

QUESTION NO: 95

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- i) How many bridges was the RTA responsible for in the following periods:**
 - a. FY 2002/03**
 - b. FY 2003/04**
 - c. FY 2004/05**
 - d. FY 2005/06**
 - e. FY 2006/07 to date?**

- ii) How many and which bridges had safety audits/safety reports that had an unsatisfactory outcome and/or recommended work needed to be undertaken for in:**
 - a. FY 2002/03**
 - b. FY 2003/04**
 - c. FY 2004/05**
 - d. FY 2005/06**
 - e. FY 2006/07 to date?**

- iii) What was the total cost of work and the cost for each bridge of work that needed to be undertaken on bridges which had a safety audits/safety reports that had an unsatisfactory outcome and/or recommended work needed to be undertaken in:**
 - a. FY 2002/03**
 - b. FY 2003/04**
 - c. FY 2004/05**
 - d. FY 2005/06**
 - e. FY 2006/07 to date?**

- iv) Which bridges were closed at any point in the following periods due the bridge being unsafe and what was the cost of making each the bridge safe:**
 - a. FY 2002/03**
 - b. FY 2003/04**
 - c. FY 2004/05**
 - d. FY 2005/06**
 - e. FY 2006/07 to date?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

Details of the bridges within the RTA's responsibility are provided in the agency's annual reports.

In the Auditor General's report "Condition of State Roads: Roads and Traffic Authority 2006", the Auditor General found that none of the bridges on State Roads are currently structurally deficient or closed to traffic.

QUESTION NO: 96.

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) What was the number of accidents at road works sites by Local Government Area for:

- a. FY 2002/03**
- b. FY 2003/04**
- c. FY 2004/05**
- d. FY 2005/06?**

ii) What was the number of fatalities at road works sites by Local Government Area for:

- a. FY 2002/03**
- b. FY 2003/04**
- c. FY 2004/05**
- d. FY 2005/06?**

iii) What was the number of people at road works sites by Local Government Area for:

- a. FY 2002/03**
- b. FY 2003/04**
- c. FY 2004/05**
- d. FY 2005/06?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information relating to traffic crash statistics is provided annually by the RTA in the publication, *Road Traffic Crashes in NSW*, which is publicly available on the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

QUESTION NO: 97

White Bay

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

i) What was the total expenditure on road infrastructure at White Bay for the following periods:

- a. FY 2004/05**
- b. FY 2005/06**
- c. FY 2006/07?**

Please identify what these funds have been spent on.

ii) What is the total budgeted expenditure on road infrastructure at White Bay in the following periods:

- a. FY 2006/07**
- b. FY 2007/08**
- c. FY 2008/09**
- d. FY 2009/10**

ANSWER

I am advised:

\$12.7 million was spent in 2004/05 on the Anzac Bridge 8 lane reconfiguration.

\$0.8 million was spent in 2005/06 on the Anzac Bridge 8 lane reconfiguration.

\$1,715 has been spent to date in 2006/07 to finalise the Anzac Bridge 8 lane reconfiguration. This is the total anticipated expenditure in 2006/07 for this project.

Information on roads projects across NSW is publicly provided in Budget papers and is regularly updated on the RTA website at ww.rta.nsw.gov.au and in community newsletters distributed by the RTA.

QUESTION NO: 98

Pedestrian Crossings

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- iii) **How many new pedestrian crossings were completed in the state electorate of Port Jackson in the following periods.**
 - a. **FY 2004/05**
 - b. **FY 2005/06**
 - c. **FY 2006/07?**

- iv) **How many new pedestrian crossings are projected to be completed in the new state electorate of Balmain in the following periods.**
 - a. **FY 2006/07**
 - b. **FY 2007/08**
 - c. **FY 2008/09**
 - d. **FY 2009/10?**

ANSWERS

I am advised:

\$21 million has been allocated to improve roads and traffic facilities in Port Jackson in 2006/07.

In the Balmain Electorate, pedestrian crossings at Minogue Crescent, Forest Lodge, and Darling Street Rozelle have been identified as two of 59 pedestrian crossings on multi-lane State Government-controlled roads to be upgraded over three years, following an RTA safety audit commissioned by the NSW Government.

QUESTION NO: 99

Leichhardt Council

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

What was the total cost of funding allocated by the RTA to assist Leichhardt Council build/construct traffic calming measures on Leichhardt Street and Styles Street in the following periods:

- a. FY 2004/05
- b. FY 2005/06
- c. FY2006/07?

ANSWER

I am advised:

In this period funding of close to \$750,000 has been allocated to Leichhardt Council under the Repair and Block Grant Scheme.

Block Grants are provided to councils under a funding formula, and councils then allocate their block grants according to their own priorities.

QUESTION NO: 100

With respect to each Department, Agency and Entity that the Minister is responsible for:

- 1) Given the RTA has acknowledged the need for traffic signals to be installed at the intersection of Beecroft Road and Kirkham Street in Beecroft by listing the intersection in its Black Spot Program:
 - a. Why wasn't funding allocated in the 2006/07 Budget to install traffic signals at this intersection?**
 - b. When will funding be allocated by the RTA to install traffic signals at this intersection?**
 - c. By what date does the RTA expect traffic signals to be installed and operational at this intersection?****

ANSWER

I am advised:

This intersection has been investigated by the Sydney Regional Traffic Office.

Two differing traffic signal options are currently being examined to determine a preferred option for the site.

QUESTION NO: 101

Princes Highway

At last year's budget estimates hearings on Roads the former Minister, Hon Joe Tripodi MLC, stated that the RTA's indicative forward program for the four years from 2005/06 to 2008/09 proposed to spend \$253 million on the Princes Highway. In an answer to a question the then Minister took on notice, he stated that, in addition to various minor works, planning and property acquisitions, this spending proposal related to eight projects. Has the status of each of these projects changed in any way since then?

ANSWER

The NSW Government considers the Princes Highway a priority, having spent more than \$505 million since 1994/95; compared to \$39 million by the Federal Government over that same period.

For every \$1 the Federal Government spends on the Princes Highway, the NSW Government spends more than \$13.

In the next four years, the New South Wales Government will continue to upgrade the Highway. This includes completing the three year \$30 million road safety improvement program announced in 2004. It will also complete the 12 year, \$380 million upgrade program announced in 1998/99.

Funding for the Princes Highway has increased 32 per cent to \$49.7 million in this current financial year. The NSW Government invests more in one year on the Princes Highway than the Federal Government has spent in a decade.

Information relating to maintenance, infrastructure and road safety expenditure is publicly available in the NSW Budget Papers, is regularly updated on the RTA's website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au and in community newsletters distributed by the RTA.

QUESTION NO: 102

1. The 2005/06 Budget allocated \$2.5 million for the Pambula Bridge and approaches, but according to this year's Budget only \$420 000 was actually spent, a shortfall of \$2.08m, and the project appears to have been delayed.

a. What were the reasons for the spending shortfall?

b. Has construction on this project been delayed, and if so, why?

2. In the 2005/06 Budget the total cost of the Pambula Bridge project was estimated as \$10m, but in this year's budget that estimation has been revised upwards to \$17m. Can you advise the reasons for this dramatic increase in the estimated cost of the project?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Federal Government refused a request to fund the construction of the Pambula Bridge 50:50. The Bridge is estimated to cost \$17M, with the Federal Government limiting its contribution to a maximum of \$5M and the NSW Government meeting the remainder.

The existing timber bridge on the Princes Highway at Pambula River has significant structural concerns and floods approximately every couple of years. Following detailed flood studies and geotechnical investigations, the Pambula Bridge is being replaced at a one in 100 year flood standard compared to the one in 20 year standard of the preliminary design.

QUESTION NO: 103

Kiama Ramps

The 2005/06 Budget allocated \$2.5 million for the Kiama Ramps, but according to this year's Budget only \$480 000 was actually spent, a shortfall of \$2.02m, and the project appears to have been delayed.

- a. What were the reasons for the spending shortfall?**
- b. Has construction on this project been delayed, and if so, why?**
- c. Will either of the preferred two ramps options be completed during the next financial year?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Kiama Ramps is a \$14M project to build a new southbound off and northbound on access ramp to provide motorists with better access between Kiama and the Princes Highway.

\$5M is allocated to the project in the 2006/07 budget.

Project expenditure in 2005/06 allowed the preparation of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) for display for community comment.

The southbound ramp is currently scheduled for completion in the 2007/08 financial year.

QUESTION NO: 104.

Conjola Mountain Deviation and Conjola Creek Bridge

At last year's budget estimates hearings, the former Minister, Hon Joe Tripodi MLC, stated that the Conjola Mountain Deviation and Conjola Creek Bridge would be funded as part of the RTA's indicative forward program for the four years from 2005/06 to 2008/09.

- d. Can you advise how advanced is the RTA's planning for this project?**
- e. Is the route known?**
- f. Will any land need to be purchased?**
- g. Have those purchases commenced?**
- h. Can you provide details about this project in terms of:**
 - i. Estimated cost?**
 - ii. Projected commencement date?**
 - iii. Expected completion date?**

ANSWER:

I am advised:

Planning is in progress for a deviation of Conjola Mountain and replacement of Conjola Bridge. \$500,000 has been allocated in 2006/07 for planning to continue.

The majority of the work is expected to be carried out within the existing road corridor, and property purchases have commenced.

QUESTION NO: 105.

Gerringong to Bomaderry

- 1. At the community consultations regarding the Gerringong to Bomaderry route realignment and upgrade project in May 2006, it was foreshadowed that a planning focus meeting would occur following the conclusion of community discussions.**
 - a. Has the meeting occurred?**
 - b. If so, what were the outcomes?**

- 2. With regard to the proposed route realignment and upgrade of the Princes Highway from Gerringong to Bomaderry.**
 - a. Have consultants been appointed to investigate the options and then a preferred route?**
 - b. If so, when are the results of their investigation due to be completed and when will they be made public?**
 - c. If not, what reasons does the RTA have for delaying the appointment of consultations and when will the appointment be made?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

A planning focus group meeting was held on Thursday 28th September 2006.

The Roads and Traffic Authority is finalising documentation to engage a consultant to undertake the process of selecting a preferred route.

QUESTION NO: 106.

Main Road 92

Will the \$80 million allocated for Main Road 92 be sufficient for construction of the entire 54 kilometre length of Stage One of the project, or will additional funding be required?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Main Road 92 upgrade is a jointly funded local/state/federal project.

Design is proceeding on the upgrade, including realignment at Bulee Mountain.

Following this design more detailed estimates will be available and an assessment made on the financial requirements to complete the work.



QUESTION NO: 117

What are the Pacific Highway fatality figures for 2005 and 2006?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information relating to traffic crash statistics is provided annually by the RTA in the publication, *Road Traffic Crashes in NSW*, which is publicly available on the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

QUESTION NO: 118

Can you please provide a table showing for each major Pacific Highway upgrade project the cost estimate made at time of route option development report and actual timing?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The issuing of a Route Option Development Report is a recent initiative by the RTA to provide information to the public at an early stage of the planning process.

All major Pacific Highway project cost estimates are contained in NSW Government and Federal Government annual budget papers as construction progresses.

QUESTION NO: 119

Given the abject failure that the Cross City Tunnel represents, and the likely removal of public transport benefits under the Lane Cove Tunnel, and the Richmond Review findings that inner suburban motorways are unlikely to be viable in the future without propping up by government, will the Minister: (a) rule out the M4 East motorway once and for all as unsustainable, and if not (b) confirm where the money for the M4 East is going to come from (if not increased tolls on the M4 or the public purse)

ANSWER

I am advised:

The concept of the M4 East extension is referred to in the NSW State Infrastructure Strategy and the Metropolitan Strategy.

The NSW Government has no immediate plans to build the M4 East.

QUESTION NO: 120

The 2006/07 Infrastructure statement indicates estimated expenditure on the M4 East at \$1 million in 2005/06, and a further \$500 thousand in 2006/07. Can you confirm the actual expenditure to date on the M4 East and explain what this has paid for and what the further \$500 thousand is required for?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The expenditure on the M4 East has been incurred on planning studies such as the development and assessment of options, community consultation, and the preliminary preparation of a draft of an Environmental Impact Statement with associated background studies such as traffic counts and investigations, for example geotechnical, noise and air quality monitoring.

Provisions have been made in the 2006/07 budget to fund any planning work that may be required.

The NSW Government has no immediate plans to build the M4 East.

QUESTION NO: 121

What is the outcome of the M5 East air quality audit?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Compliance Audit Report of the M5 East Motorway made by the Department of Planning confirmed that no motorist inside the tunnel had been exposed to levels of carbon monoxide above the limits in the project approval, and found no evidence that external air quality limits had been exceeded.

QUESTION NO: 122

Has the RTA complied fully with the recommendations and observations made in the report? If not, why not?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The RTA has addressed the four incidents raised in the M5 East Motorway Compliance Audit Report.

QUESTION NO: 123

Can the Minister advise about the progress made towards compliance? What changes have been made?

ANSWER

See answer to Question 122.

QUESTION NO: 124

Can the Minister advise about the progress made towards the implementation of the air quality improvement plan for the M5 East announced on 16.6.06? Can the Minister/RTA provide a timeframe for actions taken and proposed?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Preparatory works are underway in the M5 East tunnel for the installation of 12 additional jet fans commencing early October 2006. Additional fans will be installed by the end of 2006.

The RTA is preparing a Modification Report for submission to the Department of Planning. The report seeks approval for the installation of the filtration plant in the western end of the westbound tunnel, and a trial of partial portal emissions to remove visible haze in the M5 East Tunnel.

The Modifications Report is expected to be submitted to the Department of Planning in the near future.

The smoky vehicles video detection system now in place monitors and identifies smoky vehicles in the M5 East tunnel. The RTA is working with a number of truck operators organising inspections, testing, and repairs to polluting vehicles, aimed at reducing emissions from these vehicles to within the required standards. Failure to comply may result in prosecutions.

QUESTION NO: 125

In 2002, at a Labour Party Conference, then Premier Carr said that 60% of the Roads Budget was spent on non-Sydney roads. Is this the case in this Budget? Is so, please provide the data that demonstrates that this is so.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government announced a \$3.3 billion record roads budget in 2006/07.

Two thirds of the roads capital and maintenance programs budget will be spent outside the Sydney Metropolitan area.

QUESTION NO: 126

The Greater Taree City Council and Great Lakes Council have applied for a review of the classification of its section of the Lakes Way from Regional Road to State Road. Please provide the progress of the review and its outcome.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Panel conducting the Road Classification Review has finalised consultations with councils and is now completing its report.

QUESTION NO: 127

- (a) The State Roads budget for 2006/07 is \$3.3 billion. Does this figure include funding provided by the Federal Government for NSW Projects?**
- (b) If so, how much money included in the \$3.3 billion Roads Budget is contributed by the Federal Government?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

This information is contained in the NSW and Federal budgets.



QUESTION NO: 128

How much money will be spent in 2006-07 on staff wages and salaries in the RTA? (Please provide a figure).

ANSWER

I am advised:

Details of employee costs and numbers are set out in the Budget Papers which are publicly available. In particular, Budget Paper No.3 provides average staffing numbers.

QUESTION NO: 129

What are the RTA current cost estimates for installing in-tunnel filtration in the Lane Cove Tunnel or filtration in the ventilation stacks?

ANSWER

I am advised:

This matter has been addressed in the Select Committee Inquiry into the Lane Cove Tunnel at its public hearings on 14, 15 and 16 June 2006.

All of the information held by the RTA was made publicly available through the Lane Cove Tunnel Inquiry.

QUESTION NO: 130

- . (a) How much money do you estimate will be spent on electricity bills for the running of the ventilation system in the Lane Cove Tunnel? (Please provide figure). (b) How much money is currently expended on electricity bills for the M5 East Tunnel, Sydney Harbour Tunnel, Eastern Distributor and Cross City Tunnels ventilation systems per annum? (Please provide separate figures for each Tunnel).**

ANSWER

I am advised:

Operational costs are a matter for the road operators.

QUESTION NO: 131

Why was the contract for the Lane Cove Tunnel entered into with heavy vehicle volumes much lower than the RTA's EIS projections?

ANSWER

I am advised:

This matter has been addressed in the Select Committee Inquiry into the Lane Cove Tunnel at its public hearing on 14-15 June 2006.

Information is also available in the EIS and the documents tabled through the Lane Cove Tunnel Inquiry.

QUESTION NO: 132

- (a) Can the Minister explain why Connector Motorways expect twice as many trucks on Longueville Road through the Lane Cove Shopping Centre than on Epping Road east of Mowbray Road? (b) Why did Connector Motorways in its report in May 2006 state that traffic would be 34% less on the Gore Hill Freeway after the tunnel opened in 2006, a reduction in traffic of 68,000 vpd with data changed to exclude traffic to from the Lane Cove Tunnel and with double counting of traffic leaving the Gore Hill Freeway to Reserve Road ramps?**
- (c) Can the Minister confirm that the increase in traffic on the Gore Hill Freeway east of the eastern portals will be at least 60,000 in 2006/07 and 110,000 by 2016 or advise what increase in car and truck traffic for from existing is required on the Gore Hill Freeway east of the eastern portals to achieve Connector Motorways weekday traffic projections for 2006 and 2016?**
- (d) What is the predicted increase in traffic on the Gore Hill Expressway that will use the Falcon Street Ramps in 2006 and 2016?**
- (e) What proportion of this traffic using the Falcon Street Ramps is expected to**
 - (i) Be tolled twice by also using the Lane Cove Tunnel?**
 - (ii) Use the Gore Hill Freeway connections at: Longueville Road Pacific Highway Ramps, Reserve Road Ramps, Willoughby Road, Brook Street and Miller Streets?**
- (f) What is the predicted increase in traffic proposed on the Gore Hill Freeway east of Reserve Road Ramp post tunnel opening in 2006 and 2016 including the traffic to/from Falcon Street on a weekday?**
- (g) What is the predicted increase in traffic measured immediately east of the western portals including the in tunnel traffic, and surface traffic for Mowbray Road and Epping Road post tunnel opening in 2006 and 2016?**
- (h) In assessing the ramifications of a delay to works on Epping Road for 6 months after the tunnel opens, what is the predicted traffic in the tunnel, on Mowbray Road and on Epping Road for June 2007 and December 2016?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

All information is publicly available through the Select Committee on the Cross City Tunnel's Inquiry into the Lane Cove Tunnel.

Matters were also discussed in evidence at the Inquiry's public hearings held in June 2006.

All matters regarding surface road changes are being addressed by the Lane Cove Tunnel Integration Group which is overseeing the transition period leading up to and following the opening of the Lane Cove Tunnel.

The Integration Group is the forum to bring the public sector and private operators together to manage the integration of the Lane Cove Tunnel, expanded Gore Hill Freeway and the new Falcon Street ramps into the existing road network.

QUESTION NO: 133

What change in traffic volumes can motorists expect on the Pacific Highway and Reserve Road ramps post tunnel opening in 2006 and 2016?

ANSWER

I am advised:

All information is publicly available through the Select Committee on the Cross City Tunnel's Inquiry into the Lane Cove Tunnel.

Matters were also discussed in evidence at the Inquiry's public hearings held in June 2006.

All matters regarding surface road changes are being addressed by the Lane Cove Tunnel Integration Group which is overseeing the transition period leading up to and following the opening of the Lane Cove Tunnel.

The Integration Group is the forum to bring the public sector and private operators together to manage the integration of the Lane Cove Tunnel, expanded Gore Hill Freeway and the new Falcon Street ramps into the existing road network.

QUESTION NO: 134

- (a) Why are project estimates for many upgrades along the Pacific Highway no longer listed in RTA Annual reports or Budget Papers? (b) Could you please provide total cost estimates for each of the route options for the following Pacific Highway projects?**
- (i) Oxley Highway to Kempsey**
 - (ii) Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing**
 - (iii) Sapphire to Woolgoolga**
 - (iv) F3 to Raymond Terrace**
- (c) Could you also please provide a break down of how much has been expended to date on each of the 25 upgrade projects currently at the planning or construction stage on the Pacific Highway?**
- (d) Would you consider funding an independent economic assessment of the Pacific Highway on order to measure the positive and negative effects of upgrades of the Highway on tourism and local businesses?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

A project is included in Budget Paper No. 4 if it is over \$5 million in total cost and the RTA is to spend money on the project in the coming financial year.

Once a project enters the preconstruction and construction phase, the RTA is able to provide a total cost estimate based on the final design and alignment for the upgrade. These estimates are included in the Budget Paper.

Cost estimates for the Pacific Highway route options were made available in the following reports which are available on the RTA website.

- Oxley Highway to Kempsey - Route Options Development Report (October 2005)
- Woolgoolga to Wells Crossing - Route Options Development Report (October 2005)
- Sapphire to Woolgoolga - Draft Route Options Development Report (December 2002)
- Coffs Harbour Highway Planning - Coffs Harbour Section: Strategy Report and Working Papers (February 2004)

QUESTION NO: 135

- (a) Is the RTA currently considering introducing tolling in the future on the Pacific Highway as a way of funding upgrades? If so, when is it estimated that tolling will be introduced? (b) Will suitable alternative routes be available for local communities if tolling is introduced?**
- (c) How will it be determined whether or not an alternative route is a viable option?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

Under the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between the NSW and Australian governments in December 2005, a Working Party has been established to look at funding options for the acceleration of the upgrading of the Pacific Highway.

QUESTION NO: 136.

(a) How many people have been killed on the Pacific Highway this year to date?

(b) How many people have been injured on the Pacific Highway this year to date?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information relating to traffic crash statistics is provided annually by the RTA in the publication, *Road Traffic Crashes in NSW*, which is publicly available on the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

QUESTION NO: 137

- In relation to the Wells Crossing to Iluka Road Pacific Highway upgrade:**
- (a) Why from Pillar Valley northwards are there no assessments shown on the green (c) route?**
 - (b) Why are there more assessment sites in the vicinity of the existing Highway from Tyndale to Harwood compared to the same area on the eastern routes to Harwood?**
 - (c) Do you agree that the community should have had access to accident reduction percentage figures during the submission period?**
 - (d) Why are two of the four options the RTA is considering for the upgrade in this area achieve only 19% accident reduction? If yes, what are they and how much do they cost?**

ANSWER

For details of the investigations undertaken, please refer to the Preferred Route Report and associated working papers, which were made available to the public on 26 September 2006.

QUESTION NO: 138

- (a) The RTA has decided that Option E on the Sapphire to Woolgoolga upgrade is the preferred option. On what grounds was it decided that Option E is the preferred option? (b) Why was this option not given to the Community Liaison Group for consideration?**
- (c) What are the costings on this route?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Sapphire to Woolgoolga Supplementary Option Report, which provided details of Option E, was placed on display for community information and comment in February 2004.

Option E was presented to and discussed at a combined meeting of the two Community Focus Groups for the Sapphire to Woolgoolga upgrade on 26 February 2004.

Further information is contained in the Preferred Option Report and associated reports and working papers, which have been made publicly available.



QUESTION NO: 139

You made a commitment to the Member for Coffs Harbour, Andrew Fraser MP and Mr Steve Moody, the Technical Officer of the Woolgoolga Area Residents group, on March 30 2006 that you would investigate a proposal to spend \$145 million to upgrade the highway between Sapphire and Woolgoolga and investigate a true western by-pass, comprising a 4 lane divided carriageway for heavy vehicles and through traffic. Does this commitment still stand?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information regarding the Pacific Highway and the Sapphire to Woolgoolga project is public is publicly available at www.rta.nsw.gov.au

QUESTION NO: 140

- (a) Why is no money allocated for the Regional Roads Timber Bridges Program in the 2006/07 budget?**
- (b) Are you aware that the Nundle Bridge is in urgent need of replacing and has been since affected by floods in 2000?**
- (c) Will you commit to replacing this bridge as a matter of priority?**

ANSWER

This question was asked in the Budget Estimates hearing for the Roads portfolio on 1 September 2006. I refer to the transcript of that hearing for the answer.

QUESTION NO: 141

- a) **How many rail level crossings are there across the State that are in need of upgrading? (i.e. installing flashing lights and boom gates).**
- b) **How much do you estimate it will cost for the upgrade of all level crossings across the State?**
- c) **What is the estimated completion date for the upgrade of level crossings across the State?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

There are approximately 1500 public level crossings in NSW with about 300 of these actively controlled by lights alone or lights and boom gates.

All level crossing sites in NSW have been assessed using the Level Crossing Assessment Model (LCAM). This is a nationally recognised tool for assessing accident risk at level crossings. An initial assessment indicates there are in the order of 200-300 sites that may require upgrading to active control. This number can be refined further when a secondary assessment is undertaken. Not all sites require active control. Many rural locations have low traffic volumes and infrequent train volumes.

Upgrading of level crossings is the responsibility of the Level Crossing Strategy Council. Funding details are contained in Budget Paper No 3.

QUESTION NO: 142

(a) \$500, 000 has been committed to the M4 East Extension in this year's budget. What is the current status of this project? (b) What is the estimated date of completion for this project and the estimated total cost?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The concept of an M4 East Extension is referred to in the State Infrastructure Strategy NSW 2006-07 to 2015-16, and the Metropolitan Strategy, the 25 year plan for dealing with Sydney's growing and changing population.

Provisions have been made in the 2006/2007 budget to fund any planning work that may be required.

The Government has no immediate plans to build the M4 East.

QUESTION NO: 143

Given that cars emit more exhaust fumes in stop-start traffic than at high speeds, what measures is the RTA taking to ensure that there is less congestion and therefore less exhaust fumes in Sydney?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Despite a 25 per cent increase in the number of cars on our roads over the past 10 years, travel times into and out of the city remain steady during the morning and evening peaks. This has been achieved in part due to the operation of the RTA's Sydney Coordinated Adaptive Traffic System (SCATS), which controls most of Sydney's traffic signals. SCATS is adaptive to traffic conditions via vehicle detectors located in the roadway and automatically adjusts the amount of green time each approach receives depending on traffic flow and density. SCATS also detects the direction of the heaviest traffic flow and coordinates that direction to further reduce stop-start traffic.

The whole network is also constantly monitored by the RTA's Transport Management Centre (TMC) located in the Australian Technology Park, Eveleigh. During peak traffic periods the TMC utilises approximately 800 traffic cameras and on-the-ground traffic commanders to oversee operations and to manage traffic related incidents.

Extensive road infrastructure has also been developed to accommodate the increase in vehicle usage, including the \$6 billion Sydney Orbital Network. The RTA has also increased the number of kilometres of bus lanes and transit lanes by more than 250% since 1995, which enables less fumes to be generated by buses and other high occupancy vehicles.

QUESTION NO: 144

(a) When the Government instructed the RTA to negotiate on Cross City Tunnel road reversals, what was Cross City Motorway's position on tolling? (b) What is the average daily vehicle patronage of the Cross City Tunnel?

ANSWER

I am advised

Matters regarding this issue have been stated and are on the public record.

Vehicle numbers using the Cross City Tunnel are a matter for the Cross City Motorways.

I am advised around 30,000 cars a day have been removed from surface roads in the Sydney CBD.

QUESTION NO 145

145. (a) What plans does the Government have to roll out Higher Mass Limits to Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong?
(b) Can the Government guarantee that Higher Mass Limits will be extended to Wollongong?
(c) Will the Government ensure that Higher Mass Limits will apply the entire way from Sydney to Brisbane?
(d) What is the Government's current position on the F6?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Under the NSW AusLink agreement, Higher Mass Limits (HML) vehicle access in NSW will be extended from 31 December 2006, to include:

- The Hume Highway from Sydney to the Victorian border
- The AusLink network within Sydney
- The Sydney - Newcastle Freeway from Sydney to the New England Highway at Beresfield.

Access on the Southern Freeway from Sydney to the Northern Distributor at Wollongong will be provided when the required upgrading is completed. This work is currently scheduled for completion by the end of financial year 2006/07.

Access on the AusLink network linking Sydney and Brisbane will be made available subject to replacement or upgrading of bridges at Aberdeen and Wallabah on the New England Highway and Molong on the Mitchell Highway.

Under AusLink HML access on the Pacific Highway is subject to agreed bridge upgrading being complete and will be limited to motorway sections (dual carriageway) of the Highway.

Access to HML will be further subject to vehicles complying with route compliance monitoring under the IAP and road friendly suspension, and mass management accreditation requirements.

The F6 transport corridor has been in place since 1951. NSW Government policy is to retain the corridor for future possible transport needs.

QUESTION NO: 146

- (a) What is the current status of the announced Flashing Lights in School Zones program?**
- (b) How many sets of flashing lights will be rolled out by the end of the year?**
- (c) How much money will be expended on installing Flashing Lights in school zones in 2006-07 from the RTA budget?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) has recently completed an Expression of Interest process for the supply, installation and maintenance of electronic technology to improve the visibility of school zones.

The panel has selected three tenderers to supply such technology including flashing lights for school zone regulatory signs, which can report technical faults back-to-base to ensure the reliability of the devices.

In addition to the three selected tenderers, a further three companies who showed innovative ideas in their expressions of interest, have been asked to submit their technology for consideration.

The first 100 school zone sites to be selected for this new technology will be installed before the end of 2006.

QUESTION NO: 147

a) What is the current status of the announced \$17 million dollar program for 59 pedestrian crossings on multi-lane roads to be replaced with traffic lights?

b) How many pedestrian crossings will be upgraded by the end of the year?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The \$17M program will be delivered over three years from 2006-07 to 2008-09.

QUESTION NO: 148

- (a) How much money is budgeted specifically for Regional Roads Block Grants and REPAIR Program funding currently per annum?**

- (b) Will you consider increasing Regional Roads Block Grants beyond the annual CPI adjustments?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The 2006/07 Budget provides for Regional Roads funding assistance of more than \$141 million comprising Block Grants and REPAIR Program Grants.

All future roads funding will be considered in the context of future budgets.

QUESTION NO: 149

(a) What measures is the Government currently taking to reduce the road toll?

(b) Given that RTA statistics showed that road fatalities in the Western region of NSW were up 64% for the first 7 months of this year on the same period last year, will you commit more money to the maintenance and construction of roads in the Western region in the RTA's forward spending proposal for 2007/08?

(c) In South Australia, the Government puts up a red marker to indicate a death and a black marker to indicate an accident. Will you consider implementing such a measure to assist in making drivers more aware of dangerous sections of roads?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW road toll has substantially trended down since the record high of 1,384 in 1978. The figure for 2005 was 508 – the equal lowest toll since the Second World War, but still too high.

The RTA has an extensive list of road safety initiatives and ongoing programs designed to improve the safety of road users. Key initiatives this year include:

- Initiatives to improve heavy vehicle safety, industry chain of responsibility, legislation and speed limiter deeming legislation
- The Sober Driver and Breath Alcohol Interlock programs to counter recidivist drink driving
- School Road Safety Package
- The NSW Road Safety Education Program
- Joint RTA/Police Road Safety Taskforce
- Drug Driving Bill
- Crash Reduction (Blackspot etc.) engineering program
- CrashCam Program to identify types of crashes at intersections and develop appropriate remediations
- The Pacific Highway and Prince's Highway Safety programs
- The Enhanced Enforcement Program
- Various media campaigns, including the Paranoia and Heaven and Hell campaigns
- RTA's leading role on the Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP)
- 40kph zones for high pedestrian activity areas.

The RTA's forward spending proposals are developed on a state-wide needs basis. Road safety is an important consideration when determining maintenance priorities.

The RTA constantly monitors road safety initiatives in other jurisdictions.

QUESTION 150

How much money will the RTA expend on all sponsorships in 2006-07?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The RTA sponsors a range of programs including the SpeedBlitz Blues, NSW bike week, engineering events and other programs to support community events that assist the RTA in delivering its objectives, including promoting road safety.

Information on sponsorship events is publicly available on the RTA website www.rta.nsw.gov.au.

QUESTION NO: 151

- (a) How much money was expended on the State based Black Spot Program in 2005-06?**
- (b) Why has the State's blackspot funding been replaced with "State Funded Crash Related Treatments" in 2006-07 budget papers?**
- (c) Please provide a breakdown of where the \$25.5 million budgeted for "State Funded Crash Related Treatments", detailed in the 2006-07 Budget papers, will be spent?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information on roads projects across NSW, including road safety projects is publicly provided in Budget papers and is regularly updated on the RTA website at www.rta.nsw.gov.au and in community newsletters distributed by the RTA.

QUESTION NO: 152

- (a) How many rest areas have been closed across NSW in the last 12 months?**
- (b) How many rest areas are currently under consideration for closure?**
- (c) Where are these rest areas and what are the proposed dates for their closure (Please provide a breakdown)**

ANSWER

No RTA rest area has been permanently closed in the 12 months September 2005 to September 2006.

There are currently no proposed closures of RTA rest areas.

QUESTION NO: 153.

How much money has been spent in total for planning for the Bangor Bypass?

ANSWER

I am advised:

Information regarding funding and planning activities for stage 1 and stage 2 of the Bangor Bypass is available in Budget papers and community updates.

Planning costs include traffic modelling, design and investigations, community consultation and environment assessment.

QUESTION NO: 154

- (a) What is the estimated construction time and commencement date of the Coolac Bypass on the Hume Highway?**
- (b) Has the Department of Environment and Conservation completed its consideration of the RTA's application for Aboriginal heritage permits/consents for the construction of the Bypass?**
- (c) Why did all seven of the business operators at the Dog on the Tuckerbox in Gundagai only find out about the RTA's plans to restrict access to the Dog on the Tucker Box rest area after talking to the contractors?**
- (d) Is the RTA negotiating a suitable outcome for traffic flow changes during construction of the Bypass with local business owners?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

A contract is expected to be awarded in late 2006.

Matters concerning the Department of Environment and Conservation should be referred to the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Consultation with business owners is continuing. The RTA met with the business operators on Friday 22 September 2006 and presented a revised traffic arrangement which left the southern entrance to the Dog on the Tucker Box area operating as it does now, with minor modifications.

QUESTION NO. 155

Bowning Deviation

- 1. What is the estimated completion date for the Bowning Bypass on the Lachlan Valley Way? Is the project currently running to schedule?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Bowning Bypass is currently on schedule for completion in 2007.

QUESTION NO: 156

- (a) How much money has been allocated in the RTA's forward spending proposal to seal State Road 54 between Crookwell and Bathurst in financial year 2007/08?**
- (b) Has upgrading work on State Road 54 stopped due to Environmental reasons? If so, what are these concerns.**
- (c) When will work re-commence?**
- (d) What is the estimated completion date for the sealing of State Road 54?**

ANSWER

I am advised that:

The RTA is planning further initial seal work on MR 54. \$750,000 was made available to Upper Lachlan Council in 2006/07. Future allocations will be contained in future budget papers.

Work stopped on the sealing of Main Road 54 following the discovery of a Box-Gum Woodlands Endangered Ecological Community in August 2006.

It is expected that works will recommence in October 2006 and the work currently underway will be completed by December 2006.



QUESTION WITH NOTICE No. 157

- 1. Why was no money allocated to build the Alstonville Bypass in 2006/07?**
- 2. What is the current status of this project?**

ANSWER

Over the past ten years, the NSW Government has funded \$1.66 billion towards the Pacific Highway upgrade, more than double the Federal Government's contribution of \$660 million.

As a result of the \$2.3 billion ten year program, motorists benefit from 233 km of four lane dual carriageway that is constructed and open to traffic.

An additional \$1.3 billion will be spent by the NSW and Federal Governments over the next 3 years.

The 2006/07 budget contained \$360M for the Pacific Highway, or over 10% of the NSW roads budget.

The NSW Government is working cooperatively with the Federal Government to accelerate the completion of the Pacific Highway to dual carriageway, motorway standard.

Funding for the Alstonville Bypass project is considered in context of the AusLink funding arrangements between the Federal and State governments and the future funding for the upgrade of the Pacific Highway program.

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QUESTION NO: 158

- (a) How many drug driving testing units will there be upon implementation of the Drug Driving testing legislation?**
(b) How will this program be funded?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The *Road Transport Legislation Amendment (Drug Testing) Bill* was introduced into the Legislative Assembly on 31 August, and is currently before the Parliament for debate.

QUESTION NO: 159

(a) Are you aware that the RTA will only suppress the address of former Police Officers if they can provide evidence that the persons are under direct threat? (b) Are you further aware that the RTA now reviews police officers with a suppressed address annually? What is the reasoning behind the decision for annual reviews?

ANSWER

I am advised:

The RTA will suppress address details on its heavily-restricted database on the recommendation of a Police Local Area Commander (LAC) where the LAC is satisfied a direct threat exists. This policy has been in place 1997.

QUESTION NO: 160

- (a) How many applications did you receive for the position of CEO of the RTA between the resignation of Paul Forward and the appointment of Les Wielinga?**
- (b) Did the RTA conduct an international recruitment process for the appointment of a CEO for the RTA?**
- (c) If so, what was the cost of this process? (please provide figure).**
- (d) How many people were interviewed for the position of CEO of the RTA before Les Wielinga's appointment?**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The recruitment process was conducted by the Premier's Department.

QUESTION NO: 161

(a) Can you please provide a copy of the contract detailing Paul Willoughby's secondment to NSW Police?

(b) Did Mr Paul Willoughby receive any allowances or entitlements other than \$257,000 listed as his salary package in the last annual report while working at the RTA?

- (c) What overseas travel has Mr Willoughby embarked on during his employment with the RTA, either with the RTA or with Police?**
- (d) Were you aware of any corporate credit charges owed by Paul Willoughby that were later waived?**
- (e) Why was Paul Willoughby's position made redundant?**
- (f) Who made this decision?**
- (g) On what grounds was this decision made?**
- (h) How many workers or contractors was Paul Willoughby responsible for recruiting at the RTA?**
- (i) What was the final separation payment to Mr Willoughby when his position was abolished? (please provide figure).**

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002 provides for a Department Head to establish or abolish any branch or part of the Department. Internal branch/unit structures of Departments are designed to ensure the most efficient and effective service is provided to the Minister and the people of New South Wales.

Under the *Annual Reports (Departments) Act 1985* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Reports) Act 1984*, agencies are required to set out their structure and business units in their annual report.

Accordingly information relating to staff and salary groups is publicly available in annual reports.

The CEO of the RTA abolished the position of Director of Communications and Corporate Relations. The CEO has announced a reduction in Business units from nine to seven to streamline the organisation to focus on road construction, maintenance and road safety.

Overseas travel by public sector employees is governed by various Premier's Memoranda and Circulars. Travel by public sector employees is determined on the basis of value to the tax-payer and public sector development. Travel undertaken is always on government business and essential for the performance of official business on behalf of the Government of New South Wales.

All overseas travel is subject to Minister's approval. Ministers are to exercise strict economy in approving overseas travel and significant benefits to the agency and/or the State must be demonstrated. Ministers may approve official travel overseas after deciding that the travel is essential and that it can be funded within the budget allocation for the organisation concerned.

Employees who are required to travel overseas in the course of their duty may be eligible for overseas travelling allowances.

Overseas travel by agency staff is reported in the agency annual reports which are publicly available.

Credit cards for Ministers and public sector employees are issued and used in accordance with Directions to all government agencies. Credit cards are used for business purposes only and may be used to meet the costs of official out-of-pocket expenses from time to time in accordance with the Premier's policy guidelines. Credit cards are generally used for the purchase of low value goods and services.

Authorities must establish a business case for the use of credit cards including a cost benefit analysis for their agency.

Payment of expenses and or purchase of approved stores and services by credit card requires the normal procedures of acquiring approval to incur expenditure. Credit card accounts require the normal examination, certification and authorisation.

Allowances are published in the Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Award 2002.

Applications for compensation by Chief and Senior Executives may be made to the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal pursuant to the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act 1975.

QUESTION NO: 162

What was John Whelan's total remuneration package while employed at the RTA?

ANSWER

I'm advised:

Decisions on engaging and managing short term professional skills hire arrangements are the responsibility of department heads, having regard to Government policies on efficient corporate services.

Individuals engaged on a short term professional skills hire arrangement on a fee for services contract are not entitled to nor receive a remuneration package or benefits in respect of recreation leave, sick leave, long service leave, workers compensation entitlements, superannuation or any other paid leave or similar entitlements.

The use of contractors is limited to areas in which the agency does not have the necessary skills or specific expertise to effectively and efficiently undertake a required project or task. Contractors' work is monitored and evaluated to ensure that objectives and milestones specific to the project are met within the agreed budget and time-frame.

The Auditor General audits agencies expenditure as required by the Public Finance and Audit Act 1983 and this audit process provides an independent assessment of agencies financial situation. Internal audit procedures are guided by information supplied by NSW Treasury which is publicly available at www.treasury.nsw.gov.au, in particular Treasury Policy and Guideline Papers TPP95a (Statement of Best Practice – Internal Control and Audit) and TPP95b (Internal Control and Assessment) and Treasurer's Directions 720.01-.03 (Internal Control and Internal Audit).