: So if I ask for a breakdown of the allocations that have been made from the resilience infrastructure project development fund, would I be able to obtain that?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will endeavour to get you that information before the end of estimates.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Is there such a fund?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Well, that is different to the fund that I just quoted from. The fund I just quoted from was the Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package that I announced with the Federal Government in April of this year. That is separate to the estimated expenditure of half a billion dollars that we spent last financial year. I will see what more details we have on hand before the end of estimates.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: To help me understand, Minister, maybe you could also give us a list—and please take it on notice—of the number of different funds that are being drawn upon to actually provide the resilience that you are talking about. From what you have said, it seems that there are a number of different funds and allocations coming from various sources. It would be useful, I think, for the Committee to know what those sources are.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 1.

QoN004 – page 4

We are happy to get you details on the different programs by the end of estimates today, but I think the reality is that there is a lot of funding available for regional communities. This is in addition to, Mr Primrose, obviously, natural disaster declaration funding, whether that be category B or D funding. It is in addition to the almost \$65 million to \$69 million that the New South Wales Government, through Transport for NSW, was able to advance local government areas in direct response to the March event. That allowed councils the cashflow to be able to reconnect local roads quickly, to outline areas and to fill potholes. It was the funding that they needed immediately to address emergency works.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Minister, I appreciate that and welcome your commitment to providing that list. Could that list also please contain—I would be interested in the figures of funding available for each of those programs that you will be providing by the end of estimates.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: How about we be clear about exactly what you are asking for? You would like to know what resilience infrastructure packages that relate to road infrastructure are available?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: From this year's budget?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Let's begin from this year's budget, and how much funding is available in each.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: We will endeavour to come back to you before the end of estimates and you can explore this.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 1.

QoN005 – page 4

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I appreciate that, Minister. If not, we will ask it at the supplementary. It would help our questions to be more accurate. Has Transport for NSW quantified road damage that was caused by the recent flood events?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: We have been able to quantify some statistics, yes, on our State road network. I have spoken about this, Mr Primrose, in Parliament several times. But, just to confirm, from the latest stats that we have, some of the key statistics are that 2,000 kilometres of roads sustained damage, including State and local roads. The initial estimates indicate that the damage to the State regional and local road network from the March events is \$1.5 billion. To confirm, approximately \$1.3 billion of that \$1.5 billion is the estimated cost to repair the local road network—that is, obviously, the road network administered by local government—and an estimated \$150 million cost to repairs to our State—

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Have you been able to disaggregate that by local government areas?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I suspect to a degree, which you can explore later in the day on the specifics. But, yes, we are working directly. This is the March event for northern New South Wales that I am referring to. Those figures relate to the regional transport network. Obviously, we have discussed State versus local roads, but it has been informed by the LGA. It is where Transport for NSW is working and collaborating directly on the ground with those local councils.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: So you have disaggregated it and that is a document that is available to the Committee?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: It's internal data that Transport for NSW have. I am sure that we could supply some of that informed data that we have throughout the day.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: How about we get that when it is available? Thank you, Minister.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The estimated damage to the regional transport network, including local, regional and state roads is approximately \$1.7 billion.

QoN006 – page 5

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Putting those comments aside, you have been very specific on the northern damage to the transport network. Do you have that sort of specific information for the subsequent

damage? It has been a particularly rough few months.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Well, we have other data. Across the board, \$30 million has been the estimated cost in repairs to our commuter rail lines within the regional and outer metro network. Now, that's a statewide figure. I don't think it's consolidated to just northern New South Wales. Seventy-three State roads were closed due to the March flooding event. We have discussed the over 2,000 kilometres of damage to the State road network from that March flooding event. We can get you, probably—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We are still in March, though. I am really interested in that post-March event, given it's been so tough. As you know, damage on damage is even harder to—

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: The short answer is yes. Transport is working with local government areas right across the State in the events before March and post-March. I would ask if Mr Fuller has anything else we want to add but there would be more data we could draw on from Transport for NSW.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I appreciate it. But, to my colleague's question, what's the assessment of the total damage to the regional transport network after those March events?

MATT FULLER: Thank you for the question. Basically, what Transport has been doing is, obviously, on our own part in terms of the statewide network, and then on behalf of local government, is compiling and providing that information into the State Recovery Centre in terms of the statewide view and dashboard about the impact and the cumulative impact on the road networks overall. The numbers that the Minister talked about, some of those are estimates that have been provided by local government areas. They haven't necessarily been quantity surveyed or they haven't had projects that have been developed specifically, but on the face of it local government areas have provided us with a breakdown of the number of issues—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Fuller, this is useful context but it is not the question you were asked.

Do have an estimate of the post-March events' damage to the regional transport network?

MATT FULLER: We have a cumulative estimate and we can provide that for you, yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Do we know what it is? Can you provide that now?

MATT FULLER: Roughly it is about \$1.5 billion but I'll get the exact figures and come back.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 5.

QoN007 – page 13

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So 500 applications, 78 councils. How many kilometres been applied for, either reclassification or transfer?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: That I don't have on hand.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Do your officials perhaps have that on hand?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I would need to check, but I don't think the independent panel has shared how many kilometres. I'm happy to say that in my last dialogue with my office with the panel, what they shared was approximately 500 applications, 78 councils, and they were working through what was a reclassification application and what was a transfer application.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This information will be known once the Independent Panel finalise their Final Report.

QoN008 – page 13

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Right, so tranche two is progressing. What was the total cost for tranche one?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I don't have on hand. Cynthia Heydon may be able to answer that—

you're up, Cynthia. She is right across the reclassification program as well.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: We'll come back to you this afternoon. I don't have that on hand. But essentially, it's our own people's time and work in the administration process for gazettal.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: To date, yes, given that they're reclassifications

ANSWER

I am advised:

There were no costs incurred outside of Transport for NSW salaries.

QoN009 – page 13

In tranche one, were there any city roads transferred? Or were these all country roads, regional roads, transferred?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Let me just check that. I believe that there was—I might pass to Cynthia Heydon. I have a feeling that there is one. Yes, one in Greater Sydney.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes, there is one in Greater Sydney, and the balance were in regional council areas. But we can get you the details and I can refer you to where they are in the gazettals.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Orders were published in Government Gazette number 323 on 15 July 2022.

QoN010 – page 14

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes. It's Blacktown and it's Schofields Road.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: How many kilometres was that?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I will have to come back and confirm the kilometres on that one.

ANSWER

I am advised:

5.4 kilometres.

QoN011 – page 18

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Minister, I might pick up where I left and through you to Mr Fuller, I want to go to Transport for NSW in this upgraded line, this enabling infrastructure. What involvement did you have in the benefit-cost ratio?

MATT FULLER: Thank you for the question, Mr Banasiak. I would have to get detailed information from the team as to some of those early investigations and exactly what was provided.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This is a matter for Tamworth Regional Council.

QoN012 – page 18

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You would have had no deliberations on freight from your capacity?

MATT FULLER: I would have to check on exactly what was provided by our team. As I said, the obvious ones that come to mind are in terms of the infrastructure costs, but that would be my understanding at this point. But we would be happy to take on notice and check if there is any other involvement.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: On notice, I imagine you are familiar with this document NSW Freight Commodity Demand Forecasts 2016-2056. It has your logo on it. Can you just take on notice as to whether that was considered as part of your considerations?

MATT FULLER: Sure, happy to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 11.

QoN013 – page 20

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I just wanted to clarify what the cumulative total is. We're saying \$227 million. Do you have a sense of what that would entail? Is that going to completely fix the Armidale-Kempsey road?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: That is what has been estimated as the investment needed to get that road back to scratch. That is why that funding has now been directed towards that road to get that infrastructure rebuilt.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do we have a project time line yet?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will have to take that on notice. I will come back to you during the course of the day on a time line of how we are going project managing that piece of road infrastructure. But what is important to note when we do this is that we have put specific resources into place to manage that because a couple of hundred million-dollar rebuild to road infrastructure is a massive task for any local council, no matter how small or big they are in this State. We have put in additional resources in and around project management and expertise to help do that so it isn't just left to council to do that. The reality is that those councils involved have raised concerns about how to manage that. When I made that reference to Andrew, he is now in Lismore but he has been managing Armidale-Kempsey road for some time and he has trained another individual up within Transport to take over. That is an example of how we are using outside-of-the-box sort of resources to assist councils with this infrastructure rebuild.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: That's pleasing to hear, Minister, because I know the local members of the community have raised with me and also the local member their concerns about council's capacity to take on such a project. It's pleasing to hear.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: We're probably happy to come back with a bit of an update during the course of the day on a time line and the resources that we have committed to that project. They're public and I'm happy to talk about them because it's a good news story, Mr Banasiak—

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW is providing significant support to Armidale Regional Council on this important project.

The Council's project team is assessing tenders for the Natural Disaster Rectifications works. The assessment team includes two Transport for NSW Senior Project Managers, a dedicated Project Director as well as representatives of Armidale Regional Council.

Given the size of the tender and complexity of the works involved, award of tenders is anticipated in late 2022, with main works commencing in mid-2023. Works are anticipated to take up to two years to deliver, weather permitting.

QoN014 – page 21

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'm reasonably well familiar with the process because I sat on the acquisition inquiry. I guess the evidence that we heard during the acquisition inquiry—not specifically with Singleton but overall—was that the community found, yes, there was a process, but it was more the tone and how that process was administered by individual Transport for NSW staff. I draw your attention to a newspaper article around their concerns. In that article they claim that a threatening letter from Transport for NSW was sent to one of the landholders about coming onto their property. Have you investigated the details of that threatening letter or whether the letter was threatening at all?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I've never seen or had this accusation of a threatening letter referred or put in front of me. If you've got a copy, I'm happy to have a look.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I don't have a copy of the letter. I've just got a copy of the article where they've made this accusation.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I haven't seen a copy of the letter you refer to. I suspect, without seeing it—I don't want to make too much of a prejudgment on what that is, but I would think that it is a challenging circumstance. When we have a vision like we do as the New South Wales Government and we go to build legacy infrastructure for this State, in particular in the regions, it's never an easy task because it is a big job when you build legacy infrastructure. At times it requires parcels of land to build that infrastructure. There's a very defined process on how that works. If you have a copy of the letter, I'm happy to look at it. Is it a legal letter or is it a threatening letter? I would have to see the letter itself to make that judgment—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Neither have I. Perhaps on notice, can you get back to us as to what this letter was? Because it's been mentioned in—

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: No, I'm not prepared to take it on notice. But if you present a copy of the letter or the article to me, I'm happy to—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'm happy to present the article.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: —come back to you during the course of the day with some response.

ANSWER

I am advised:

A copy of the letter was not provided, without which a response is unable to be provided.

QoN015

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: On notice, can you provide some level of detail as to what those properties you have signed off on are, Minister, so we get a sense of where we're up to with the acquisition process?

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes, we can provide details on the acquisitions but also if we require access as opposed to an acquisition. Sometimes we use the Roads Act to gain access as opposed to an acquisition. That may be one of the issues in this instance. But we'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Just to confirm, the Minister has absolutely no involvement in the negotiation. I have no involvement at all in what the compensation or value is. The process is so rigid that it has to point to the Valuer General and then, once it gets to that stage, that is what is utilised. Obviously, as Camilla has highlighted, it is a very rigid process. We can certainly on notice provide details about some of the quantity, perhaps, of parcels of land that have been acquired throughout the course of the day.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at 9 September 2022, there are 38 properties required to be acquired for the Singleton Bypass. Three properties are in ongoing negotiations, with the remaining thirty-five having reached agreement, exchanged, settled or formally gazetted.

QoN016 – page 23

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Minister, I understand it took about nine years to complete the Sydney Harbour Bridge, or just a little over. I would like to ask you a question about the upgrade to McKanes Falls Road bridge in Bathurst. I recall that it was first promised and funded by Minister Duncan Gay in 2012. It first appeared in budget electorate reports in 2014-15. It's still going on. I understand from the locals that they've been told they expect it to be finished this year. Can you confirm that it will actually be open to traffic this year?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice for the course of estimates and try to get you an answer on that. I live in Bathurst, for the record. I know of the road and bridge you're talking about. I will just reconfirm the time line and come back to you in the course of the day.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: And—if you would, Minister—if it's not this year, when? And why has it taken so long?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will find out what the current time line is for "open to traffic" date and come back to you with that during the course of the day.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The McKanes Falls Road bridge project is expected to be open to traffic in November 2022, weather permitting.

QoN017 – page 24

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Excellent. But I asked you about concrete, composite, heritage and steel bridges across the State that are also in need of repair. You have answered that question. Why did the New South Wales Government approve the Cuttagee Bridge under the program in March 2021?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will refer to Cynthia Heydon with that question.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Could you just clarify the question, please?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Why did the New South Wales Government approve the Cuttagee Bridge under the program in March 2021?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I will have to double-check our records in relation to that bridge and the timing; it's not one I have on hand. If you can wait, I will come back with some clarity.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: You may not have it on hand because the Government withdrew funding for the Cuttagee Bridge under the program in May and June 2021, just two months later.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Again, I'll wait to get some more detailed information. My understanding and recollection of that is that it wasn't a formal approval of that bridge. I believe it was in relation to the bridge not being predominantly timber, as per the guidelines.

ANSWER

I am advised:

In late 2020, Bega Valley Shire Council submitted an application for funding under Round One of the Fixing Country Bridges program for the replacement of Cuttagee Bridge.

However, Council later withdrew their application as it did not meet the program guidelines.

QoN018 – page 25

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Will the New South Wales Government reclassify the Tathra-Bermagui Road, including its five bridges?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: As part of the reclassification and transfer process, I don't know if that road has been submitted to the independent panel for consideration.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: We'll come back to this when you give me that information.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This information will be known once the Independent Panel finalise their Final Report.

QoN019

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Just quickly, Mr Primrose, McKanes road and bridge has experienced a slight delay due to the most recent flooding, which has occurred right across the State, including in my home town of Bathurst. We are scheduled to be open to traffic by November 2022.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: You might want to get people to correct your website, which, as of 15 minutes ago, still says September.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: We will take that on notice. We've had recent flooding as of a week or two ago in that region, so maybe that's why. But November this year.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Transport for NSW website has been updated.

QoN020

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: In February the taxi industry submitted a proposal on behalf of the entire point to point transport industry for a change to current policy. Did you read that?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I would have to refer back to which document you are referring to because there has been a lot of work done in this space, a lot of consultation, a lot of meetings. I will come back to you on that on notice.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It has been seven months on and the industry is still awaiting a decision. When do you think they'll get a response?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will refer to my previous answer.

ANSWER

I am advised:

On 21 September 2022, the NSW Government announced that taxi licence holders across the State will receive an additional \$500 million in assistance payments as part of a comprehensive \$645 million package to fully deregulate the industry and benefit customers long term.

QoN021 – page 44

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And how much have you taken back, I guess, is my question, Minister? How much money has been taken back off people that was promised and delivered to them, now reclaimed?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I'll pass over to Mr de Kock.

JOOST DE KOCK: Thanks, Minister. As the Minister said, the regional seniors travel card has been really successful. After a two-year trial it has been expanded. As the Minister said, nearly a million cards have been distributed. It's a \$250 card for regional seniors to pay on travel expenses. The balance is \$250 and—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr de Kock, I'm well aware of this. How much money has been taken back off people?

JOOST DE KOCK: I don't have those figures at my fingertips so I'll have to take it on notice as to how much exactly that would be.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Thank you. Minister, I appreciate your answer that it's not an issue you're aware of, so we might come back to that in the officials' session.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Can I confirm for the record, Mr Graham, that to memory—I sign a lot of correspondence and I read all of it before I sign it. I haven't seen this raised with me at all. I've just checked with my office—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I appreciate that.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: —and I don't think we've received any. We'll certainly go and look into it. It could be some sort of technical issue, but we're happy to look into it.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The average dollar value on the closed Regional Seniors Travel Cards, where the value had fallen below \$5 and not fully expended within 30 days, is \$1.27 per card. The total of recovered from closed and expired cards last year was \$217,439. Funds remaining on closed cards are returned to Transport for NSW for use in the next round, as per QoN055.

QoN022

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Yes, well, at the end of the day, Mr Graham, we have round six of our Fixing Country Roads program. I announced on 22 August that the \$80.3 million that was made available in round six is open and I encourage councils that had previous applications in to have a look over their proposal—"Is this still a priority?"—and, if so, resubmit it.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can I ask you where the \$80.3 million appears in the budget papers, please?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: It is a decision of the Expenditure Review Committee since the budget was published.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: There you go. More good news.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: When was that decision made?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will come back to you throughout the course of estimates as to which ERC meeting, which I think I can find, and which date that occurred. But it was over the course of the last eight weeks.

ANSWER

I am advised:

19 August 2022.

QoN023 – page 48

CYNTHIA HEYDON: In relation to your query on Cuttagee Bridge, we are still waiting on some information. If we can't get it back to you this afternoon, we'll take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 17.

QoN024 – page 48

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: No others? I will begin. One issue, and it is a very localised one that is of interest to me because of my duty electorate, is the subsidised school transport scheme for flights from Lord Howe Island. Students from Lord Howe Island who travel to New South Wales schools have issues getting flights and are often forced to take extra time off from school in order to access flights. Can I ask whoever is responsible, are you aware of issues being experienced by isolated children living on Lord Howe Island under the school student transport scheme? I can list some of the issues, if you wish.

JOOST DE KOCK: We do have a school student transport scheme in place that has over half a million active school travel pass entitlements and that also includes special arrangements for school children in Lord Howe Island. I'm not aware of any issues of the scheme that you just mentioned.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: That concerns me because I am and there is a number of parents who—basically, what parents want is to be able to book flights themselves and to be reimbursed by the subsidised school transport scheme or have a dedicated human contact in Transport for NSW to address their needs. I can go through quite a few concerns that have been raised. Can I ask you to please take the question on notice and come back with if you are aware or not aware of any specific concerns just from correspondence you have received? I've got a whole lot of students and their parents who have raised specific concerns. It's not a political issue; it's simply just a way of—they are saying the booking arrangements are clunky and outdated and they've got some sensible suggestions. If you could look at those, that would be great.

JOOST DE KOCK: I'm very happy to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW is consulting with the Isolated Children's Parents' Association and Lord Howe Island residents on alternatives to the flight booking and payment processes.

QoN025 – page 48-49

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So, \$1.5 billion in damage in total on State roads and regional roads; is that correct?

MATT FULLER: Yes, Mr Graham, that's correct. What I think we should do is take on notice the latest available figures that we have provided to the State recovery committee because, as I said, we have been providing updated data pretty consistently. Of course, as we've gone on, as the Minister highlighted, we had an initial assessment that was around that \$1.3 billion mark. We understand now, more fully, that basically our latest estimates are about \$1.3 billion on the local and regional road network.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Correct, yes.

MATT FULLER: And as the Minister talked about, another 150, thereabouts, on the State road network.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

MATT FULLER: If you combine the two of those, we are in that circa one and a half. But, as I said, I think it would be good for us to make sure that we come back because it is something—they were initial estimates; they have been refined over time.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. I think you made that point in the earlier session. I understood that clearly and I heard clearly the comments you put on the record. They coincide exactly with what you've just told

us. I accept that you've taken those on notice and you'll come back with specific estimates. But, just to clarify the numbers you have just given us, I understood they were the figures for the three events—that is, February, March and July.

MATT FULLER: The cumulative total as at July, based on all of the natural disaster events that have occurred in the time.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And they are statewide figures, not North Coast figures?

MATT FULLER: Yes. I probably should say that the figure hasn't moved a whole lot since July. There was much less damage in that July period and also, as we have refined, some of those estimates have come back a little as we get more detail from our local government partners. It was important in the early response to the flooding events, particularly in the north of the State, that we gave local government the chance to really send in and for us to collate information on the extent so that we could really inform the response, particularly around

what the Minister spoke to this morning in terms of the funding arrangements we advanced and a range of other things that our task force that we set up initiated in the early stages in response.

ANSWER

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 6.

QoN026 – page 49

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes, thank you. I would like to ask briefly some questions about the bus service alteration requests. Can I ask how many requests Transport for NSW received in the last financial year for a bus service alteration?

MATT FULLER: I'll actually hand to Barbara Wise to take these questions.

BARBARA WISE: No problem. Thank you. Are you specifically interested in regional New South Wales or overall?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I am happy for it to be disaggregated for both.

BARBARA WISE: Okay, we will need to take that on notice. I am happy to provide details around that matter.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Let's begin then with just regional. Have you got those figures?

BARBARA WISE: Not off the top of my head. There is a little bit of backwards and forwards when we do get a request because sometimes not sufficient information is—and then sometimes it doesn't actually turn into what we would call a bus service alteration request. It can be an inquiry. I will need to provide on notice the details.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Okay. My request is in relation to last financial year. How many requests have been finalised?

BARBARA WISE: Yes.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: How many requests were received? How many have been finalised?

How many are still outstanding? What was the average wait time?

BARBARA WISE: For the financial year 2021-22?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes.

BARBARA WISE: Not a problem, we'll take on that notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

317 Bus Service Alteration Requests were received from bus operators holding Rural and Regional Bus Service Contracts in the 2021-22 financial year. Of these, 267 have been finalised.

During the 2021-22, the average time spent processing a Request was 82 calendar days.

QoN027 – page 50

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: How long would you say it would take on average?

BARBARA WISE: On average, I would have to get you some details. As I said, because there can be some backwards and forwards, it may be that from when the actual final submission to a BSAR it would be a number of weeks or months generally.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: A number of weeks or months?

BARBARA WISE: Yes.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Okay. We have been advised that many of these requests are for desperately needed additional services in high-growth areas. Do you think it's acceptable for transport providers to be funding these additional routes because of the delay?

BARBARA WISE: Certainly in high-growth areas we deal with requests routinely for when there is high-growth residential areas going into schools. I'm not aware of operators funding these themselves. In the event that that did occur, we would certainly reimburse operators as part of a contract adjustment once it was sorted out.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: There are probably not a lot of additional questions I can ask without having the data. If you could get me the data we might look at this again at some supplementary hearing, if you can, in relation to this.

BARBARA WISE: Sure.

ANSWER

I am advised:

In most cases, route changes are not implemented until after the Bus Service Alteration Request is approved and financing is completed. Requests in relation to urgent issues such as capacity or safety are prioritised, and the additional service may be temporarily approved whilst the Request process is completed.

QoN028 – page 50-51

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I can advise in relation to tranche one, which was the 16 classifications that we have progressed, the costs are less than 5,000 and that relates to TFNSW employees.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Less than \$5,000?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: For tranche one, yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Would it be fair to say that's how much has been spent prior to June 2022?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: No, that is in relation to tranche one. There have been other activities in relation to other stages we have started to work on, inspections et cetera. I'll have to take that on notice and get back to you with those figures.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Let me ask the question more broadly. How much has been spent on reclassifications to June 2022?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: If we can get that information before the end of the session, we will provide that; otherwise I'll take it on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Great. That would be very welcome. This is just the standard budget reporting that we'd expect. How much has been allocated for this financial year for this program?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I don't have the breakdown from specifically within the budget. But the budget paper identifies 193 million in CapEx over the two years.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is a signature commitment from the Government. There must be a budget allocation for this financial year. I don't mind if you want to take a little bit of time to find it—

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes, we'll get that confirmed.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: But I would expect to be able to ask how much has been—I might just explain what I would like to know, and then I'm happy if you want to take a little bit of time.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I just want to have a clear understanding of the standard budget reporting how much have we spent to 22 June? How much has been allocated this financial year? How much has been allocated over the forwards, expecting that, given what is printed in the budget, I would have thought that is only next financial year. I may have misunderstood that, but I would have thought it is spent to date, allocated this year, allocated next year. I want to have an understanding of what are those figures.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: We'll come back and confirm that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The following table represents the budget and actual expenditure for the Regional Road Transfer and Road Classification Review implementation program:

	Expenditure to date - Opex (millions)	Budget – Opex (millions)	Budget – Capex* (millions)
FY22	\$ 0.82	\$ 1.00	
FY23		\$ 16.00	\$ 5.00
FY24		\$ 40.00	\$ 15.00
FY25			\$ 50.00
FY26			\$ 123.00
Total	\$ 0.82	\$ 57.00	\$ 193.00

* Subject to Final Business Case approval

QoN029 – page 51

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Okay. What are the terms of the members of the independent panel's employment—that is, for how long are they appointed?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I can get you the details. It is published and I'll confirm, but I understand it is through to the end of this year. But we'll confirm the actual date

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Through to the end of 2022.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Independent Panel members have been engaged to deliver the Final Report by late 2022.

QoN030 – page 52

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can I just ask briefly some questions about Fixing Country Rail? I note that, having had a brief look at lunchtime on the website, I couldn't see any details of the 18 successful projects that were funded under the \$17 million allocation for the 2020 round that was announced in February 2021. Is there a reason that they are not there, or have I just missed them?

MATT FULLER: I think it's fair to say that the website probably requires an update, but I will hand to Ms Heydon because I know she's well across the detail of the number of projects, including the 26 that have been completed.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Apologies; the website requires an update. We can provide the information around that round to you—if not today, we will take it as a question on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

All projects which have received funding under the Fixing Country Rail Program are now published on the Transport for NSW website.

QoN031

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I might just invite Mr Hayes back. I've just got a few follow-up questions on the Wee Waa school project. I note that you mentioned that you're working on a new proposal, which is a kiss-and-drop on George Street. Is that the same proposal that was originally put forward on the planning portal, which included compulsory acquiring of two residences to make room for this kiss-and-drop facility?

ANTHONY HAYES: I would need to take that away, I'm sorry. I don't have that level of detail, no, so I don't know.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Perhaps on notice, would you be able to—

ANTHONY HAYES: Yes, of course.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Obviously, this will probably be on notice as well: Did Transport for NSW support that original proposal to acquire those residences and put the kiss-and-drop on George Street?

ANTHONY HAYES: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: If it didn't, why? Any level of detail as to why that proposal was withdrawn or—the community are concerned because they saw that as the best option as well. Has Transport for NSW seen TTW—I'm assuming who is the contractor for this project—their response to your concerns? Have you seen that? I might pass that up to Mr Hayes. Obviously, part of Transport for NSW's concerns was that the design wasn't really future-focused in terms of the growth needs of the school and the contractor's response was, "Well, we can stagger the bell times in terms of students exiting the venue." Does Transport for NSW see that as a viable option?

ANTHONY HAYES: I'm not terribly familiar with the initial proposal. If I can take that away, we can certainly look into that. But our initial response would be that we

would always be looking for a safe place where kids can cross the road and that wouldn't be dependent upon a bell.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No. It is the preference of Transport for NSW that the kiss and drop area to be located within the school site and accessed via a local road.

QoN032

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I might just quickly turn to—while I'm bringing that up, the Wool Track road, which is the road between Cobar and Ivanhoe and Balranald, is there any indication as to whether funding will be granted to have that sealed all the way through, given it's an important freight route and becomes impassable in bad weather?

MATT FULLER: I think, Mr Banasiak, we would have to take that one on notice fully and just check whether or not there have been any submissions made and how we have responded to those.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Wool Track proposal consists of sealing four sections of road from Balranald to Cobar. Work on two sections between Balranald and Ivanhoe has been completed by Balranald Shire and Central Darling Shire councils.

The remaining two sections in the Wool Track proposal are the Cobar-Ivanhoe Road in the Central Darling Shire Council, and The Wool Track in Cobar Shire Council.

Local Councils receive funding under the Regional Road Block Grants to maintain Regional Roads, including the Cobar-Ivanhoe Road and The Wool Track.

The latest round of Fixing Country Roads opened on 22 August 2022 and closes on 14 October 2022.

QoN033

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Sure. Thank you. I've just got the question I need. There have been some concerns from residents in Menindee, both to my office and to my colleague Roy Butler's office, about the quality of work done on the sealing of Pooncarie Road—basically showing that 12 months after the work has been done, they are already in a need of drastic repair. Has the Minister tasked the department with looking into the shoddy workmanship and what can be done?

MATT FULLER: I might just see if Mr Hayes has got any information on Pooncarie Road. Can I just say more broadly, without reflecting on workmanship, we've had a number of challenges on works that have been recently completed under various programs across the State because of, obviously, what has been going on in the environment with weather. There have been some projects that have needed revisiting in terms of their pavement, the sealing, because of the unprecedented wet. Mr Hayes, do you have any specific on Pooncarie Road?

ANTHONY HAYES: No, I have nothing here. I would have to take that on notice.
The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You've had no representations from the Minister to look into it? I ask because my colleague has on numerous occasions requested the Minister to look into it and has received no response. I'm wondering where the breakdown is occurring in terms of communication.

MATT FULLER: We will certainly check with our western region, and I'm sure they will be able to provide us with a quick response. We can perhaps get back to you through the course of the day.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Pooncarie Road is under the care and control of Central Darling Shire Council and Wentworth Shire Council. Each Council is the legal delegated roads authority for the section of Pooncarie Road that passes through its Shire. As such, this is a matter for Central Darling and Wentworth Shire Councils.

QoN034 – page 53-54

As I say, there are 26 projects here of varying size and scale, all meeting the objectives of the program and having been completed in the recent past.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: And they were included in the \$17 million allocation for 2020?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: No. There is information available on the previous rounds on the website and, if not, we can make sure that you've got the full information. This isn't an annual program. It is actually a program that is essentially, through Transport for NSW delivery, looking at the New South Wales regional lines. A lot of what you'll see around previous projects have actually been around development and business cases. So last year we were doing development and business case activities, which have informed future rounds. And if you look—and we can demonstrate in the previous rounds—a lot of the development activities resulted in delivery of projects in the future rounds or further rounds after that. So essentially a lot of the earlier rounds were development and design. We concentrate on that and then we progress and request delivery funding.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Thank you. What has been the actual expenditure since the 2020 round?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Under the full program we have got committed for this year \$42.5 million. I'll have to go back and just double-check the full commitment of what was spent in the previous years. But overall we've got \$42.5 million this financial year and \$58.2 million the next year as well, and then all funds prior to that. Give me one moment and I'll just come back and confirm the commitments that have been made.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: If it's easier, a lot of my questions—the next few—relate to expenditure and it probably would be of assistance, and you may wish to take it on notice too. What I'm interested in is, for each financial year, what has been the allocation and how much has been expended since the program began, basically. My understanding is that there has been about \$400 million allocated.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: There has been \$400 million for the whole program. We have not allocated \$400 million. We've allocated \$229 million, and we can provide you with a breakdown of each of the rounds and the expenditure.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: That would be useful, please. I don't expect you to have that at hand.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: We'll take that on notice. But, yes, we can break down each round and expenditure.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information in relation to the Fixing Country Rail program is publicly available on the Transport for NSW website.

QoN035

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I'm asking all of these questions through the secretary, and please put them to whoever you think is appropriate. In Infrastructure Magazine, the Minister recently announced Riverina rail was going to be delivering a series of projects totalling over \$70 million in funding. How much of this was new funding and how much of it was projects that have been announced in previous rounds?

ROB SHARP: We'd have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This announcement included two projects, the Junee to Griffith Line Upgrade project and the Coolamon Loop Extension project. Details of these projects can be found on the Transport for NSW website.

QoN036

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Very happy to. Again, in *The Land* on 19 August, it was reported that Mr Murray Henderson from Wilga Park in Tullibigeal said that the Lake Cargelligo to Ungarie line, which is more than 100 years old and in need of an upgrade, fits right under the Fixing Country Rail umbrella but can't get a look in. Can you comment on why that might be the case?

ROB SHARP: The program does have an assessment criteria, and that includes productivity and safety benefits. It also looks at growth and the economic benefits that flow. So it would have to meet those hurdles. From my perspective it would appear it hasn't. Have you got a comment?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: No. We can come back with any detail around Cargelligo, but I'll say from an assessment perspective, it's probably not meeting the requirements of the freight benefit. This is also under Restart funding, so it does need to meet a BCR above one. So that may also be why it's not in the—

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Could you come back, because that would help us assess those criteria. Another one you may wish to take on notice too is, given the significant flood damage on the Tullamore Road between Cargelligo and Dubbo, which is still being used for freight, can you explain whether a connection from Lake Cargelligo to West Wyalong might be included and might be of interest?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: We'll have to look and assess that. I can't answer that right now.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I've got questions here from regional primary producers who are trying to get regional freight infrastructure updated but they can't see what happened since 2019. Essentially, the concerns that people have are that there's insufficient transparency. In part that may be related to the fact that, as indicated, the actual website hasn't been updated. Rather than go through each of those, you've already undertaken to update the website.

MATT FULLER: Mr Primrose, if you've got contacts there and primary producers, we'd be very happy to get in contact with them, understand what their issues are, consult with them further and see if we can assist.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Under Round 2018 of Fixing Country Rail, \$28.7 million was allocated to the Temora to Calleen Upgrade project.

Under Round 2020 of Fixing Country Rail, funding was provided for project development activities for Calleen to Lake Cargelligo and Naradhan - 25 Tonne Axle Load TAL upgrade and Temora to Lake Cargelligo – Intermediate Loops. The Lake Cargelligo to Ungarie line may be considered in the options development stage of the project.

All projects which have received funding under the Fixing Country Rail Program are published on the Transport for NSW website.

QoN037

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I appreciate that. Thank you for that. Is any of the money under this program going towards level crossing safety to do with Inland Rail?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: No, this is a separate funding and program.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Heydon, I was just going to ask about any update on those financial figures.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: No, I don't have those. If we could take it on notice and we can give you the detail.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 30.

QoN038 – page 55

Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm glad you mentioned it. I was going to ask about it later.

MATT FULLER: Just to clarify, because I thought you might ask about that one, Two Mile has been reopened. It does have some traffic control, so there is single-lane access down there, given the recent slips that we have had on Jenolan Caves Road. But we've been working very closely with the Caves House and the management of the caves, and the team has been able to reinstate that—I think pretty quickly. They have done an amazing job there. We do have some other roads that are under controlled access. Some of the challenges we have had through the State, particularly in relation to some of those east-west corridors—

we've been working very closely with communities to maintain those connections and to give them access.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As of today, how many roads are under controlled access?

MATT FULLER: I'd have to get back with that exact figure. But to give you a couple of live examples, we have single-lane access on some of those corridors like Cambewarra Mountain, Moss Vale into Kangaroo Valley and Waterfall Way on the North Coast. There are a number of sections where we still have controlled access, just to ensure that those corridors are kept safe.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. Acknowledging that and acknowledging the \$90 million that has been allocated now, an increase over the last financial year, the regional and outer metropolitan division assets and services plan 2021-22 to 2030-31 had the overall 10-year funding shortfall—I think these would have been June 2019 figures—at \$805 million. That was pavement repair, bridges, roadside assets, traffic facilities—as you observed, State roads, not local roads. What is the updated figure that is comparable now?

MATT FULLER: Are you talking in terms of a maintenance backlog figure?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm talking here about what was identified in the earlier version of the assets and services plan at that point. I understand for 30 June 2019 it was a figure of \$805 million. What is that figure now?

MATT FULLER: I don't want to misquote a figure, so perhaps I'll take that on notice and come back as to how that has moved.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. I might indicate that it's on page 69 of that report, if that is helpful.

MATT FULLER: Okay.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The funding shortfall is the difference between the optimal preventative and renewal maintenance expenditure, considering whole-of-life deterioration of the asset and available funding over a defined funding period. It is a different calculation to the maintenance backlog which is a point in time calculation. As at 1 September 2022, there are 60 locations of restricted access on State roads.

The Regional and Outer Metropolitan Asset and Services Plan 2021-22 to 2030-31 contains information relating to road maintenance shortfall.

QoN039 – page 56

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Thank you. I want to ask about one final figure before I hand to my colleague. That same assets and services plan, this is 2021-22 to 2030-31, identified on the page before that, page 68, that the maintenance backlog overall had jumped to \$2.955 billion by 30 June 2019. That's a matter of fact. I'd like an update on that figure, firstly, which I presume you can either give us or—

MATT FULLER: As I say, that's about 4.9 per cent of the asset base as it stands at the moment.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And what is that in actual terms?

MATT FULLER: I'll get that actual figure for you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So you'll get that shortly?

MATT FULLER: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Great, thank you. I'm clear on what you've put to me to date, but I want to understand what is the difference between that figure and the NRMA figure. The NRMA figure only applies to roads. This is regional transport generally, as I understand it.

MATT FULLER: This is the State road network in our figure. Sorry, I do have that figure. It is \$3.778 billion, which is 4.9 per cent of the asset base.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: At what date? As at today or as at 30 June?

MATT FULLER: I would have to check the exact date for you, but that is what I understand is in the current plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, okay. So it's the most recent figure, it's fair to say.

MATT FULLER: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: But if you could get me the date, that would be welcome.

MATT FULLER: Can do.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Regional and Outer Metropolitan Asset and Services Plan 2021-22 to 2030-31 refers to a road maintenance backlog of \$2.955 billion as at 30 June 2019.

The maintenance backlog is a different number to the maintenance funding shortfall number and are not comparable. The maintenance backlog is the forecast cost to bring infrastructure to a defined standard, assessed at a point in time. The maintenance funding shortfall is the difference between the optimal preventative and renewal maintenance expenditure, considering whole-of-life deterioration of the asset and available funding over a defined funding period.

QoN040 – page 57

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I just want to come back to the question I started out with, Mr Fuller, because it may become important down the track. I presume the NRMA is going to put out another report. I want to understand the difference between what's included in the assets and services plan calculations and what the NRMA is talking about. I think the difference, Mr Fuller, is that the NRMA is talking about State and local roads— roads only. This figure that's in the plan—the bigger figure, the \$2.9 billion now up to \$3.8 billion—is actually State roads and other transport assets in the region. Is that correct?

MATT FULLER: That would be my understanding, but we'll take the question away and we'll do an analysis of what's in the NRMA report and just make sure that we line it up against it. We're happy to do that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I appreciate it. I think that would be helpful, presuming they're going to then put out another set of figures.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Regional and Outer Metropolitan Asset and Services Plan 2021-22 to 2030-31 refers to a Regional and Outer Metropolitan road maintenance backlog on state

assets of \$2.955 billion as at 30 June 2019. This is a point in time calculation, it does not include other transport mode maintenance backlog.
The definition and method of calculating road maintenance requirements reported by the NRMA is not known and it is not possible to compare against the road maintenance backlog reported in the Regional and Outer Metropolitan Asset and Services Plan.

QoN041

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I've just got one line of questioning and then I'll throw back to the Opposition. Hopefully this will close the loop on my earlier questions around the intermodal. Notwithstanding the Minister's comments about how most of this is to do with the council and notwithstanding your comments that you didn't fund the project but you administered it—you essentially built it—I am grappling with the concept that any agency that has been fiscally responsible would spend \$35 million on enabling works for a project when that project doesn't have a business case and has questionable financial benefits. I still don't believe we have a public-facing business case for that. Is this common practice for your agency, Mr Sharp, where you would spend or budget for a significant amount of money to enable a project that hasn't been properly assessed in terms of its benefits to cost?

ROB SHARP: The short answer is no, but in this case the business case, I'm presuming, is sitting with another agency. We would provide the input and the costs into that and there would be a BCR and, obviously, criteria in there for that sum of money to be approved. We took on notice to go back and obtain that information. I don't have it. I'm not privy to it. But anything of this size I can assure the Committee that we do actually go through a formal approval process. There have to be benefits in there and we also revert, if it's our business case, on benefit realisation subsequently to see where we landed. Did we exceed it? If we didn't, are there things we can do to close the gap? That process is part of what we do for all our projects. But for the large projects in particular, that's formalised through the Infrastructure NSW gateway review process, including the benefit realisation at the end. But in this particular case, I am suspecting we provided input. We were asked to actually build the rail, but it's probably a similar business case and will come back to you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 11.
Transport for NSW has completed the rail line reactivation component of the project. The remaining works are to be completed by Tamworth Regional Council.

QoN042

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: In relation to Inland Rail grade separations, is the plan still to have no new level crossings on the Inland Rail throughout New South Wales?

MATT FULLER: Thank you for your question, Mr Primrose. Essentially, our position has always been to avoid increasing the number of level crossings on the Inland

Rail corridor, yes. Whether that is what eventuates, that's obviously still a decision to be taken by the Inland Rail through ARTC and the Federal Government project. We continue to advise and support Inland Rail with recommendations and reviews, particularly in relation to safety as I talked about this morning when the question came up about Wagga and the Albury to Illabo section.

We are often there as, I guess, an adviser and supporting community at some of the community events. We often make submissions on the EIS's that occur from the Inland Rail, which talk to our thoughts about relevant safety matters, and we use the nationally recognised process to review the safety of those proposed level crossings and that helps inform those that have been prioritised for the grade separation.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Am I correct in saying there are 22 crossings?

MATT FULLER: On the State road network there are 26. At the moment there is funding to prioritise four of those.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Okay. You see, my understanding—and you've already alluded to one council—is that several councils have interpreted earlier discussions and announcements in relation to Inland Rail that basically there was going to be some sort of funding to eliminate those. But they're concerned now that they're not high on a priority list. There seems to be a bit of confusion and you've already alluded to that. It would probably be of interest to us if we could just get a list of those 26, which are currently proposed to be funded, and some idea of when, or if, and how the remainder may be eliminated so we can at least zero in on which ones people are concerned about and which ones they shouldn't be.

MATT FULLER: Sure. We'd be happy to do that. Just to be clear, the 26 aren't currently funded. There are certainly four priority crossings that are funded.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: So, we're talking 30?

MATT FULLER: Sorry?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Is it 26 plus four?

ROB SHARP: Less four.

MATT FULLER: Less four.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: So that's 22.

MATT FULLER: There are 22 that are not funded so, my apologies; I should have clarified that.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Okay.

MATT FULLER: But of the 26, four have been prioritised for funding.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Okay.

MATT FULLER: But we'd be happy to take that away and provide some more information about the list as it currently stands.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It would be valuable too, as I said, as part of that list to get some idea of the priority ordering. I accept there will be ongoing discussions but there is confusion out there.

ANSWER

I am advised:

A total of 26 at grade interfaces with the NSW Classified Road network exist along the Inland Rail corridor in NSW. Australian Rail Track Corporation has committed to grade separate four interfaces as part of the Inland Rail project.

Transport for NSW is in the early planning stages for the remaining 22 interfaces as part of the Grade Separating Road Interfaces program. Transport for NSW has

determined the priority ranking of all 22 interfaces and on 31 August 2022 informed Councils along the Inland Rail corridor of the rankings.

QoN043

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: They're often sort of backcast a little bit. So, I'm asking about 2021-22. You're giving me now 2022-23, so it might even just be June 2020. Could that be right?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: It's effective as of—so, we develop the plan in the prior financial year, so while we developed it in 2021, it is live and effective as of 2022-23.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. So when was the backlog of \$3.778 billion? At what point in time?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I'll have to confirm that it was earlier this calendar year that we finalised the plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's not my question. The question is: When was the backlog—

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Which will be when that backlog date was effective.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Right.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Because that would be live information when we finalised the plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Okay. All right. Fantastic. So, that would be really helpful, that date. I do just want to ask Mr Fuller, in talking about the difference between those figures—one much smaller dealing with State roads, one much bigger dealing with the general regional backlog—what are the biggest assets that would be in that general regional backlog? Just give us an idea. One figure's a lot bigger than the other.

MATT FULLER: Sorry: The NRMA's figure, you mean, versus—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. I'm asking about the assets and services plan for your division.

MATT FULLER: Well, our assets incorporate, obviously, road and rail infrastructure. They incorporate fleet. They incorporate a range of things.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So what would be the biggest contributor to that much bigger figure when you look right across your asset base to the maintenance backlog?

MATT FULLER: I could come back to you with the exact detail on that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yeah, presuming it's not the roads. Thank you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

As at June 2022, the Regional and Outer Metropolitan road maintenance backlog is \$3.787 billion. The maintenance backlog is the forecast cost to bring infrastructure to a defined standard, assessed at a point in time. The backlog amounts to 4.9 per cent of the Regional and Outer Metropolitan state road network replacement cost.

Pavement is the largest component of the state road maintenance backlog, this includes both our spray seal, asphalt and concrete pavement across the regions.

QoN044 – page 60

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I am looking at point 12 of the Minister's answer: 2021-22 financial year, as at 17 June, \$9.891 million had been spent on the subsidy out of the \$18 million.

JOOST DE KOCK: The budget numbers that I have here for 2021-22 was \$30.6 million and I don't actually have the actual expenditure here at the moment. Over the last few years, of course, COVID has significantly impacted the patronage as well, so I have to take on notice what the exact expenditure was for the different years.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: As I said, I am just quoting from the Minister's figures, which presumably are worked out by you guys and the Minister's office signed off on them: \$9.891 million, and \$520,000.28 as of 17 June out of a total subsidy program of \$18 million.

JOOST DE KOCK: This was the School Student Transport Scheme?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes, School Drive Subsidy.

JOOST DE KOCK: It is the drive subsidy? There are two schemes. There is the school subsidy and there is also the drive subsidy scheme as well.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes, but the budget for the School Drive Subsidy is \$18 million per annum, according to the Minister.

JOOST DE KOCK: I will have to confirm that. But you are right, there are two types of scheme. One is the school transport scheme and there is also the School Drive Subsidy.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: And the Preschool Drive Subsidy. The question that the shadow Minister asked was about the School Drive Subsidy. They did talk about both projects but the specific response was, correctly, in relation to the question asked by the shadow Minister, which was in relation to the School Drive Subsidy.

JOOST DE KOCK: I am very happy to take that detail on notice, how those two subsidy schemes are split up and what the budget versus expenditure has been.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: The question then is why was only half the program money spent? The Minister's indicated that the total program is \$18 million and there is only \$9.8 million subsidy.

JOOST DE KOCK: I will also take that on notice. But I also notice that during the last few years, obviously, COVID—

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: The question then is what has happened to the rest of the funding and is there any scope for any excess in the program to be used to enhance school bus services? Could that be taken on notice as well?

JOOST DE KOCK: Yes. Happy to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

COVID-19 and the associated Public Health Orders impacted travel arrangements that the School Drive Subsidy scheme funds. Unused funding was not carried forward to future years, however it was made available for other Transport for NSW schemes and activities.

QoN045

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: If we can keep trying on that, that would be helpful. Mr Sharp, I want to come back on that headline question to you. I think it is appropriate to ask you this, as the secretary. It is on that question I put to the Minister and he was very uncomfortable answering. I don't expect you to comment on this. He gave the answer he did just about the number of roads that have been transferred to date under what I put to him was a signature commitment by his government. He can give whatever answer he gives. I am not asking you to comment on that. But I do think it is fair to ask you, as the secretary of the agency. I thought it was clear that as of today no roads have been transferred. I understand some have been dealt with in the other part of the program, but no roads have yet. That is, some have been reclassified in that tranche one of the priority round. But it is correct, isn't it, that no roads have yet been transferred?

ROB SHARP: As you rightly point out, it is a program. The program has a large number of activities, including various tranches, a panel that is reviewing. In respect to an actual physical transfer, I would have to take that on notice. I don't know. If you could comment?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has been working with the relevant Councils to facilitate the complex and detailed process of the transfer of roads under the Regional Road Transfer and Road Classification Review, to enable identification and prioritisation of remediation work and inform timeframes for the completion of these Regional Road Transfers.

QoN046 – page 62

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I will finish up on the School Drive Subsidy. The Minister's answer indicated that there were 12,322 children covered by the Schools Drive Subsidy, but I would like to focus on the Preschool Drive Subsidy pilot. The Minister indicated back in July there were 81 children covered by that and that \$2 million had been allocated for the Preschool Drive Subsidy pilot, including implementation and administration costs. Can you tell us how long that pilot will continue?

JOOST DE KOCK: The Preschool Drive Subsidy is a pilot, and it's a joint Transport for NSW and Department of Education initiative. It started in the 2022 school year. This pilot will provide a subsidy for families living in remote and very remote areas in New South Wales so their children can access preschool services by offsetting part of the transport costs of driving children to participate in preschool. This is for preschool children. The pilot is voluntary for both the preschools and the families. As part of the pilot, 91 preschools were identified to be eligible for the pilot. To date 29 preschools have agreed to participate. We have received 102 applications for semester 1, covering travel for terms 1 and 2, and they're now being processed for the payments. The subsidy is paid at the same rate as the School Drive Subsidy. The main difference for the pilot is that the payment for journeys is capped at a maximum distance of 50 kilometres between home and preschool. Attendance is also capped at 86 days per annum. The pilot is being evaluated by the Department of Education. The pilot is underway at the moment.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Thank you. That's all very valuable information and I appreciate it. When is the pilot due to expire?

JOOST DE KOCK: I'll have to check how long the pilot will actually last for. As I mentioned before, it will be evaluated by the Department of Education. But I will get back to you with the duration and the exact budget for the pilot.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: If it's really valuable and people are finding it of value, I'm interested as to whether people suddenly find they really value it and then find it has stopped. That is the obvious question. There is a whole lot of questions I'd like to ask in relation to its operation. For instance, do bus operators have to accept preschool students who are aged over four years of age? What are the guidelines in relation to assessing independent travel readiness? For example, do the students have to be toilet trained? There is a whole range of those operational things I'm interested in. But let's begin by asking—and I'll come back to it if you can find out for me before we finish today—when the pilot is due to finish, and is there an expectation that it will then continue?

JOOST DE KOCK: I will try to find out as soon as I can how long the pilot will last.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Preschool Drive Subsidy Pilot is a joint Transport for NSW and Department of Education initiative commenced in the 2022 school year. The evaluation of the Pilot is being undertaken by the Department of Education. Continuation of the Pilot will be considered following completion of the evaluation. As participation in the Pilot, by both preschools and families is voluntary, sufficient data has not yet been collected for an effective evaluation. It is expected that the Pilot will continue until an effective evaluation can be conducted.

QoN047 – page 62

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Sharp, I want to return to some of those costings issues. I might ask about a different one while we're waiting for those other figures. I refer now to the budget papers, and the transport section of page 19 of the regional budget statement. I think it is the larger, A4 version where you might find that regional statement. You can see there that under transport, that second from bottom paragraph, \$201.2 million— have you got that one?

ROB SHARP: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That is a rolled-up figure for Fixing Country Bridges, the 16 Cities program and the Fixing Local Roads Program. It doesn't say whether that is a two-year, three-year or four-year figure. I'm interested in what is the allocation to Fixing Local Roads that the budget refers to?

ROB SHARP: We'll take that on notice and break that out.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The \$201.2 million is for the 2022-23 financial year. The allocation for the Fixing Local Roads program is approximately \$143 million.

QoN048 – page 62-63

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And we don't know—or feel free to tell me that we do know—how much is allocated this financial year?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: We'll take that on notice. Just for clarity, the rounds reflect the total allocation for that round. The projects do have a two-year delivery window so the expenditure will be slightly different to the allocation. If we can take that on notice, we can come back with the distinction between the expenditure.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Accepted. That's a good point. Of course, some of this might have slipped or may have been just ordinary program delivery, but what is the allocation this year and what is the allocation in the rest of the forward estimates?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: With regards to this year, this will be influenced predominantly by round four and we are going through the process at the moment. We'll be looking, hopefully, to announcements around round four towards the end of this year. That will then inform what the funding cashflow requirement is for this financial year and beyond.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I am asking—there is a budget figure here of \$201.2 million. I'm really asking what the budgeted figure is that has been allocated. That's my specific question, not what you might change it to.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: We can come back and confirm what the funding allocation is for this financial year for that program.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Great. Could you come back on notice and tell me what is then in the rest of the forward estimates for that?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: For Fixing Local Roads?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 47.

QoN049 – page 63

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I presume it will be less than the \$201.2 million allocated for the range of projects here that is referred to in the budget paper?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes. The reference that you've taken from that on page 19 refers to several programs.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Do you know if that is a two-year allocation, as the one below it is, or a four-year allocation, as the one above it is? The budget is silent on this.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I'll have to come back and confirm that, if we could take that on notice?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Great. That would be helpful. But we still don't know about the roads reclassification funding?

CYNTHIA HEYDON: I'd request if we could take that on notice, mainly because I want to make sure that we're giving accurate information—particularly because we have had some expenditure that is just our day-to-day work—and make sure that we are providing accurate information of expenditure against the various tranches as well.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Look, I preface this by saying I have generally found the Transport officials excellent at giving information. This is a signature Government commitment so I'm a bit frustrated to have to take this year's allocation on notice. I would have thought that is just something that we could ask about and is easily to hand. Having said that, if you could take that on notice, understood. What I would like to ensure, though, is that we have that breakdown: what's been spent to date, what is in this financial year and, for each of the years ahead, what is the allocation?
CYNTHIA HEYDON: The forward estimates?
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We just need that information to be able to do our jobs.
ROB SHARP: Your point is noted.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 28 and 48.

QoN050 – page 65

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: How far from a change in speed zone could a vehicle be parked?
TARA McCARTHY: I would have to take that on notice.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Thank you. If you could—
TARA McCARTHY: Mr Carlon may know that. No.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Thank you. If you could take that on notice. How far from another vehicle could a mobile speed camera vehicle be parked?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Mobile speed camera sites should not be located within 300 metres of a decrease in speed limit or within 100 metres of an increase in speed limit.
A minimum clearance of 15 metres in front of and 15 metres behind the mobile speed camera vehicle is required.

QoN051 – page 65

TARA McCARTHY: It's important to understand that that is a protocol that has been iterative. It wasn't in place on 1 April. We have responded to community concerns.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's why I'm asking that, because it has changed. And that is 10 to 15 metres presumably in front and 10 to 15 metres behind?
TARA McCARTHY: That's correct.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And are these written protocols?
TARA McCARTHY: They are.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Can you supply the protocol to the Committee?
TARA McCARTHY: Yes, I believe so, on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 50.

QoN052 – page 65

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: How many reports have you had? Obviously this has come about as a result of reports made where motorists felt these vehicles were not appropriately positioned. How many reports has Transport for NSW had?

TARA McCARTHY: I would have to take the exact number on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: If you could, that would be welcome. Subtly

ROB SHARP: Mr Graham, just to clarify on that, there are two ways we receive information. Some of it is very public, through radio stations and others just ringing in. We obviously follow those up. But we do have

a hotline specifically for this. We have been promoting it. If someone has a concern, they can ring that hotline, and we track that. That data will be available and we are happy to share that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Thank you. I really appreciate it. I was interested in specifically, also, just this idea of foliage maintenance. On how many occasions will you have had to respond to a report, go out and deal with the foliage issue?

TARA McCARTHY: Again, I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that would be fair to ask you to take that on notice rather than have that here.

ANSWER

I am advised:

From 1 July 2021 to 1 September 2022, there has been approximately 90 written and verbal representations to Transport for NSW and to the Ministers within the Transport and Infrastructure Cluster regarding the position of mobile speed camera vehicles.

The table below outlines the total number of occasions site maintenance was undertaken, which includes but is not limited to trimming trees, cutting long grass and/or cutting foliage.

Site Maintenance	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22
Total	51	57	56	111	201	206	249	233	140	81	252	92	87	96

QoN053

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Essentially, what you are telling us there is that these signs cost \$2.6 million to install. How much was that for each operator?

TARA McCARTHY: I would have to take that on notice. It would be based, obviously, on the split of the fleet.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: On the number of vehicles operating, correct. The Minister in the House—this is Minister Ward now—has said, "Look, the State is happily paying for those." But you are saying that in the course of negotiations, as I understood it, the penalties that might apply for these two operators not meeting the hours that they had contracted to have been offset in some way. Is that the view you are putting? They

should have paid a penalty but we—

TARA McCARTHY: They only get paid for the hours that they deliver. Because they were unable to deliver the 21,000 hours at the commencement of the contract, there was money available within the contract to pay the \$2.6 million.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Was that by way of a penalty or by way of a withheld payment?

TARA McCARTHY: It's a withheld payment.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: How many hours have been delivered in each month of this program?

TARA McCARTHY: I would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, could you just take it on notice? This was the subject of discussion earlier and Mr Carlon gave us some excellent information at the time. But I think it would be an appropriate point to ask for each month looking backwards.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The signage costs, excluding GST, were approximately \$1.22 million for Redflex and \$1.36 million for Acusensus.

The table below depicts the number of hours that have been delivered by month between September 2021 to August 2022.

	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
Total	9,641	13,648	15,878	17,673	21,159	17,203	12,706	7,380	17,285	18,514	11,479

QoN054

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that's an important distinction. There was a time when the capacity was not there. It had been promised and contracted and it was not there. You are making the point that we are now past that. But, if we could ask: What is the number of hours that have been delivered for each of the operators—that is, separating them out—over each month looking back perhaps over the last 12 months?

TARA McCARTHY: Yes, we can do that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The number of hours that have been delivered by each operator by month between September 2021 to July 2022:

Vendor	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22
Redflex	6,975	7,930	8,947	9,344	11,960	10,631	7,321	3,986	9,511	10,679	6,415
Acusensus	2,666	5,718	6,931	8,329	9,199	6,572	5,384	3,395	7,774	7,835	5,064

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Sharp, I might turn back to those questions about the regional seniors travel card and the issue of the low balance. If your account balance falls below \$5 and you don't use it within 30 days, then the funds are forfeited to Transport for NSW. Those are the operational practices. The agency is quite up-front about that with the public. Can you tell us: Where does this money go and how often has this been the case?

ROB SHARP: Yes, it would be part of the treatment of any card that has ultimately a low balance. If you got down to a dollar, what do you do with that dollar? I will just pass over to Mr de Kock who has an update on that question.

JOOST DE KOCK: Yes, sure. The regional seniors travel card, customers are awarded that to the tune of \$250 to assist in offsetting that travel cost in the regions. Most of the customers actually use that amount. In terms of the demand of expenditure that people have used already, it is about \$184 million that has already been injected back into the regional community. About 96 per cent or so of the expenditure actually goes on to fuel, followed by taxicabs and then followed by TrainLink services. The vast majority of customers use that. But when the card balance reaches \$5 or less, people are encouraged to use that in the next 30 days. If the balance stays below \$5 for 30 days, the card is discontinued. That is consistent with the terms and conditions of the cards that are provided to the customers.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Understood. Where does the money go?

JOOST DE KOCK: I will have to take that on notice and how that fits into the overall envelope of the program. I will have to take that on notice. I will take on notice how much that was and how that is used.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I appreciate that. If you could take on notice perhaps the following things: Where does the money go? You suggest—but perhaps on notice if you could confirm—that the money is then quarantined within this program. Feel free to confirm that now.

JOOST DE KOCK: I will have to take on notice how the exact treatment of that works.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that's fair. For how many individuals has this occurred? That is, for how many cards has the balance fallen below \$5 and been reclaimed?

JOOST DE KOCK: We will get those numbers on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And, perhaps, if there is a distinction between—I would have thought the number of low balances and the number of expired cards should be equal. You really have to satisfy both of those conditions for the money to be reclaimed by Transport. If that is not the case, could you confirm separately for each of those?

JOOST DE KOCK: Are you asking the question are there some cards where people—because they have got a year, 14 months to use it—still just let it expire? Is that the question?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

JOOST DE KOCK: I'll try to take it on notice to see whether we have those funds.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So perhaps I might have \$100 left and I just haven't used it in time—

I have tucked it in the back of the drawer or perhaps lost it in the washing machine. All those things certainly

happen at our place; I'm not sure if they happen at yours. Is it the case at that point that the funds are forfeited?

JOOST DE KOCK: I will try to take that on notice. I don't have the detail. I don't have it in my notes

how much that is and what actually happens to those funds.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Finally, what is the total quantum of funds which have been reclaimed in this way either from expired or from low balance cards?

JOOST DE KOCK: I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Regional Senior Travel Cards expire 14 months after their issue. Cards will also be closed 30 days after the value of the card falls below \$5.

Of the total 692,388 cards issued across 2020 and 2021, 352,817 were closed, where the value had fallen below \$5 and not fully used within 30 days of reaching that threshold.

Funds remaining on closed cards are returned to Transport for NSW to be used for the next round of the program.

QoN056 – page 67-68

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Great. We have talked about this before, and I apologise because I can't recall the answer. The cards are provided by Westpac. What was the quantum of fees or charges or money that Westpac was earning as a result of this program? Was it anything?

JOOST DE KOCK: Can you repeat the last part of the question again?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Is Westpac, the provider of these cards, earning any fees or charges?

JOOST DE KOCK: I can't answer the question in a specific piece for Westpac, but the overall administration of this scheme is about 16 per cent of the overall scheme. That includes both the cost of

Service NSW doing the customer service, as well arrangements with Westpac, but also the production and distribution of these cards.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Perhaps you can tell us in the last financial year what has Westpac earned out of this, either by way of fees, charges or the contract payment from the State?

JOOST DE KOCK: I don't have that detail so I will take that on notice what we can provide in that space.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: My recollection is that that was not particularly significant. Where there potentially was an issue was the data. It is potentially very valuable to have access to this data. We asked some questions about this, possibly years ago now. What I really want to know now is have there been any changes to the management of that data in the way this program is dealt with since the program began? I am asking about—

I mean, we are providing the names and addresses of seniors across the State. There is some significant benefit to a financial institution in getting that information. Have there been any changes? What are the current protocols around what they are allowed or not allowed to use that data for?

JOOST DE KOCK: Obviously, we take any customer information and data very seriously. But I will have to take that on notice what the specific arrangements are with third-party providers.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Detailed figures on fees and charges payable to Westpac as part of the Regional Seniors Travel Card provisioning and management, are commercial-in-confidence. Westpac is bound by State and Commonwealth privacy legislation. Additionally, the NSW Government's Banking Agreement with Westpac states that Westpac must only collect, use, access, disclose or hold personal information for the purposes of performing its obligations.

QoN057 – page 69

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Who made the decision about the service provider last time? Was that a Treasury or a Transport decision? I am now referring to the regional seniors card.

JOOST DE KOCK: I would have to take on notice who actually made that decision.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Small Business and Minister for Fair Trading.

QoN058 – page 70

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Rather than pursue this one, so we have some idea of what we're talking about, can you provide—probably on notice—what the quantum is of bicycle and board luggage fees that have been paid by commuters travelling on NSW TrainLink regional trains in the last financial year? I want to know how much was actually paid by people to take their boards and bikes on.

DALE MERRICK: I will take that on notice.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: That would give us an idea of the demand that we're talking about.

ANSWER

I am advised:

During the 2021-22 financial year, there were:

- 1,137 journeys involving a bicycle, totalling \$10,736.67
- 298 journeys involving a surfboard, totalling \$2,771.34
- 61 journeys involving a fold up bicycle which are not charged a fee.

QoN059 – page 70

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: The new XPLOER service will have only three spaces available for bicycles.

DALE MERRICK: Which document are you referring to, just for clarity?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: The Transport for NSW website.

DALE MERRICK: I will take that on notice. Ms Drover is here as well, as well as Ms Heydon. But my understanding is that offering the ability to have bikes, as I said before, on our new regional fleet—I think what's being referred to here is the trains that will replace the existing XPLOER fleet and it takes part of that review that I just referred to before, in that they are part of fleet that is being procured.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Could you also take on notice does the new fleet have the capacity to expand the number of spaces if it turns out that there's a demand by consumers?

DALE MERRICK: We can take on that board. As I said, as Ms Drover and Ms Heydon would know, the train is still in the design phase—early design phase.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: That's excellent because, presumably, then you could take account of consumer demand if they are being designed. I don't expect you to answer that straightaway, but if you would take it on notice. I have absolutely no idea what the demand would be, but if, as everyone expects, the demand for this does increase in the future, it would be good to have it, particularly if some future government decides to bring equity to the whole system and allow people in regional New South Wales to actually have bikes and boards on for free as their city cousins do.

CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes, we will take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The new fleet will have dedicated bike spaces. The number of dedicated bike spaces and spaces available for bicycle storage is not yet finalised.

The current bike storage method on the XPT and XPLOER trains is part of NSW TrainLink luggage handling policy and procedure. The policy and procedure for the storage and carriage of bikes and cargo will be reviewed before the new regional fleet is introduced. As part of this review process, concept testing will be carried out regarding the feasibility and viability of taking and storing bikes on-board without boxing.

When assessing alternative options, consideration needs to be given to securing bikes during travel for the safety of all on-board; the ease of taking bikes on and off the train and securing in storage; the space available for unboxed bikes; and the storage needs of other customers.

QoN060

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: They have reviewed it and they have had the chance to have their input?

MATT FULLER: There was an open session with Mr Willett from that freight transport advisory committee, where we had a number of the members participate and provide feedback, but there have been a number of other both open sessions and also requested targeted sessions with—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: What's the timing of that final report, then, to the Minister?

MATT FULLER: I would have to get back to you, but I know it's between now and the end of the year. I think the expectation is—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The suggestion was perhaps at the end of September. Does that sound accurate?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Yes, the report is expected to be submitted later this year.

QoN061 – page 71-72

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: One of the things that's referred to here is the abolition of the Minister's power to regulate surcharges. I just wanted to be clear about precisely what we're talking about there. This relates to the same powers that Minister Constance threatened to use previously to regulate some of the charges. Are we talking about the same power to regulate surcharges?

MATT FULLER: I'd have to clarify the direct comparison. I wouldn't like to comment on the overarching position and what will be put forward until we see the recommendations from Mr Willett. He's obviously created a broad net of options.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Feel free to not buy into this inflammatory language; however, my real question is are these the powers that Minister Constance threatened to use to keep prices down and then did absolutely nothing about, leaving these freight operators totally exposed to significant price rises?

MATT FULLER: I'll take on notice just to verify, but I think, broadly speaking, your assumption is correct.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The *Ports and Maritime Administration Act 1995* and Port Botany Landside Improvement Strategy are subject to an independent review.

The option to remove the broad power to regulate stevedore charges in relation to the Strategy, was put forward in the Options Paper to the Independent Review of the *Ports and Maritime Administration Act 1995* and the Port Botany Landside Improvement Strategy.

The Independent Reviewer, Mr Ed Willett, has consulted with industry on all options put forward and will make his final recommendations to government on any changes to the Act or the Strategy.

The NSW Government will then consider and respond to the recommendations, including analysis of the impact and suitability of any recommendations.

The NSW Government's position in relation to stevedore charges was outlined in its submission to the Productivity Commission inquiry into Australia's Maritime Logistics System.

QoN062 – page 72-73

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: What will be the interaction between the TACP and the RISSB, the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board?

DALE MERRICK: Thanks again for the question. I'm not that familiar with the platform that's being referred to, but what I would say is that as a rail agency within the sector—within Transport—the relationship with the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board is ongoing and we are participating in many of their safety programs.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Please take this on notice because I'm not being silly about it. In the development of all of these things, there's obviously a concern about duplication and if something goes wrong, who's actually responsible. My question is simply what will be done to ensure there's no duplication? Please take that on notice, if you would.

DALE MERRICK: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

There is no duplication of work effort between these two programs as the Transport Asset Custodian Platform is building an asset register while the Rail industry Safety & Standards Board is providing rail specific standards and guidelines and not defining any asset class structures.

QoN063 – page 74

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can I ask you, in relation to BusNSW and the range of options to increase driver recruitment, are there any particular options that are currently being positively looked at?

BARBARA WISE: I would say that none of them—well, as far as I'm aware, because I'm not involved in all of the discussions. But in terms of the discussions I've been involved in, certainly we haven't ruled anything out. As Mr Sharp mentioned, a lot of it does go down to—in fact, BusNSW did talk about in that submission, if we're referring to the same one from July, visa categories and those kinds of things as well. We're actually working across the entire agency—so with my colleagues in Greater Sydney as well—on working with bus operators in an on-the-ground kind of way to see what we can do to help speed up processes around driver licensing, for example.

ROB SHARP: There are some interesting examples, though. Hunter Valley Buses has been running a trainee program and they've had 44 new people come through there over the last six months, so each organisation is targeting different initiatives and some are actually being quite successful. I do think there are some really good opportunities in the regional areas to create jobs and bring in traineeships, not just on buses but more generally, even within Transport.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Obviously training heavy-vehicle drivers is also critical, I understand. I'm not going to try to confuse the two issues here at the moment, but they are obviously interrelated. Just on this matter, can I ask you to please take on notice: Since 1 January this year, on how many occasions has Transport for NSW been advised of cancelled bus services due to workforce shortages? How many of these occurrences involved school buses? And how many complaints has Transport for NSW received in relation to this matter over that period of time?

ROB SHARP: We'll take those on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Between 1 January 2022 and 31 August 2022, of the 742,674 scheduled Rural and Regional Bus services, less than 300 or 0.03 per cent were cancelled due to workforce shortages. Only five of these cancellations were school services. Transport for NSW is unable to provide data regarding complaints received that are specific to staff shortages.

QoN064 – page 74-75

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd like to ask about the issues that have arisen from the relocation of the heritage train complex at North Rothbury. This has been a very strong local community issue, and obviously the heritage rail teams in many parts of the State are very passionate advocates for what they do. The real issue here, as I understand it, is the short-term accommodation for these rail assets while there's a longer discussion that goes on. What is the agency doing to assist?

ROB SHARP: Thank you. We do take our heritage seriously and we've been investing in some of our heritage assets. There's a large facility at Chullora that is being put together. The Sydney Trains organisation is actually making good the facility at the moment. It hadn't been used for a little while, so it's being brought back to a state where the project can actually kick on. My understanding, and I'll have to take on notice the specific details, is that we're talking a period of about 12 months. Clearly those assets need to be relocated. I'm not sure if you're across it? No.

DALE MERRICK: No.

ROB SHARP: I'll have to take it on notice in terms of the detail, Mr Graham.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: One of the immediate questions is whether or not, as Broadmeadow is emptied out to Chullora, which is on track to occur by November 2022—whether that might be a temporary option. That is one of the things that's being canvassed. Perhaps on notice—

ROB SHARP: Yes, I'm not familiar with that. I have spoken personally with the heritage organisation and they were expressing some concerns around the time lines, but we've given them comfort and focus that we'll be supporting them in that endeavour. But I'll come back to you on the interim arrangement.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Just to emphasise the urgency of this, I understand that the repossession which will effectively close the North Rothbury site will be issued on 1 October, so there's obviously a pressing deadline from their point of view.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has a long standing history of working collaboratively with Transport Heritage and will continue to work together to explore options for the housing of their rolling stock.

QoN065 – page 76-77

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Right. Thank you both for those answers.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I'm just writing out this name for Hansard. Can I ask you about the Gobbagombalin, or Gobba, bridge at Wagga Wagga, please? My understanding is that there was an investigation a few years ago to duplicate the bridge. That then morphed into a study and then a business case. Then after seven years, the Government produced a transport plan, which once again called for an investigation to be undertaken. Given all the various reports, nothing as far as I can tell from reading through the material has actually happened. There have now been at least two rollover accidents on the approach to the Gobba bridge within the past few weeks. Can someone give us an update on what's actually going to happen there, please?

MATT FULLER: Yes, sure: Happy to start with that and Mr Hayes might be able to add as well because I know he's been acting in the southern district recently. Transport at the moment is working with the council. As you say, there has been a transport plan for Wagga that has been circulated. In relation to that plan and some of the things that are going on at the moment, there was an announcement made by Government for a \$30 million package of work to be undertaken in the Wagga region, which included upgrade works to the inner section of Gobba bridge which, at the moment, the team are working on and coming up with proposals so that, hopefully, we can get some activity happening around the Gobba bridge and get a better resolution for the Wagga community.

Mr Hayes, I don't know if there's anything else you can add?

ANTHONY HAYES: There's not a great deal to add to that. The primary focus is on making the bridge safe and fit for purpose. The analysis that we've done suggests that the feedback we've had regarding duplication of the bridge, that's not necessary at this time, so the focus is on making the current bridge safe.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Okay. Can you give us an idea when some action may actually be physically taken?

MATT FULLER: I think detailed design is in the process of being undertaken and I think the expectation is we'll have that wrapped up by the end of October. So, on that basis, we should be in a position to be back out communicating with the community in terms of what a program of work might look like and time frames.

ANTHONY HAYES: And, just to give further information, we're looking at traffic lights, the road surface, the soil sub-surface, the placement of utilities to make sure that it's effective.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Is any of this information public information? I'm just wondering whether we could receive just a summary of what is actually being proposed at the moment. I don't want to go into details.

MATT FULLER: Sure, no. So, through our southern director in that region, we'd be happy to provide the Committee with an update of where we're at—no problem.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Yes. Can you make that available to us? That would be of use—

MATT FULLER: Certainly.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has developed plans for the Olympic Highway intersections at Old Narrandera Road and Travers Street, at either end of Gobbagombalin Bridge. The preferred options for the two intersections, which feature traffic lights and additional lane capacity are designed to improve safety and traffic efficiency. The concept design and Review of Environmental Factors were displayed for community feedback last year and work on the detailed design is underway. The intersection upgrades are expected to improve traffic flow through the area. Although there are still some calls amongst the community to duplicate Gobbagombalin Bridge due to high growth to the north of Wagga Wagga, there are no current plans to do so. The bridge is considered in the final Wagga Wagga Transport Plan, released in August 2022.

QoN066

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: The Newcastle, Wollongong and Central Coast councils are not eligible for funding under the Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme, which provides funding to upgrade local bus stops and facilities. I am trying to understand why that is the case.

ANTHONY HAYES: I would need to go and look at the terms of reference for the CPTIGS program. I don't have that in front of me now, but I would be happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: If you would. For instance, a person with disability living in Port Stephens can catch a bus in Raymond Terrace but can't get off in Newcastle, as there may not be appropriate facilities. The Central Coast has 35 per cent of its population over the age of 65 years. But how can Central Coast Council fund upgrades to bus stops that are necessary for all of these clients? Buses go over the border of Maitland at Woodbury into Newcastle at Beresfield on an hourly basis. Why shouldn't a person with disability from Woodbury, who wants to go to the shops at Beresfield, be able to benefit from funding from the Government to make their trip possible, just because the two suburbs are in different local government areas? I don't think it is unreasonable to ask, not what is the political decision, but what is the policy basis of why one LGA has been included but another hasn't, when there doesn't seem to be any real disparate reason from one location to another.

I am not talking about something in the middle of Sydney. I am talking about a regional area. Can you take that on notice? What is the policy basis for that?

ANTHONY HAYES: Yes. Happy to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The scheme is only available to Local Government Areas located within the Rural and Regional Bus Contract regions.

QoN067 – page 78

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to ask about the changes that were made to the registration costs, given the changes that were made to the definition of primary producers. This was part of a legislative change. I think it happened in 2021; it would have been October. This was supported by both sides of politics but it

tightened, effectively, the definition of primary producers. I have two questions here. Firstly, for people who formerly would have had a vehicle that was within that definition of primary producers but now do not, what is the assessment now about how much extra they are paying for their heavy vehicle registration?

ROB SHARP: I am afraid I will have to take that on notice. Ms McCarthy is the person who is across that one.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The impact to each individual registration will vary depending on the vehicle type and its weight. Information about primary producers registration concessions are available on the NSW Government website.

QoN068 – page 78

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to ask about the changes that were made to the registration costs, given the changes that were made to the definition of primary producers. This was part of a legislative change. I think it happened in 2021; it would have been October. This was supported by both sides of politics but it tightened, effectively, the definition of primary producers. I have two questions here. Firstly, for people who formerly would have had a vehicle that was within that definition of primary producers but now do not, what is the assessment now about how much extra they are paying for their heavy vehicle registration?

ROB SHARP: I am afraid I will have to take that on notice. Ms McCarthy is the person who is across that one.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We let so few people go.

ROB SHARP: Happy to revert on that. I am aware of it, but I am not across the detail, I'm afraid.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And what is the quantum of funding that will be raised by these changes?

ROB SHARP: We will take that on notice and revert to you specifically.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to put that question strongly. I asked about this around the time of the changes—in fact, in the debate—and the Government was putting the view that they had no idea. They were unable to inform the Parliament what this would mean. We supported the changes, but there were obvious concerns that it might be revenue raising. We are now significantly on from that October 2021 debate. What we want to know is, looking back, what has this meant? Has this raised money or not? What is the quantum?

ROB SHARP: I understand the context. Thank you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

It is too early to quantify the change in the number of vehicles receiving the primary producer registration concession through the full 12-month registration cycle.