

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 - TRANSPORT AND THE ARTS

Wednesday 12 March 2025

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio area

TRANSPORT

CORRECTED

The Committee met at 9:15.

MEMBERS

Ms Cate Faehrmann (Chair)
The Hon. Mark Banasiak (Deputy Chair)
Ms Abigail Boyd
The Hon. Anthony D'Adam
The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine
The Hon. Rachel Merton
The Hon. Tania Mihailuk
The Hon. Bob Nanva
The Hon. Damien Tudehope
The Hon. Natalie Ward

PRESENT

The Hon. John Graham, *Special Minister of State, Minister for Transport, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism*

CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:

**Budget Estimates secretariat
Room 812
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

The CHAIR: Welcome to the second hearing of Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts for the additional round of the inquiry into budget estimates 2024-2025. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today. My name is Cate Faehrmann. I am Chair of the Committee. I welcome Minister Graham and accompanying officials to this hearing.

Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Transport. I ask everyone in the room to please turn their mobile phones to silent. Parliamentary privilege applies to witnesses in relation to the evidence they give today. However, it does not apply to what witnesses say outside of the hearing. I urge witnesses to be careful about making comments to the media or to others after completing their evidence. In addition, the Legislative Council has adopted rules to provide procedural fairness for inquiry participants. I encourage Committee members and witnesses to be mindful of those procedures. All witnesses appearing today have already been sworn. Minister, you do not need to be sworn either.

Mr JOSH MURRAY, Secretary, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

Ms TRUDI MARES, Deputy Secretary, Planning, Integration and Passenger, Transport for NSW, on former oath

Ms CAMILLA DROVER, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure, Projects and Engineering, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

Ms BRENDA HOANG, Deputy Secretary, Finance, Technology and Commercial, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

Mr HOWARD COLLINS, Coordinator General, Transport for NSW, on former oath

Mr PETER REGAN, Chief Executive, Sydney Metro, on former affirmation

Mr MATT LONGLAND, Chief Executive, Sydney Trains, on former affirmation

Ms TRACEY TAYLOR, Deputy Secretary, People, Communication and Workplaces and Chief People Officer, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

Ms SALLY WEBB, Deputy Secretary, Safety, Policy, Environment and Regulation, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

Mr ANTHONY WING, NSW Point to Point Transport Commissioner, on former oath

The CHAIR: Thank you for making the time to give evidence. Today's hearing will be conducted from 9.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. We are joined by the Minister for the morning session from 9.15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. with a 15-minute break at 11.00 a.m. In the afternoon, we will hear from departmental witnesses from 2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. with a 15-minute break at 3.30 p.m. During these sessions there will be questions from the Opposition and crossbench members only and then 15 minutes allocated for Government questions at 10.45 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. We will begin with questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, thank you for coming back for your encore. When were you first made aware of the SafeWork investigation into the point to point commission concerning the treatment of staff?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would have to take on notice the precise time. I wouldn't want to mislead the Committee on something like a date.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're aware of it, though?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Just repeat the question; I missed the start of it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The SafeWork investigation into the point to point commission concerning treatment of staff.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't believe it's been raised with me, so I'm not necessarily aware of it. But it may easily have been raised with the office and, therefore, I'd have to take it on notice, including the time.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: As it stands, you're not aware of that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd refer those questions to the point to point commission.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray, when were you first made aware of complaints regarding the culture of the point to point commission?

JOSH MURRAY: Thank you, Ms Ward. I would have to also check the exact time frame as to when that element was raised with Transport.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When roughly?

JOSH MURRAY: It would be a number of months.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So last year?

JOSH MURRAY: I would guess that it would be last year but, again, I wouldn't want to give you an incorrect date. I'm happy to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but you are aware of it?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm aware.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And you've been briefed on it?

JOSH MURRAY: No, it's an investigation by SafeWork. I have had discussions with the point to point commissioner. I've certainly had a discussion with Transport senior executives and with the point to point commissioner.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: A discussion—is that a briefing? Is that a formalised environment where you are given information about the investigation?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, that's correct. But I would note that it's an investigation that's being conducted by SafeWork and, therefore, it is protected from Transport in terms of the information that's provided to us.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you briefed the Minister?

JOSH MURRAY: I don't believe that I've discussed it personally with the Minister, no.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Has the Minister's office been briefed?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm not sure about that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're not sure if the Minister's office has been briefed on a SafeWork investigation into culture at point to point?

JOSH MURRAY: That's correct. I'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You've known about this for months and you haven't told the Minister or his office?

JOSH MURRAY: That is not something that I have done in the intervening period with the Minister, no.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have staff reached out to you regarding the issue?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes. I have received advice from staff at the point to point commission, which I have followed up with authorities, but I wouldn't want to go into that in too much detail at this point.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have staff reached out to you personally?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, I wouldn't want to give that detail here in open forum.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Last year?

JOSH MURRAY: I would have to check the details of that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right, you'll take that on notice. What actions have you taken about that?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, there is an active SafeWork investigation—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I understand that. I'm not asking about the investigation; I'm just asking about your actions.

JOSH MURRAY: —which I have sought independent advice on in terms of the progress of that material.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Independent legal advice?

JOSH MURRAY: I have sought advice from within Transport, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: From legal advisers or what special expertise?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, Ms Ward, I appreciate the questions, but I do want to be very careful. This is an investigation by SafeWork. The point to point commission is an independent statutory authority. The commissioner is here. I don't want to breach the line between what SafeWork needs to do with an independent agency and Transport's role in that, which is also limited.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Certainly. I'm not asking for the details of the investigation. I respect that. I'm asking about your involvement, your actions, and the Minister's understanding and awareness. Have other bullying complaints been raised with you inside Transport that you haven't raised with the Minister?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, I can't be aware of any. You'd have to be more specific.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have any other bullying complaints been raised with you that you have not raised with the Minister?

JOSH MURRAY: Transport has a very clear process for handling any staff complaints. They would certainly be—in an agency as large as Transport, with 30,000 people, we have robust procedures and, as I have discussed here before, these are elements that I have sought to put additional safeguards in place, including briefings to me directly. When matters are raised of a significant nature, then I have briefed Ministers on those.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But not this one?

JOSH MURRAY: Not this one with this Minister, no.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, what do you have to say about over 30 employees raising complaints with SafeWork regarding the commissioner?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think any issues of this nature, of course I'd be concerned about, so I'm open to hearing more about it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Particularly from your secretary?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm very confident with the way that the secretary has handled these issues in the past.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How can you be confident, Minister, if he hasn't raised it with you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: In my experience—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What gives you that confidence?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I was saying, I'm talking about issues in the past. I'm very confident with how the secretary has handled some of these sensitive issues in the past, having had that direct experience when issues are raised, including by members, and when then dealt with by the agency and the secretary.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, respectfully, you're out of the loop on this one. You haven't been briefed on it, according to either of you. How can you have that confidence when you're not even aware of the complaints?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Just to be specific, I've taken on notice—I don't believe I've been briefed, but I have taken on notice whether the office has. We'll certainly come back and be clear either way, but I've taken that on notice rather than giving a clear answer today.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You have taken that on notice, but you've been aware of other sensitive issues having been raised with you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, I think the secretary has put it well. This is a large agency, a key public sector employer with strong standards in place, but of course there are issues across the workforce. If there weren't issues, you would suspect there was something wrong with the reporting arrangement.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, when will the Transport internal standards investigation conclude on the matter?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're directing that to me?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I haven't been briefed on the issue, or I believe I haven't been briefed on the issue, I am probably the wrong person to direct that to, but I can refer that to the agency.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you. Mr Murray, when will the Transport internal standards investigation conclude on the matter?

JOSH MURRAY: Ms Ward, again I'm happy to seek advice on the timing of that, but this is predominantly a SafeWork initiated—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you get that today?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll seek further advice, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's a timeline issue. We're not asking about details of the investigation; we're asking about what you've done and when the timelines kick in. When will that conclude?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm very happy to bring that back to the Committee today in terms of the information that we have. Again, I would point out that this is a clear delineation between SafeWork and an independent authority.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, you said that, thank you; I hear that. Can you advise what the internal standards investigation is about?

JOSH MURRAY: No, I'm not prepared to do that now. I'll seek further advice and aim to inform the Committee during the hearing today. But I would want to take independent legal advice on what can be shared, given it is not an investigation that we own.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is a cover up?

JOSH MURRAY: Not at all, Ms Ward. I think you have experienced—the fact that whenever issues have been raised, I've been very happy to take them forward and to take full accountability for them. Again, this is not my own investigation. This is a SafeWork matter that we are—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, I'm asking about the transport internal investigation. The internal investigation is not a SafeWork matter. It's part of Transport, isn't it?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, but these matters would naturally be linked. One supersedes the other, because it started at SafeWork.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you take accountability for the treatment of staff inside Transport?

JOSH MURRAY: Absolutely.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you think a culture of bullying exists within the point to point commission?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm not aware of that. I'm not the investigator in this matter.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But you've been briefed?

JOSH MURRAY: I have been briefed to a level. It is not our investigation.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, would it surprise you to learn compliance officers on duty are not working as required, including taking dinner breaks and eating ice cream while charging taxpayers?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm hesitant to comment on—this is, as the secretary has described it, an active investigation. I don't want to comment—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: This is not about the investigation. This is compliance officers. I've moved on. The compliance officers who are out there doing their jobs, inspecting taxis, are not working as required, are taking dinner and eating ice cream while supposedly being paid by taxpayers.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry, Ms Ward, the rapid way you moved on—it did have me confused. So this is not related in any way to the investigation?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, this is compliance officers, point to point commission.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So in the ordinary course of business, you're now asking about compliance officers who—and just repeat the suggestion that you are making?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Would it surprise you to learn compliance officers on duty are not working as required, including taking dinner and eating ice cream while charging taxpayers.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, people are entitled to have dinner. Obviously—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And ice cream?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: What they have for dinner—I will be careful not to express a view about that. That's more a matter for the health Minister.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So they're entitled to do that on taxpayer time?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would expect that anyone working for the public sector works hard—that's been my experience—and works in accordance with whatever their relevant terms and conditions are. Obviously those vary. I'll be hesitant to comment without having some knowledge of the individual instances—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Chair, these are very serious matters—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —and also the individual industrial conditions that apply.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: —and I'd ask that the Government deal with them respectfully. Minister, is it acceptable for staff to be vaping while on shift and enforcing industry regulations?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would need some more details before—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Compliance officers are vaping while on shift—supposed to be inspecting taxis, keeping people safe. Is that acceptable to you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I expect public servants at the highest level, at any level, to do their job. In my experience, that happens routinely.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can they vape on shift?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I also expect people to follow the law and—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes or no on vaping—can they vape on shift?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: If it's legal, they can do it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So vaping routinely on shift is fine?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Ward, I expect people to do their jobs. That's the key goal here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What KPI framework exists for compliance staff during the shift?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's a very good question. I would refer you to the point to point commissioner.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I can deal with him in the afternoon, but I'm asking you about the KPI framework for compliance staff that are out there supposed to be inspecting taxis, keeping people safe. You've been out there on media releases about the point to point commissioner. I'd like to understand what the KPI framework is that exists for those staff during the shift—when they're not vaping.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm certain there is a framework in place to spell out the job details of these compliance officers. I'd expect there is a KPI framework. I have not been briefed on it in my five weeks in the job. As you would probably expect—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray, is it OK for compliance officers to vape on shift?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can direct you to the point to point commissioner.

JOSH MURRAY: Again, these are questions for the point to point commissioner.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm asking you as the secretary of the department in charge of this—is it acceptable to you, is it Transport policy, that it's fine to vape on shift?

JOSH MURRAY: As you know, the point to point commission is an independent statutory authority, so—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are there vaping rules inside Transport for NSW?

JOSH MURRAY: I would have to check exactly what that is. Obviously, staff take breaks during the day, especially if they're frontline staff, and they are afforded the opportunity to do that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How do taxpayers know that these compliance officers are actually working while on shift?

JOSH MURRAY: The point to point commissioner has put in place a significant operational frontline response to ensure the safety, in particular, and compliance of operations. I, for one, know that the commissioner is well versed on the level of activity and the level of success that the investigations have had out there on the front line. But he would be best placed to speak to those. I don't have the detail of the investigations.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right. I'll move on. Minister, have you read the 2025-26 midyear review?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're referring to the budget midyear review, you're referring to the New South Wales one. I'm aware of it. I would have scanned it. I think I wouldn't want to mislead the Committee by saying I read it in detail. I have in the past done that, but I wouldn't be confident that I've stretched as far as reading it—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When you were on this side of the table you might have been more attuned to it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —but I'm certainly aware of it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But you haven't read it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am aware of it, and I would have scanned the details, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Scanned, but not read?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't want to overstate my familiarity with the fine details.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's probably sensible.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't have worked to the same level of detail that I'm confident the Treasurer did.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In it, it states that the capital expenditure has decreased by \$1.1 billion, driven by changes in delivery of Transport projects, including Sydney Metro. What projects in Sydney Metro or Transport have changed delivery that enabled a \$1.1 billion decrease in capital expenditure?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is similar to some of the questions you've previously asked at estimates, and they're good questions. But they relate to the normal sequencing and timing of projects. These are big projects in delivery—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. But my question was more specific—which projects?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As those move around, they have big impacts on the State finances. On the specifics of what has contributed to that particular figure in the way that happened at the last estimates, I'd refer you to the agency.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm asking you, Minister. You've got a midyear review. You've got a \$1.1 billion increase in capex. What projects have changed?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These are the sequencing of individual projects—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which ones?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Well, we can take you through that detail. There's no problem with doing that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you get that back to us today? Because it's budget estimates. I would have thought, given I did ask it last time, your team might have been prepared for that this time. I'd like to go through it. Can the agency provide the answer—what projects have changed?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I propose we deal with that in the way we dealt with it in the last estimates, which is the agency takes you through the main components that make up those shifts in the finance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: There's a \$1.1 billion decrease in capex. I would have thought that's something that you'd be prepared to answer immediately.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's the context of a \$62 billion capital program. These programs are moving around—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can the agency answer that now?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —and I'm happy to talk about the timing of these projects

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray, can anyone answer that now? Where's the \$1.1 billion decrease? Which projects have changed?

JOSH MURRAY: As the Minister has said, it relates to the ability to bring projects to market.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which ones?

JOSH MURRAY: As an example, I know that Sydney Metro West is going through procurement at the moment on a number of packages. There have been other projects across both the Roads and the Transport space. Some have come forward—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which ones have changed to contribute to the \$1.1 billion?

JOSH MURRAY: —and others—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You've got a big budget, clearly a billion dollar decrease is massive.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Point of order—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You don't need to run cover. He can answer.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: The secretary was in the middle of an answer and he was giving a good answer. The shadow Minister was interrupting, speaking over, and that needs to stop.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And you're taking my time.

The CHAIR: I think the member knows what I will say at this point. Just try and allow the member, the witness, to answer the questions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Certainly. Thank you. Mr Murray, can you give specific detail on what projects have been changed to enable the \$1.1 billion decrease?

JOSH MURRAY: As I was saying, this is very similar to the question yesterday. It is not one project for \$1.1 billion. There are a number of projects that come forward as funding becomes available—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which ones?

JOSH MURRAY: —or Federal funding, for example, which has been the case, as discussed yesterday. Other projects which are going through procurement move back in the order. I'm sure we could provide you with some of the more significant movements that are part of that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: This is budget estimates. I would hope you would immediately for \$1.1 billion of decrease in capex. That's a very scary prospect for the people of New South Wales. I would have thought you would be able to, today, come back, certainly before the lunchbreak, about which those projects have changed.

JOSH MURRAY: Again, it's not a decrease in capex. It is the performance to the half-year as we move projects around and they go through their procurement or delivery processes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Ward, can I just put it into context?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you provide it now?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That number is much lower than capital slippage over forward years.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But your own midyear review, Minister—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So figures in the Coalition budgets would have seen much larger movements.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, your own midyear review states that the capex has decreased. Can you provide it now?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, we certainly can take you through that detail in the way we did last time. I'm just making the point that, while \$1 billion is certainly a lot of money, in the context of a \$63 billion budget, it's not unusual. In fact, capital slippage has dropped as the Transport controls have tightened.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Given that it's such a large amount, Minister, can you provide now to the budget estimates on the midyear review information about where the \$1.1 billion has changed and on which projects? I mean, high-level discussions about delivery is not an estimates answer, and you know that from having sat on this side of the desk. The people of New South Wales are entitled to know, and they're entitled to understand where this has gone, which projects have changed and how.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think we should take you through the key elements that have led to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you provide that now?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —the movements, noting, as the secretary said, that some of those will be projects speeding up, some of those will be increases in funding and some of those will be projects slowing down.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What do you know? What projects have changed?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm referring you to the agency to provide some detail about the headline changes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, you don't know about bullying in Transport, you don't know about the SafeWork investigations, and you don't know about the budget and where the billion dollars has gone. You haven't read the midyear figures. Are you out to sea, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're going to have to try harder than that, Ms Ward.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm trying very hard. You've got seven portfolios. You're a very busy person and you're juggling all of these things, but you can't tell us where the \$1.1 billion has gone and what's going on with the Point to Point Transport Commissioner. What is going on here?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Tragically, it's eight portfolios at the moment. But otherwise your figures are correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'll keep digging into those, but if you could come back with those specifics. That's a massive amount, a huge portfolio, and I would have thought for someone sitting at the driver's seat of the Transport portfolio, you'd want to know pretty quickly with that one. I'm trying to help you here.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, I do want to make the point that we are chasing the capital slippage issues closely. They are serious in a pipeline as large as Transport.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could we get that as soon as possible?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These are reasonable questions. You should seek the information. We'll give it to you in the form that you were given last time.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: As soon as possible please.

The CHAIR: Minister, firstly, can we just get clarity in terms of the Transport portfolio? Is that still interim, or is that done and dusted and you are the transport Minister from here on in?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've been commissioned as the transport Minister, but I think the Premier's indicated that he expects to reshuffle the team to a smaller or larger extent at some point in the near future.

The CHAIR: Do you have any further idea of that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's really a matter for the Premier.

The CHAIR: It's a little bit tricky I suppose. From your perspective, you've got eight portfolios and possibly if you don't think you're going to be keeping the Transport portfolio, it's probably one that you're not wanting or trying to get your head across completely if you know you'll be giving it up in a week.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've certainly worked hard in the five weeks I've had, and there have been some significant issues. I've dealt with those to the best of my ability. I've enjoyed working with the Transport team across the broader range of issues in the Transport and Roads portfolio.

The CHAIR: Minister, what's the update in terms of an opening date for the Metro West to Parramatta?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're free to press on more details, but Metro West has been talked about a target opening date of 2032. That's still the advice from the agency to me. Feel free to press in more detail. Obviously that tunnelling is going very well. We had a big breakthrough with two of the tunnelling machines out at Clyde recently, and those tunnelling machines are now heading west, out to Parramatta and Westmead, over the course of this year.

The CHAIR: The Western Sydney Airport line, any update on that? There were those internal documents that said it planned to open in mid-2027, roughly six months or so after the airport itself. Is there anything more firm in relation to that opening date?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've seen the public speculation and the media reporting about a potential six-month delay. I can't confirm that, based on the agency advice to me at the moment. Again, feel free to press Metro on the details of that advice so you hear it direct yourself. I can confirm that this is a project under time pressure, and there may well be a delay, but we're unable to quantify that. Some of the reasons for that have been made public.

The CHAIR: Mr Regan, that date was reported as being contained in a highly confidential review of Sydney's metro projects. What's that review, firstly?

PETER REGAN: I'm sorry, could you just clarify which reference?

The CHAIR: A *Sydney Morning Herald* article from February this year, I think, said that the airport line was planned to open by mid-2027. That was contained in a highly confidential review. I'm not sure if it was a review that was obtained via this Parliament or via a GIPAA by a journalist, but that's what the SMH reported. What's that highly confidential review, firstly?

PETER REGAN: I'm happy to try to answer the question, I'm just not entirely sure that I understand what that article was referring to.

The CHAIR: When you say you're not sure—

PETER REGAN: I'm happy answer the question, but if we could just get clarity on which review. I'm conscious that the article referenced a number of different dates from different sources.

The CHAIR: This is an article from *Sydney Morning Herald*, dated 13 February 2025. There is mention of Sydney Metro's annual report, where it states it was buried "that the new line to the international airport is 'expected to open in April 2027'". Then the next sentence reads:

A highly confidential review of Sydney's metro projects also reveals the airport line is 'planned to open by mid-2027'.

The first question is what's the highly confidential review referred to there?

PETER REGAN: Thank you for clarifying. The reference to the date of April 2027 in Sydney Metro's annual report, which is a published document, refers to the underlying contract, the Public Private Partnership contract to deliver the Western Sydney Airport metro. That contract has and always has, since it was signed, had a range of dates for the completion of the railway. The contractual date for completion in that contract has always been April 2027, and that's what's in the annual report that you refer to. The contract, however, also has included, since it was signed, an incentivised target date, which is in advance of that date for completion, in line with the opening of the airport. If we refer, say for context, to the opening of the Sydney Metro city section last year, again the date of first passenger service was in advance of the date actual final completion was achieved under the contract. That's the way these contracts are set up. The first passenger service often occurs in advance of full and final completion under the contract, which involves a set of further performance tests. So that's why the April date is correct, and it always has been that date, but there has been a target in that contract for earlier completion.

The CHAIR: The highly confidential review, which was actually the question, that's the Mrdak review that was released via an order for papers under Standing Order 52 in this place.

PETER REGAN: Yes.

The CHAIR: It states, "plan to open by mid-2027". Is that because that review found that it potentially stretched out? Therefore, from your perspective, when do you believe that the Western Sydney Airport metro line is going to open to passengers?

PETER REGAN: To the extent that I can—obviously I didn't write the article, but if it is referring to that review, the Mrdak review—

The CHAIR: It is.

PETER REGAN: The Mrdak review was undertaken in 2023, and I believe the reference is to the underlying contract for the date for final completion being in the second quarter of 2027, as has always been the case.

The CHAIR: Second quarter of 2027 or April 2027, what can the public expect?

PETER REGAN: The dates in the contract are April and the review referred to the second quarter. I don't think it was being specific on the date.

The CHAIR: Because mid-2027 sounds like it could be pushing into Q1.

PETER REGAN: Yes, to reiterate—and I'm happy to be open about this; there was obviously coverage of this in the public—there's dates in the contract. Like all of these projects, they are complex projects with a range of dates and a particular sequence of contracts and activities that take place. The project itself has been progressing very well. The tunnels are completed and the viaducts are completed. Within the Public Private Partnership contract, which is for the stations and the railway systems, that was the one that did include the incentivised target for December. There have been some challenges affecting the program, and we're working that through with the consortium at the moment.

The CHAIR: Are any of those challenges likely to impact the delivery date? Can you be more specific?

PETER REGAN: Yes, they may. Certainly the target date, which is in advance of that final completion date, may well be impacted by those. We're working through with the consortium whether that date for final completion remains the appropriate date.

The CHAIR: What are the challenges?

PETER REGAN: There have been a series of challenges. The program for that project was very tight from the start. When that contract was originally signed at the back end of 2022, it was done at a time when there were very significant supply chain pressures coming off the back of COVID, and then there were challenges in

global supply chains around the disruptions and uncertainty—war in Ukraine, for example, did have an impact. There were initial challenges. There have been a series of challenges on the way through. There have been some impacts in different parts of the project from industrial action against different parties, which has impacted some of the delivery. There have been processes to refine and finalise some of the scope elements within the project. And there have also been some challenges within the procurement and the construction time frames that we're working through at the moment with the consortium involved.

The CHAIR: It sounds like it's highly likely that the Western Sydney airport—we knew it was going to open for at least six months. Passengers are arriving at that airport without the metro in place. But you're saying today, Mr Regan, that it could be longer than six months, given these various challenges that the agency is confronting.

PETER REGAN: Yes. What I'm saying, to be clear, is that—

The CHAIR: Do you know specifically what that looks like in terms of delays?

PETER REGAN: No. That is tipped—to be very clear, we don't have a revised date for completion of the project. We're in discussions with the consortium that's delivering the final contracts on the project at the moment. What I can say is that the contracts for the delivery of the tunnels and the viaducts and the heavy civil works are now complete.

The CHAIR: Last question. Sorry, I've got six seconds. Do they need to pay compensation? What happens if they break the contract in terms of delays? What happens there?

PETER REGAN: As is normal in these contracts, there are a range of provisions dealing with who pays for delay. That's one of the issues that I say we need to work through with that consortium—to understand, if there is delay, what are the individual causes of delay; and then the individual attribution of that delay is undertaken under the contract. It's a process that we're working through at the moment. It is quite complicated in terms of the number of interfaces and impacts, but when we have more information, we'll be able to provide that.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'll go to taxis. Minister, under the Act, all vehicles need to be insured that are providing a passenger service. In the five weeks that you've been the Minister, have you been made aware of numerous entities distributing insurance certificates that are not actually issued by a company authorised under the Insurance Act 1973?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't believe so, but I'd be happy to take that on notice. Certainly, over recent weeks, there have been real concerns raised about some issues in the taxi industry in Victoria, but also in New South Wales. I'd have to check and take on notice the specifics that you are asking about.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Wing, did you ever raise the issue with the previous Minister about fake insurance certificates being issued by entities for taxi and rideshare vehicles?

ANTHONY WING: I don't recall that I raised it with the Minister, but we have certainly taken action to deal with fake insurance, as well as reporting it to ASIC, of course. There are some fake insurance certificates and there is at least one issuer out there whom we have told the terms of their insurance would need to be amended to comply with the requirements of the Act.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: When you say you've taken action, what does that action look like, other than telling one insurer that they need to modify the terms of their insurance? From what I have seen, these fake insurance certificates are actually saying that the people are covered by an insurance company, and that insurance company is saying, "No, we're not covering you at all." There are potentially hundreds of taxis running around uninsured, not knowing that they aren't actually covered.

ANTHONY WING: The action we've taken is with the particular taxis involved. We've basically told them and their companies that that insurance is not acceptable and they need to replace their insurance. We have also reported the fraudulent insurance to ASIC as well, as we wouldn't have any powers to go after insurers per se. But we have been clear to industry that they need to be very careful about that insurance and if they have fake insurance, they will need to replace it.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How many companies have you contacted regarding this fake insurance?

ANTHONY WING: Do you mean taxi companies?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes. Can we quantify how many taxis have been impacted by this?

ANTHONY WING: I don't have a number here. I'd have to go away and take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Happy for you to take it on notice. What was the response from ASIC to your concerns?

ANTHONY WING: ASIC asked if we could continue to keep them advised and continue to tell the taxi industry not to take up this insurance.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: So ASIC weren't going to take any action against insurance fraud?

ANTHONY WING: I can't speak for ASIC; all I can say is we reported it. We've also, ourselves, been dealing with this industry and making clear to them that they need to be careful about certain kinds of insurance and be alert to it.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I can kind of speak for ASIC because I've got an email here from them back to a legitimate taxi insurer, basically saying, "We're not going to investigate or charge anyone for this because we can't prove who actually printed out the fake certificate or whoever created the fake certificate." If ASIC aren't going to investigate and charge people for doing the wrong thing as the main regulator, we are going to keep seeing this problem arise, aren't we?

ANTHONY WING: What we can do under the Act is keep dealing with the taxi companies and keep making them aware of this kind of problem. We can keep reporting it. If we see certificates being issued which are false, we report them to both—to the insurer as well. But all we can do ourselves is deal with this industry and make sure that when people do have fake insurance or improper insurance, they are replacing it.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Have you got any advice as to whether New South Wales police are able to do anything regarding this issue—whether they have any powers regarding fraud?

ANTHONY WING: No, I have not been advised on that.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Are you prepared to go away and seek that advice as to whether there is anything around committing fraud that they could potentially do to help you stamp out this problem?

ANTHONY WING: Yes, I'm prepared to go and seek that advice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Minister, I'll jump to the Sydney Metro. In 2024, *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported several examples where Sydney Metro operators had bungled emergency response arrangements after failures on the network. According to firefighters, Sydney Metro doesn't have permanent emergency response units with the appropriate capability who can respond to incidents promptly when they occur in the network. They attributed that factor to the issue that was being reported on. Are you able to, perhaps on notice, provide the data detailing the number of emergency response incidents in the metro network over the past 12 months, along with any after-action reviews that have been undertaken by the agency or the operator?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd certainly be happy to take that on notice. I'm aware this has been an issue that has been raised publicly in relation to the emergency response. Obviously it is an important issue to make sure that both the agencies are confident, the Government is confident, but also the public is confident with the emergency response. I'd happily take that on notice and we'll get you some details.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Has the rail safety regulator imposed any obligations on the Sydney Metro operator with regards to getting emergency service capability right?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would have to refer you to Sydney Metro.

PETER REGAN: The reports that you're referring to relate to prior to the opening of the Metro City section last year. The arrangements were put in place around emergency support for the metro through the City line, involving support from Sydney Trains Rail Fire and Emergency in support of Fire and Rescue and Metro Trains Sydney, the operator of the line. Those issues were resolved prior to the opening of the metro and prior to the sign-offs from Fire and Rescue NSW and from the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator. The arrangements that were put in place at the time were interim arrangements between the parties so that further work could be done to plan out the appropriate level of emergency support from other agencies in the context of the ongoing growth of the Sydney Metro network, so not just in relation to the City line but the broader extensions and the further projects. Those discussions have progressed during the past year and are continuing but, certainly, there are a number of different options for providing that additional support. We're working those through with our colleagues at Sydney Trains and Fire and Rescue and with the operator, Metro Trains Sydney.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You were talking about interim arrangements. When do you think you will fully resolve this matter?

PETER REGAN: Certainly it's a live discussion at the moment. We've put in place interim arrangements initially for the first year of operations. We are continuing those discussions and looking to resolve

that and, certainly, there will be a resolution within that time frame around the next steps. Those discussions are actively taking place.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: In the two minutes I've got, I'll quickly jump to Kamay ferry wharves, one of my favourite topics and Mr Howard Collins' favourite topic. It's obviously just been officially opened last week. It's a great fishing resource. What is the final cost? Is it \$78 million, or are there ongoing maintenance costs that have to be factored into that figure?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I knew this was an issue. I've noted your questioning over the years, so I knew there was an issue here. But, I've got to say, when I was briefed on the details of this project—the background to the project—it was even more incredible than your questioning had suggested. The fact that it has increased from \$18 million to \$78 million—that is the final budget. It's a great place to fish but not, at the moment, a great place to catch a ferry. That was never part of the plan, incredibly.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: That's debatable, Minister, because there are several documents that actually list the ferry service as the primary purpose. Then, magically, halfway through this, the primary purpose changes to other things. It was listed in the EIS as the primary purpose at one point, and then that's disappeared and changed.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: In the twists and turns in this tale.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: In the twists and turns.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: But, on the question of maintenance, I think that's a good question. I might refer that to Howard Collins.

HOWARD COLLINS: Good morning, Mr Banasiak. Yes, it's my favourite subject too. The capital costs—we believe, again, there's still some final sorting out of the final cost, but \$78.1 million, I think, is the forecast final cost for the capital side. Obviously, like many other wharves, there will be maintenance costs. Those maintenance costs are included within Maritime's overall maintenance budget. Some \$360 million is raised by Maritime. Some of that money will be spent over the time in cleaning, maintenance and other costs which are on the opex side of business.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: We might pick that up when we come back around.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, metro—is the aerotropolis precinct plan Government policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're referring to the document released by Infrastructure NSW.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, the aerotropolis precinct plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The one that was just released recently.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes. Is it Government policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, it's certainly a Government document. Whether it's a policy, I'd be careful in describing it, but it's certainly a Government document—a Government status update about where things are up to as we alert the public and particularly people with an interest around that area to what the plans are to roll this out.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Does it say it's a status update? People see a Government document that says aerotropolis precinct plan—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is absolutely a Government document. I'm not—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: They can assume that it's Government policy? Or is there a caveat on that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, this is absolutely a Government document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's a Government policy, right. Did you see it before it was announced?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I won't go into Cabinet details, but I think you could—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm not asking you to reveal Cabinet-in-confidence; I'm asking you whether you saw it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The best way to answer that is, I think you could expect an update like that to have been circulated in Government.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Did you see it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You saw the aerotropolis precinct plan; that's a yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That is a yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right. So it's your plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't want to take responsibility for my colleagues' work. NSW does not report to me as a Minister. I've certainly worked closely with them.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What's the difference between a policy and a Government document?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think you would be diverting the discussion to—not all Government documents are a Government policy; that's all.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's not your responsibility for the transport stuff inside the plan. Is that what you're saying?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. Absolutely, the transport elements—well, transport delivery is the responsibility of the transport Minister—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So it's your plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —and the transport agencies.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is it correct that the Government doesn't intend to start construction of any new metro lines or any rail connection in south-west Sydney until the 2040s?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I don't think that's a fair statement of what's in the NSW report. This is a baseline from which we'll work from here. As we were talking about yesterday with Fifteenth Avenue, we've already attracted a billion dollars extra into that project. Over time—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Let's talk about this policy, though, in the limited time.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. This is a snapshot that looks at where we are at the moment. But Government will now work from here—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you disagree with your own document.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, absolutely not. I spoke about this publicly—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which is correct? The document or the Government policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry, what was the question?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which is correct?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Which is correct?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you disagree with the plan?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You agree with the plan?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So there will be no new metro connections in south-west Sydney until the 2040s. That's right, isn't it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, you're misreading the document, Ms Ward.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm misreading your own aerotropolis precinct plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you don't disagree with the document. It's taken you a week to walk away from your own document. Can you explain it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm not walking away from the document. As we talked about yesterday, this is public communication about the order in which the Government is working through these priorities in this crucial area of Sydney. For example, we've already doubled the road funding here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I want to talk about the metro, not road funding.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We will continue to step into that, both on the public transport side and on the road side, to drive this plan faster. We're clearing capital headroom in the budget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But let's talk about the plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll talk to the Commonwealth and advocate for it. What this sets out—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but I'd like to talk, in the limited time, about the plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It is actually really important, Ms Ward.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's very important.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: What this sets out is the sequencing of this. What it enables is landowners and developers—people providing jobs in this region—to look at the order in which this will roll out. They haven't had that information before. To credit the former Government, the pipeline of information going to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, I just want to talk about the plan, if I may. I have very limited time.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm trying to explain why you—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Roads was yesterday. Let's talk about this today, and this plan specifically.

The Hon. BOB NANVA: Point of order—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We can talk about the previous Government, we can talk about roads and we can talk about other things—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I will hear the point of order. I thought they mutually agreed to move on.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I think we've moved on.

The Hon. BOB NANVA: My point of order is that it would be helpful if this were to operate as a question and answer session. It's not courteous to the witness to talk over him when he's providing an answer that is directly relevant to the question that was asked.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It wasn't directly relevant, but I will move on. You're wasting my time.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I've already ruled. The member knows how to conduct herself in questioning.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, the aerotropolis precinct plan says that new construction will start in the 2040s. Is that the plan or not?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can give you a status update, which is, as you would be aware, we're looking at rail extensions in the north-west and the south-west. Those business cases, which are currently being conducted by the Government, will be completed either at the end of this year or in 2026. Once they've been evaluated, then we'll look at what the next steps are, and we'll look at the—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, with respect, I've heard what you've had to say. We don't care about business cases. Your own document says it won't start until the 2040s. Is there some other secret plan that we're not aware of, or is this the document that is published by the Government and is your policy? Which is it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Ward, you're misunderstanding the document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I don't think I am.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was attempting to explain to you why, but you've cut me off. That's fine but, no, you are incorrect. You are factually wrong.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How am I misunderstanding your own Government document that says you won't start construction until the 2040s? Is there an asterisk that says, "Actually, that's not correct. See Mr Graham for the other plan"? You published a document. It says no new metro until 2040. That's right, isn't it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, that's not right. You're misunderstanding the document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is that a typo?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm happy to explain it to you, if I'm given the chance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When will construction start then?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Do you mean in addition to the three metros that are being constructed at the moment?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, not the three metros that the Coalition put in place, but any new metro from this Labour Government.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You are referring to any new metros?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The two new metros that are in the plan, which says 2040. Is there a typo?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, there is not a typo.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Okay. When will construction start?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Following the business cases.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: 2040s? 2050s?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I don't expect it to be the 2040s. The business cases will be completed either this year or next year. The Government will then make decisions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: After 2027?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is the ordinary process of government working through. We are clearing capital headroom at the moment in the budget. We will make future investment decisions. We are doing very, very well attracting money from the Commonwealth—much, much better—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Will construction start—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We have got a much better share of the Commonwealth's infrastructure pipeline at the moment than we had when we came into government. I am very happy with that as well.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You've opened a lot of metros that we put in place over many years. That's a great thing for the people of New South Wales that we built things.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The Premier has given credit for that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, can I ask you a question please?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think he took the right approach on that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is it your commitment to start investment after the business cases or it is your commitment to start it in the 2040s?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: If you're asking if we will set aside the normal process of government and leap to an investment decision before we do a business case, absolutely not.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I am asking you, on behalf of the people of south-western Sydney, when those projects will start. You've got a published document saying not till the 2040s.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're asking me to make an investment decision prior to getting a business case. We will not do that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, I'm asking why the plan says the 2040s. That is your own published document. I am asking why that is.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: What I was explaining to you about what's going on here is that it sets out the baseline for where we are now and the sequencing of projects. It's similar to—to the credit of the former Government—the pipeline that was looking outwards to the construction industry, where construction industry people were able to look at the sequencing of projects. This now allows a broader range of landholders and private interests to look at this information.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's curious—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think it's a real step forward in terms of communicating—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, and you can put that in a press release.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —except if it's deliberately misinterpreted.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can I get to the question though?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Obviously, this is the baseline. Then we look to move through, attract extra funds and make further Government decisions in the ordinary way.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, I have limited time, if I may. Those communities are just wondering what the point is of finalising business cases for projects that you don't intend to build for 13 years. That's where it's coming from. You might take on notice what the point is.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I won't take it on notice. That is a deliberate misunderstanding of what's going on here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right. I will move on.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That is incorrect. Those community fears that you're raising are not required.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's your published document. Minister, when did Sydney Metro provide official advice that delivery of Metro Southwest would not be completed this year?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was briefed on the Metro Southwest conversion as I was commissioned as the transport Minister. I was grateful for that briefing.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When did they provide that advice?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We've updated to say that the conversion will be completed in 2026.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When did they provide that advice?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The first time that was made clear to me very specifically in advice—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —which we then immediately made public days later, was after the work that had been conducted over the weekend of 1, 2 and Monday 3 March. That work, having been completed, was the crucial work that then allowed us to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you were advised in March?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That then allowed us to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, it's a really simple question. I've got a lot of them.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm taking you through a very simple answer.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We don't need to get tongue-tied. When were you advised? You were advised in March—the official advice that it would be delayed.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was briefed earlier than that but that weekend—I can't emphasise enough how crucial that work was. Until we had that work done, we were unable to get really serious advice about what the date would be.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What changed?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That occurred on the Monday. I think Peter and I updated the public as early as—it might have been the Wednesday. It was certainly days later. As soon as we were aware of the specific timing and we could give people some confidence about that, we immediately updated the public. It would be my intention to do that with any of the projects that we are dealing with.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, you've said it won't be 12 months. Will it be open by June 2026?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Look, what I said is that the Government announced that this line will be open in 2026. That is the commitment that has been made.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. Will it be open by June?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I did observe in the course of that that I don't expect it to be a 12-month delay. That's based on the advice to me.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Will it be open by June 2026?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The Government has confirmed it will be open in 2026.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Will it be open by June 2026—yes or no?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've let you know what the Government's position is. It will be open in 2026.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What is the advice to you about when it will be open?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're welcome to ask metro directly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I know that. I'm asking you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Based on the advice to me, that was what I felt comfortable updating the public. But feel free to press the nuance of that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I will feel free. Thank you so much. But I am asking you. Minister, how much will the delay cost?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am happy to take that on notice. We're obviously still working through some of those details. You are welcome to ask Peter this afternoon, but I will take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you intend to inform the public of the cost of the delay?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, I would think that's very appropriate. There will be some cost impact, of course. I think it's clear that there will be some cost impact. We were up-front about that the other day. Of course, the public will have an interest in that at the appropriate time, once we are able to update on that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Did the Government make a decision that impacted the delivery timeline?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Look, that's a very general question. I invite you to be more specific.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Was it just delayed or did the Government make a decision regarding the delay?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think the best way to characterise it—and this is how we characterised it when we made the public announcement—is that these are complex projects. You would know how complex this particular one is. There were, however, 130 days that were impacted, in one way or another, by industrial action.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Understanding all of that—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to emphasise that wasn't the only thing going on. This is a very complex project, so there are multiple things going on. But feel free to ask metro directly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Did the Government make a decision that impacted the delivery timeline?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would have to take that on notice to make sure that I don't mislead you, but no, that was not the major cause of what was going on.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you come back today before the lunchbreak to indicate? It's a very significant project. It's a very significant matter. I think you would want the opportunity to answer. I just want to know, just to be clear—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm happy to take it on notice and we will be as cooperative as possible. That is what I can promise you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is it delayed because of delivery issues or did the Government take a decision to change the delivery date?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, this is an issue with the project. We have been very up-front about what has been causing some of those delays. But I do really want to emphasise that it is multifactorial. It's very complex.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, is Sydney Metro West still forecast to cost \$25.32 billion?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The advice to me is that the project budget has not changed. But I invite you to clarify that this afternoon with the officials.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, I am asking you now: Is the Sydney Metro West still forecast to cost \$25.32 billion?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am confirming that the project budget has not changed and is still \$25.3 billion.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Has the Government been provided with advice regarding whether the project is still on track to be delivered at a cost of \$25.32 billion?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, that's the latest advice to me as I have been briefed on this project.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you aware of analysis or costing that shows the delivery of Metro West will now not be delivered for \$25.32 billion?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry, you will have to repeat that question. I didn't quite hear you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you aware of analysis or costing—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You might have to pull the microphone closer to you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you for that, Mr Mookhey.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's no need to flatter me.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you aware of analysis or costing that shows that the delivery of Sydney Metro West will not be delivered for \$25.32 billion?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Now you're going to have repeat the question again. You're distracting me.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You are wasting my time, but I will go there again. Mr Regan, are you aware of analysis or costing that shows that the delivery of Sydney Metro West will not be delivered for \$25.32 billion?

PETER REGAN: With all of our projects we look at a full range of outcomes around the likely outturn costs of the project. As the Minister has confirmed, we are still working to the same budget of \$25.3 billion. I am not sure which specific analysis you're referring to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you provided advice that it might cost more?

PETER REGAN: As I said, we provide analysis looking at a range of outcomes—probability assessed outcomes that sometimes would exceed budgets before other mitigations are put in place. I note that on Metro West we still have seven years to go—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but my question is very specific.

PETER REGAN: —and we are still tracking to deliver that project within the budget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you. My question is very specific, though, so I'm going to ask it again and give you the opportunity to answer. Are you aware of analysis or costing which shows that the delivery of Metro West will not be delivered for \$25.32 billion?

PETER REGAN: I am aware that there is, of course, analysis of a range of outcomes on the projects, some of which are above and some of which are below the budget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So there is analysis that shows that it may not be delivered for \$25.32 billion?

PETER REGAN: Of course there is.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you. We got there in the end. Has Metro West experienced any cost escalations?

PETER REGAN: Since the project was announced in 2019, there have been significant areas of cost escalation and additional scope that have been added to the project that were not funded. That is something that we've been working through over the last couple of years, to work out how to bring the project budget consistently, with a greater degree of confidence, towards the original number, and how to deliver the project for the original budget. As you would expect, given the time frames and the challenges that have happened since then, there are all sorts of pressures on that budget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I have another specific one in relation to metro. Is Metro Western Sydney Airport still within budget?

PETER REGAN: There has been no change to the budget on the Western Sydney Airport. As the Minister and I indicated before, there are some challenges we are working through around the time frames. To date, the delivery of the tunnels and viaducts and the heavy civil works that have been completed have been completed within budget. We are working through with our delivery partners the time frames and costs and the attribution of costs to go. So at this point—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But I'm asking about the budget. It's budget estimates. I'm asking about the budget. I'll let you know timelines.

PETER REGAN: Yes. There has been no change in the budget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: To be absolutely clear, has Sydney Metro provided advice to the Government concerning risks that Sydney Metro will not be delivered within \$25.32 billion?

PETER REGAN: Yes, absolutely we have.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, absolutely. That's the normal process of government. We're routinely updated about risks with all these projects.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, will the Luddenham station be opening and operating on commencement of services on the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport line?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would refer that to the officials.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm asking you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't feel confident giving you a black or white answer on that, but I'd refer that—

PETER REGAN: I can confirm, Ms Ward, that the six stations on the Western Sydney Airport metro line—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just Luddenham.

PETER REGAN: —including Luddenham, are all scheduled to be opened at the same time.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So that will be open at the commencement of services on the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport line?

PETER REGAN: That's the current plan.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, what's the status of the EBA negotiations between metro train services and the RTBU?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I understand we're in the early stages of that process, unlike the broader industrial relations issues that have occupied the public mind—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just metro.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —and have certainly occupied a fair bit of my time since I've been commissioned.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What's the Government's position on continuing drivers on driverless trains?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The position is that there are not drivers on the driverless trains, and the Government's position is that will continue to be the case. There will not be drivers on these trains.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The drivers or so-called customer service officers who are able to drive the driverless train—what does a customer service officer on a train get paid?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Ward, you're incorrect in making that assertion.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What do they get paid?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There are not drivers on these trains. There will not be drivers on these trains.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What does a customer service officer on a train get paid?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's the position of the Government.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What do they get paid?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd refer that to the agency, to Peter.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You don't have an answer on what drivers on driverless trains are paid?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: They're not paid, because there are no drivers on these trains.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Customer service officers—if you could come back to me on that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It would be irresponsible to pay them if they weren't there.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: They're there to drive, apparently.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm sure you'd chase me around the block on that one.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you come back to the Committee on what a customer service officer who can drive will get paid?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would happily take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, could you come back today?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I will take it on notice and we'll be as cooperative as we can be.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Collins, I'm trying to close off that loop around the maintenance costs. Given that we don't have a ferry service as part of this wharf at the moment, and it's largely a wharf for recreational fishing and you can tie off recreational boats, is it the intention of the department that maintenance fees will be drawn from the fees that are contributed by recreational boaters through the Waterways Fund to cover the cost of maintenance for this wharf?

HOWARD COLLINS: I will take that detail on notice. As we know, some public wharves are maintained by Maritime. Some are funded by other sources from Transport. I'll take that particular one on notice. As you say, it's not only a great place to fish—and the disability fishing area I checked out the other day looks good, Mr Banasiak—but we have also seen vessels already using the wharves for recreational boating. We have also seen Kamay Rangers, who work in the area for the National Parks, use the wharves as well. The other thing is we've seen people use it for walking off their lunch after a great lunch in La Perouse or even at the Matt's Place fish shop in Kurnell. I'll check for you and come back to you on where those operational costs are.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Minister, can I go to the just terms Act and acquisition. If you recall, on 10 August 2022 you stood next to Abigail Boyd from The Greens when we tabled the report into the Act in major transport projects, and you were quoted as saying that when your now department knocks on the door of home owners, it's not the beginning of hardline commercial negotiations. Do you stand by that statement?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I didn't recall the date, but I'm certain you're right. I do recall the report, and the evidence that we received in that committee. I did have concerns at the time—and I still hold them—that we've got to distinguish here between big businesses who might take a tough approach in land price negotiations and ordinary home owners who shouldn't be approached as a tough commercial landowner.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: What changes have you implemented in your department to see that cultural change actualised where your department distinguishes between a hard-nosed business negotiation and a mum and dad who just want to get a fair price for their property so they can move on to a comparable home?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd highlight three things. Firstly, I reiterate that view publicly and make it clear that my expectation is that the agencies will make that distinction as they're working through with ordinary humans caught in these big projects being built. Secondly, there has been active consideration of the just terms Act, particularly how long some of these processes can take, and there has been active Government decision-making around allowing a faster path through, which, in my view, is better for the home owner and better for the project. Thirdly, we made some commitments at the election about broader reform. That's still an ongoing Government discussion.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: That election commitment for broader reform seems to have stalled. If you go onto the website that looks at that reform process, it doesn't seem like you've actually got past or even completed the public consultation phase.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't think it's fair to say it has stalled.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: From the public perception of the front-facing website, it looks like it has stalled, so I'm providing the opportunity—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As someone who was involved in those discussions, I take that feedback seriously. It is an active Government discussion about the operation of the Act and about potential reform of the Act.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Have you committed to the report recommendation to have letters of offer provided early? Have you changed anything within your department's processes to see that actualised?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd like to refer to the agency about how that is operating and how it has changed. I might take that on notice and we'll give you a detailed answer.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I might as well throw them all out there. You committed to partial up-front payments, and independent valuers and mediators. What have you done in your department to see them actualised? I guess we've already covered off the legislative change. You also committed to ripping up non-disclosure agreements of home owners. Where are we at with those?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll take all those on notice. We'll get you an answer. I think they're fair questions. I'll make one distinction here between the Government's election commitments and the committee report recommendations. Our election commitments were quite specific. I'll report on each of those things about the current practice and where we're up to.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can I go to the electric bus deal that is now being reviewed by the Anti-slavery Commissioner?

Are you aware that the Australian Uyghur Tangritagh Women's Association is calling on your Government to rip up the contracts and strengthen procurement mandates? Are you aware of that call?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was not personally aware of that call, no, but I'm obviously aware of the issue and the interest it's generated after it was raised in the Parliament.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You're aware that I raised this issue of down-the-line modern slavery occurring in other countries, and that we obviously then use those components in our renewable energy projects. You remember I raised that with the Treasurer at the time in 2023.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: And he acknowledged that that was an issue and that your Government does need to look at that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: What has your Government done since 2023 to address the issue? Clearly the law, as we designed it, has this giant loophole that means companies can actually ship their modern slavery practices offshore, and then we still buy their products.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll answer largely in reference to the issues that have just been raised—but I think it does go to your general point—which is I don't think it's clear there's a giant loophole. I don't think we should leap to that conclusion. But these are now issues that are being raised that are some of the key tests for the legislation that the Parliament debated and put in place and was of real interest to members. The Government wants to see those issues tackled and wants to see that done well. Certainly I know that's the view of the Anti-slavery Commissioner. I've spoken to him in relation to these issues to assure him that whatever assistance he needs from Transport on these issues, he will have. Transport's already met with him.

It is the case where these issues will now be considered. While there are strong protections in the contracts and the deeds that are in place to detect this—to ask companies to declare it and to cancel contracts if it's the case—this has raised issues about joint ventures, downstream partners and what information the public has and the Government has. The Anti-slavery Commissioner, in my view, is likely to work through that process using some of these live examples that people have raised, and that's welcome.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You don't think that an overseas company can set up a subsidiary company in Australia and funnel all their business through there, but commit all the acts through their primary company? You don't think that's a giant loophole in the Act?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. I think if that was clear that was going on, then I think it could—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Well, it's clear. That bus contract shows it's going on.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: On the evidence to me, that's not clear. But we're getting the Anti-slavery Commissioner to have a close look at this and Transport's obviously still investigating.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Did the Anti-slavery Commissioner look at it when it was raised back in 2023?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Obviously the Anti-slavery Commissioner works most closely with the Attorney. I wouldn't want to either speak for the commissioner—I want to make that really clear—nor could I update you on those issues that you raised and the Anti-slavery Commissioner's response.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Have you had any discussions with the Anti-slavery Commissioner about these matters at all—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: —given that there's obviously an intersection with your portfolio?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, I certainly have—both to assure him of the support but also I was very interested about how he was regarding these issues and how he might now tackle them.

The CHAIR: Minister, in the five weeks that you've been in the position, hopefully you've been able to get your head around the Auditor-General's report into bus contracts. Firstly, the shortage of Transport for NSW staff to manage those contracts, as identified by the Auditor-General, is concerning. Mr Murray, why has it been so hard to fill those positions?

JOSH MURRAY: While the Auditor-General's report, I think, was disappointing for Transport, and we acknowledge a large number of areas that it did call out for improvement, I would say that they mirrored the bus taskforce reports, of which the last of those was delivered in the third quarter of last year. Of around 60 recommendations from the bus taskforce, we've already implemented more than a third, and will continue on the path. One of those that you call out is recruitment. That began with the establishment of the coordinator-general division.

In recent months, we have appointed an executive director of bus transformation to continue that work that will change the way that we administer the contracts, the fleet and the driver issues that have come up in both the taskforce and for the Auditor-General. We have appointed an asset management leader and bus inspectors in terms of the asset provision. There is a wide-ranging response. There is more to come. Mr Collins and I regularly discuss the requirements around the resourcing for bus, but it's also a difficult area. Our contract providers are doing the same in terms of their asset management. We want to get the balance right, but we are committed to those changes.

The CHAIR: In the organisational chart that I've got in front of me, underneath "director of service delivery", it says that there are eight vacant positions. Are all of those positions actively being recruited now? How long have you been recruiting for those positions?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll ask Mr Collins to comment perhaps in more detail, but what I would say is we are going through the restructure of the division and the branches so that, under Mr Collins, he has both an executive director of public transport contracts, which is largely responsible for our bus and ferry contract improvement, and then, as I say, the executive director of bus transformation, which is the improvement program. Mr Collins?

The CHAIR: Mr Collins, is it the case that some of those may not be filled? Maybe in one sentence, and I'll come back to you this afternoon.

HOWARD COLLINS: I'll try to keep it brief. Yes, we've been working on a combination of temporary assignments to bring in some talent. These are very complex contracts. They are very difficult to recruit for. We're reorganising. We know we need more quality staff in this area and, as Mr Murray has said, I have two very senior, experienced people now looking after the bus taskforce and also the asset assurance process. But I certainly support the fact that we need more time and effort. One of my jobs is to ensure we rebalance the resources for this critical operation area of the business.

The CHAIR: As a result of the Auditor-General's report that you, Mr Murray, said reflects a bit of the Bus Industry Taskforce reports, are you boosting the position in the contract management section, Mr Collins?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think, as the taskforce has said and as the Auditor-General says, for many years this area has probably been undercooked. As we moved into significant complex contracts over the last few years, we do need additional resources, not only in numbers but also in the quality. We've been working through that and we have recruited a number, but there's still more to be done and that is urgent.

The CHAIR: On the issue of bus driver training, I understand that the Government subsidises private bus contractors for training each individual driver. Do you have the figure of how much contractors like Keolis Downer are provided by the Government for training each individual driver?

HOWARD COLLINS: I'll take any of those figures on notice, but it is quite complicated because a number of the bus companies provide incentives themselves: sign-on bonuses and retention bonuses. We have simplified the way that people can obtain a licence to operate vehicles, which I know my colleague Sally Webb has assisted us with. But, in terms of your direct question, I'll take that on notice and see whether I can find information regarding that area. I don't think there is a significant amount to figure. It may be more about us simplifying the process.

The CHAIR: Minister, there are concerns. I have had a whistleblower contacting my office who was a driver for the company, Keolis Downer, who suggested that, in fact, it's \$6,000 that the Government provides for each driver to be trained. It costs the bus company roughly \$1,000. That is a pretty good profit for the company to make—\$5,000 per driver. I understand also that the company, Keolis Downer, has reduced the time required for driver training—that it used to be four weeks under Sydney Buses, and it is now just five days. Mr Collins or Mr Murray, are you aware of that?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think in the old days training may have been four weeks long—whether people actually did four weeks. What we have looked at is where does this individual come from. If they're a private car operator, they will need more than four weeks perhaps. We tailor now, and there is a pretty comprehensive process for assessing people's skills. Some of those people who were former heavy vehicle drivers are very skilled in that area—they just have a few different customer skills—so it may be quicker. But I assure you that we do check and make sure that the training is provided to the required standard.

The CHAIR: There is a bus industry dashboard that reports every quarter. If you have a look at the Bus Industry Taskforce report, which I'm assuming is a key responsibility for a number of people in Transport for NSW, it does show that there is a worsening safety record over time, which I'll go into in a second. We've got potentially lower training. The company is getting incentivised, \$5,000 per bus driver, in terms of what it expends on training. The quarter one 2023 report has 3,431 incidents and quarter one 2024 has 5,718 incidents. That is an increase of 66.6 per cent and, if you have a look, it actually is increasing over time. Doesn't this seem to indicate that there is a problem—that the private companies are reducing the training to profit from government training subsidies? Shouldn't this be inquired into?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Faehrmann, I thank you for raising that specific issue. I'd be very happy to work with the team to look at that and make sure that the public is reassured that, if there is public support, it is being adequately used to address this problem. There is a big problem, though, and I want to thank the agency and in particular Minister Haylen for the work they did. We've got a long way on the driver challenge. We had more than 500 driver vacancies, and now that number is just over 150. We've still got the fleet issues that came as a result of buses simply not being bought that we're working through. All these have contributed to the safety challenges, but the specifics you've raised we will examine.

The CHAIR: It is very concerning. These two quarterly Bus Industry Dashboard reports say that the proportion of crashes attributed to driver behaviour has also risen. As we know, there have been a number of recent bus crashes, including the bus with passengers that crashed into a home at Bonnyrigg Heights in Sydney's south-west. These are serious issues.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And as that bus work rolled out—I mean, you saw one of those specific reports really dealt with some of the bus safety issues. Obviously, that was as a result of a specific incident, but also the sorts of concerns that you're dealing with, and that's something that I know both Minister Haylen and Minister Aitchison were working on.

The CHAIR: The person who contacted my office also suggested that it's something that the companies do in some ways to make it less attractive for the workers because the companies are getting incentivised again to continue training new drivers. Will you commit to looking at the training incentive to see if that actually has perverse incentives for companies, and for the safety of drivers and passengers?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. We're happy to look at the specifics you've raised. We're working with the system we've got, so we need to work with these privatised bus companies who have been left as a result of these contracts. We need them to do their job well. We need new drivers into the system and we need new fleet into the system. That's one of the reasons we've announced just this morning that 60 new buses will be purchased.

The CHAIR: Thanks, Minister. Two and a half minutes for the Opposition.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister Graham, can you explain to me again the aerotropolis precinct plan—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd be happy to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: —published by the Government. How is that not Government policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I was simply making the point—this is a Government document and I'm not backing away from that at all. Describing it as a policy was the matter I was quibbling with. It's not a policy; it's a Government document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's not a policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is a Government document. This is an accurate record from INSW of the current pipeline. We've talked that through earlier in the session.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The aerotropolis plan published by the Government is not the plan?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, that is incorrect. You're mischaracterising this document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Explain it to me then.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I was explaining to you earlier, this is the INSW document. What it does is it sets out, in the same way that the infrastructure pipeline to contractors sets out the forward program for what work will unfold, the infrastructure baseline for this area. That is not to say that projects that are in one column or another will be delivered at the end of that column. It's not to say that there might not be additional government funding, either from State Government decisions or from Federal, Commonwealth decisions, which we've been very successful at, or from developer levies that are paid in this area and—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, but let's talk about the plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —we've reformed those as well. All those things and future decisions may well impact on what's there.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is the aerotropolis precinct plan the plan?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, I support INSW issuing this document to really let people know the sequence that we're moving through this. I think this is a step forward. But I do want to emphasise it is building on the good work that the Coalition Government did with that infrastructure pipeline to contractors.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. I have 30 seconds, so I'll just get to that. The current pipeline for 2040 metro—the current plan says, and you support that it says, 2040 for the new metro.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Your question was are we going to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: No, my question is this: The current plan says that you support—you just said that metro will only be delivered in 2040.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's totally incorrect.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's what the plan says.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're deliberately misrepresenting—read the document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I have read the document. Have you read the document?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You need to read the document. I encourage you to read the document.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The document says 2040. Do you disagree with the document?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I agree with the document, and you should read it closely.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You agree 2040 is the plan for the Government to deliver metro in south-west Sydney?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I don't agree. You're deliberately mischaracterising it, and I encourage you to read the document again.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you read—so you disagree or agree? You've said two different things.

The CHAIR: Order! It's my time now. Minister, there was an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* last year by Max Maddison that revealed Transport tunnelling workers, metro workers, I believe, being exposed

to silica dust at 208 times the workplace safety standard. The report said that SafeWork had agreed to meet with the union about these concerns. Are you or Mr Regan, are you aware that that is taking place, and what action has been taken since that report?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I just want to say, before I hand to Mr Regan—

The CHAIR: Whatever you know first, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This obviously is of concern, both in relation to metro tunnelling, but also our road-tunnelling projects. It has been a focus of the Government, it has been a focus of SafeWork and of Transport in my time, but I might hand to Mr Regan.

PETER REGAN: It is absolutely our top priority, at all times, that safety of everyone working on and travelling on the metro is paramount. We've worked very closely with our contractors and with industry through the development of tunnelling on metro since the commencement of the metro to improve the standards in this area, especially as this has become an increasing focus, and people have really developed a much better understanding of the potential risks around silica. So absolutely we're aware. We're working very closely in this space. I think it is important to note that the controls that are in place in the metro tunnelling, and I understand across broader tunnelling portfolios are quite multifaceted. And that goes to how the work is done. So, for example, wet cutting of rock and silica—

The CHAIR: What about union involvement, Mr Regan? That was the question. Has Transport for NSW, Sydney Metro, met with the union regarding this?

PETER REGAN: We work very closely with our contractors, who are the employees of the workers and their subcontractors. We're certainly aware of the issue. We've been working very closely, and including with SafeWork NSW, to assist in any information there. Certainly, we require our contractors to meet all standards, and there are monitoring arrangements in place around that. So we're working very closely. We have been working with our contractors to also increase the level of personal protective equipment in addition to the broad ventilation and other things in the tunnel. So, absolutely, we're totally involved in this.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: You mentioned a little while ago the shortage of buses. I wondered if you could talk a little bit about what action the Government is taking to alleviate particularly the shortage of articulated buses, which I believe is particularly bad on the northern beaches.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There was some questioning on this issue before, so I did want to indicate that help is on the way for the northern beaches, in particular, with new buses now ordered by the Government. We're aware that people, especially on the northern beaches and the North Shore, have been hit hardest by some of the fleet issues that have been had with those articulated buses. We're now addressing the gap. We're moving to buy 50 new diesel-powered Euro 6 articulated buses, as well as 10 double-decker buses to supplement the B-Line fleet. It's very good news for these regions. The northern beaches bus region, known as region 8, has faced challenges. Those 83 Volvo articulated buses were temporarily removed from service in October 2024 after safety concerns.

More than half of those buses would normally operate in this northern beaches region. We know this will improve reliability on the B-Line. It will increase capacity across the northern beaches, on the North Shore and the wider network. These will be the first new articulated buses that have been bought in 14 years, so it is a big step forward. We know that there's been an impact in this area. The new buses are expected to roll out and enter service toward the end of 2025. Repairs to the first of the existing articulated buses are currently underway. They're forecast to return to service in April 2025. So between that repair program, these new buses on the way—help is on the way, particularly for the northern beaches and North Shore, given the challenges that we've faced with the ageing bus infrastructure that we were left with from the former Government.

The CHAIR: We'll now break for morning tea. We'll be back at 11.15 a.m.

(Short adjournment)

The CHAIR: Welcome back. We'll go straight to questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Morning, Minister. I apologise for not being here for your vibrant first session. Minister, you will recall in the House serious concerns were raised in relation to the letting of bus contracts to Foton Mobility Distribution. Are you aware of that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I recall your questions, and there was some discussion and interest in the House.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: You recall that I tabled a document in the House which was a summary of works by Globalworks Lund AB in respect of supply chain screening. You recall I did that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I recall you tabling a document, yes.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Do you recall the date of that document?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't recall the date of that document, but I understand that the report itself was in 2023.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Do you accept from me that it was June 2023 that that report was made?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd always be happy to accept your assurance on the facts.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Have you had an opportunity of reviewing that document?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I have been briefed on the contents of the document, as I followed up on the issues that you raised in the House.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: In relation to that briefing, can you tell us what have you done in respect of the issues which were raised with concerns about the letting of contracts which have been called into question by Globalworks as part of their serious concerns or, as they describe it, risk category very high in respect of exposure to modern slavery?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I updated the House, Transport has been looking at these issues in relation to the particular companies that were named in questions, and we're happy to update about some of those details today. But Transport is examining those to make sure that we have as many of the facts as we can assemble on this. These are important issues.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: On the facts that have been provided to you, have you been able to satisfy yourself or not as to whether there is a supply chain issue in respect of the supply of batteries for these buses?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I might just say before I turn to that question, the second thing I've done is talk directly to the Anti-slavery Commissioner. Firstly, to offer the assistance of the Transport agencies in this matter and make sure that there are no barriers to any of the information that should flow to him to do his work. Transport has met with the Anti-slavery Commissioner on Friday to discuss these matters initially and to see what information could be provided, but also what advice the Anti-slavery Commissioner's got as we deal with this issue.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Have you been able to satisfy yourself that the batteries being supplied to this supplier are not tainted with anti-slavery issues?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've sought advice on the report, and we're working through that process now, with the great assistance of the Anti-slavery Commissioner. I can assure you firstly, Mr Tudehope, the issues in general will be taken very seriously. These are important issues, and you've raised them in the House yourself over the years. But these specifics will be closely examined to make sure that we're able to assure ourselves on the specifics, but also whether the processes in place in Transport are sufficiently tight enough. I've satisfied myself that they're very tight, that the deeds that are in place here really do provide significant assurance, but we'll also ask from a Transport point of view, and we'll ask for the assistance of the Anti-slavery Commissioner on this question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: When you say you've satisfied yourself in relation to the deed, tell me what—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, that's not an accurate caricature of what I just said.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: You are reasonably satisfied, I think was the—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's a better caricature.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: You are reasonably satisfied that the provisions in the deeds deal with this issue in a sufficiently robust way, if I can use my word?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think there are strong protections in the deed. We'll examine the specifics, but we'll also examine are there other provisions in the deed that are required over time.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: If it is true that the batteries used in these buses have been identified as being tainted by the blood of Uighur slaves, what steps will Transport do in relation to the contracts which it has entered into?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Tudehope, are you suggesting that in fact CATL is linked to state-imposed forced labour in Xinjiang? Is that what you're suggesting?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: That's what the report suggests.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's not what the report suggests. But are you suggesting that this company is linked to state-imposed forced labour in this province?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You are suggesting that?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Correct.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's not what the report's suggesting. You're going further than the report.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: The report says:

Yutong is a major Chinese bus manufacturer with a large electric bus production in Zhengzhou, Henan Province. In contrast to BYD, Yutong does not develop or produce batteries. More than 90 percent of Yutong e-vehicles run with CATL batteries. The supplier agreement between Yutong and CATL was renewed and expanded in August 2022 and will be valid until 2032. As a result, downstream forced labour risks enter Yutong's supply chain through CATL; a company that we analysed in section 5.4.

Are you saying that that doesn't demonstrate that the CATL battery component of these buses is not tainted by anti-slavery concerns?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm stating that the report certainly identifies risks. They're risks we're examining. The report does not agree with the statement you made that this is the case. That is not what the report says. And I'm asking you, are you asserting that this company is linked to state-imposed forced labour?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I'll ask the questions, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I do want to understand what you're putting to me, though.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: If I put it to you and you disagree, just disagree. Minister, do you disagree that these batteries are tainted by anti-slavery concerns?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You'll have to put the double negative again.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Is it the case that you disagree that the batteries are tainted with anti-slavery concerns?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm making the observation that the report does not confirm that this company is linked to state-imposed forced labour. You are asserting that. You have just asserted that.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Correct.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That is not what the report asserts. It identifies risks, and those risks are being taken seriously. However, I'm observing, Mr Tudehope, you are going further than this 2023 report in the position you're putting, and I'm seeking clarification as to what exactly you're alleging here. But it's not an allegation made by this report, to be clear.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Is it your position that you've been able to satisfy yourself that the batteries being used in these buses are not tainted with anti-slavery issues?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I think it would be absolutely fair to say—you've raised these concerns; they're being taken seriously. We haven't been able to work through that, and I think that's very fair to ask that question.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: What questions have you asked the company? Have you asked the company in respect of which you've entered a contract to demonstrate that they are not in breach of their supply chain requirements in relation to anti-slavery provisions?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's a couple of answers to that question. Probably three steps are unfolding at the moment. Firstly, there's very significant assurances in the deeds that are signed for any of these procurement processes. I encourage you to look through them.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: But it is self-certification. Is that what you're saying?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I went through it in the House. There are significant protections. They require companies to be up-front if, for example, there are convictions or if there are issues identified that they're aware of. There are penalties then and potentially contract cancellations. So that's the first thing. Secondly, Transport is working through the process to identify any extra information. That process will take a little bit of time, but we're working through that process.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: So is it self-attestation?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Let me firstly answer your first question and then I can come to that. Thirdly, Transport has requested—and I have offered the support to make sure it happens in a way that is of assistance—the support of the Anti-slavery Commissioner to work through this. I'm satisfied that the work that'll now unfold at that end will take this issue seriously. They're complex matters. I don't want to speak for the commissioner, but what came through to me as I spoke to him was he's aware of the complexity of these issues and making sure that we're sorting through them.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Do you agree with me that the process in place at the moment is self-attestation?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that's a broad categorisation. I agree that's the first line of defence. The deed is very extensive and really requires a lot of information from these companies. Bear in mind, the company that you're—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Answer the question, Minister. Is it self-attestation that the current process adopts for certification, that they are not engaged in anti-slavery supply chains?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The Government processes do have an element of self-attestation. Self-attestation is not the only—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: What else is there?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We will be working with the Anti-slavery Commissioner—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: What else is there, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I've indicated, the two steps we're also following here. Transport is looking in more detail. Given the issues—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: What detail did they look at? Did they look at this report, for example?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: They did look at this report?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Transport has looked at this report and they don't—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: When?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Point of order—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The position you've put—

The CHAIR: A point of order has been taken. Excuse me, Minister.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Mr Tudehope keeps interjecting. The Minister is trying to answer the questions legitimately and honestly, but he is not getting the chance.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order. There wasn't much time for the Minister to respond.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Minister, when did Transport first look at this report?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That is a question you'll need to put to the agency.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Have you asked them?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: But since you raised these issues, I've certainly been briefed on these reports. The position you've put in the House and the position you put this morning goes beyond what is in the findings of the report.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Did Transport, in their briefing to you, tell you that they had looked at this report as part of their—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, they've looked at this report.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: When?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer you to the agency for that precise date. I don't want to mislead the Committee about precisely when.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: So before they let the contract?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd refer you to the committee on that, Mr Tudehope.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: So you don't know.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: In terms of the due diligence in respect of the contract that was entered into, on 30 January 2025 the former Minister for Transport stood alongside Mr Neil Wang, a part-owner and CEO of Foton Mobility, and announced in Nowra:

Once our partners at Foton get this plant up and running there will be an extra 100 quality manufacturing jobs right here.

Besides the order of 126 Foton buses placed with Foton Mobility in December 2024, was Foton Mobility formally or informally guaranteed further orders by Transport for NSW?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Tudehope, these are exactly the same set of companies who—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: No, they're not.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —your Government has ordered buses from previously. I note that the former transport Minister—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: We didn't have this report.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I note the former transport Minister is campaigning against these 100 jobs in Nowra.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: We didn't have this report, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Andrew Constance is out there campaigning to close these jobs down in Nowra—these 100 jobs.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: We didn't have that report.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: He wants them sent elsewhere, out of Nowra, even though he was announcing something very, very similar with a similar set of companies—something I find quite astonishing. I've perhaps diverted from the question. You might need to redirect.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: You did divert from the question, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You'll have to put your question again.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Did you do the due diligence in relation to that company? If so, your partners at Foton, in relation to the proposed new and the prospective 100 jobs—have you guaranteed to this company additional contracts?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There is significant due diligence.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Have you guaranteed—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Look at the deed. Look at the anti-slavery provisions of the deed. It requires—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I'm not asking about that. I'm asking about—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's significant due diligence, is the point. You were asking about due diligence. The due diligence is extremely extensive, Mr Tudehope. I'm reassuring you about that.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Did you do company searches in relation to the shareholders?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I personally did not, no.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Did anyone in Transport?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I refer you to the agencies.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Has the agency briefed you? These questions were raised in the House, Minister. Have they briefed you in relation to the company searches which they may have done in relation to the shareholders of this company?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've been briefed in relation to Foton Mobility.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Have you satisfied yourself in relation to the ultimate beneficial shareholder in relation to this company?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're referring now to your questions in the House, I take it, that you raised. I just want to be clear exactly what you're asking.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I'm asking you did they do any investigation in relation to the ultimate beneficial shareholder in Foton Mobility?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I indicated in the House, Transport has examined the issues that you raised in relation to Foton Mobility.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: And what advice have they given you about that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: To Foton Mobility and its shareholders?

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Yes. What advice have they provided to you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would refer you to the secretary. I'm happy to give you a caricature of that information, but I'd encourage you to—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I'd like you to give it to me, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, but I'd encourage you to seek further information. The individual who you were asking about—and I provided some of these details in the House—was not a director. My advice from Transport is now that he's in the process of exiting GoZero Group and therefore the joint venture with Foton Mobility Distribution regarding the South Nowra facility.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: But at the time of entering into the contract, he wasn't proposing to exit, was he?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't know, Mr Tudehope. That's not clear to me, nor have I been briefed about his intentions. I'm merely advising you of the facts I have been briefed on. I make that distinction between a directorship and a shareholding.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: You might, but in respect of those circumstances where the ultimate beneficial owner of an entity with which the New South Wales Government is entering into a contract has a history of tax defaulting, as a matter of principle, is that something which would concern you: that you would continue to enter into contracts with that company?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, your Government bought buses—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: No, I'm not asking about my Government, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —from companies associated with this individual—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I'm asking about whether that would—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —from the companies you formerly asked about, with these batteries. Let's put that on the record first.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: We didn't have this report.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that is relevant.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: What's the date of the report, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're now asking about this individual. This individual was involved in some of the contracts your Government signed.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Correct.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You were the Minister for Finance at the time.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Correct.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You agree with that.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: I'm asking you about if, as a matter of principle, you have concern. I don't laugh about this, Minister, I must say. I have to say this is a serious matter of principle.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Can we stop with the finger?

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Do you, in fact, think it is appropriate, where the ultimate beneficial owner of the company has a history of tax defaulting, to continue to enter into contracts with a company in those circumstances?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The second thing I was going to say, Mr Tudehope, was the advice to me—but, again, I'm open to the agency providing some nuance here—was that there is not a conviction related to this individual. That's one of the reasons why—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: It's not a conviction; it's a liquidation. It's a circumstance where a company goes into liquidation, owing significant money to the Australian Tax Office. Is that something, as a matter of principle, you would endorse the New South Wales Government entering into contracts with?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Obviously it's of concern. You've made a range of allegations under parliamentary privilege. I've taken them seriously, Mr Tudehope, and we're continuing that work.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Similarly, do you have similar concerns in relation to circumstances where the ultimate—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I just make the point that this individual was associated with buses you bought, and you didn't seem to have concerns at the time.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: But, Minister, I'm putting to you the proposition that this is now also the same company where your Government becomes aware of significant issues relating to high risk of anti-slavery avoidance. This is the circumstance where potentially more diligence should have uncovered these things.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: In relation to this individual, you're asking for a standard you did not apply in office. I am now taking these issues—

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: But you're the Government, Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: But you've now raised it, and I'm taking these issues seriously. I assure you, Mr Tudehope, I will.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: If you take it seriously, what will apply or what will follow if, in fact, the assertions being made in relation to this company are true?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're now asking not about the individual, but about the company—that is, the batteries.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: No, I'm asking about the circumstances where the ultimate beneficial owner of the company has a history of tax defaulting. What steps will you take?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll examine two things: firstly, the facts; secondly, the standard. You're asking us to apply a higher standard than you applied. I'm open to examining both those matters—the individual concerned and any things that the Government should take into account there. I'm open to looking at the standard you're now asking us to apply, although I do make the point that you never applied this when you were the Minister for Finance.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Never.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Be very careful about that, Minister, because the dates of the phoenixing may not tally with exactly what you're now asserting.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Yes, but there are other companies.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm simply indicating what I've been briefed on, Mr Tudehope.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: Work health and safety, Minister—if there are concerns in relation to convictions relating to work health and safety, is that a standard which you will accept for the ultimate beneficial owner of a company that the New South Wales Government enters into a contract with?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd certainly be concerned in those circumstances.

The Hon. DAMIEN TUDEHOPE: And was due diligence applied in relation to that issue?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Due diligence is being applied as we speak.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Point of order: The Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine is a very enthusiastic cheerleader for the Minister, but I ask that she contain her comments.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: But the hypocrisy is just astounding.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can I finish my point of order? There is Government time allocated for her to respond, but this running commentary throughout other members asking their questions is disrespectful.

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: The shadow Treasurer was undeterred—water off a duck's back.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And Mr D'Adam.

The CHAIR: I will uphold that point of order and ask for the little comment gallery over here to just—there is 15 minutes that you can use to give your opinions and ask questions.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Good morning, Minister. I wanted to ask you very briefly, have you already released a statement of expectations to the point to point commissioner, as you are required to each year? Have you done that in the past two years?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: In my five weeks in the job, I have not.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Can I remind you, Minister, that it's a statement of expectations signed by both the Minister for Roads and the Minister for Transport?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd have to take that on notice just to be sure about that. I would have signed one over the course of my time, but I'd have to take that on notice to check the timing.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: And that was issued to the point to point commissioner?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It would have been, yes.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Can I just clarify, Mr Wing, did you receive a statement of expectations from the Minister?

ANTHONY WING: I had a statement of expectations from Ms Haylen previously. There is not one this year, as yet. There would have to be one this year.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Why is it, Minister, online, that the only available statement of expectations is the one that David Elliott did? I've been trying to find one from former Minister Haylen, but there isn't one. I've been now advised that there is but, online, you've still got the former Minister David Elliott—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. We wouldn't want to leave that unattended. David Elliott's doing a great job where he is.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: —and Mr Faraway. The commissioner's functions and priorities—and the only statement publicly made available is from the former Government. It's their statement. I'll just bring it to your attention, if you can, in your capacity as—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am grateful for you drawing that to our attention.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Yes, you should rectify that as soon as you can. That would be great. Can I ask you a couple of questions about rideshare drivers and Uber? At the moment we've got 172,792 passenger transport code registered licences with Transport. I don't expect you to know that figure, so I'm just giving you—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Just give me that number again, though.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Do you have a breakdown of how many of those are held by working visa holders?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: For that specific detail, I'd refer you to the commissioner. If the commissioner is unable to supply it, I'd certainly be happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: If you could take it on notice, I'll come back to the commissioner because I'm conscious of time.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'll take that on notice, but I'd encourage you to ask the commissioner.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: That's fine. I'd just like to know if there's a breakdown of these passenger transport code registered licences that you are required to have to be a rideshare driver or an Uber driver

in New South Wales. Can I also just ask you—we don't have Uber teens in New South Wales, right? To have an Uber licence, you appreciate, you have to be 18—not a licence, sorry. To ride an Uber or rideshare vehicle, you have to be 18 in New South Wales. Is that right?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: To ride an Uber?

ANTHONY WING: If I can just answer that. To drive an Uber vehicle—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: No, not drive. To ride—to be in one or to take one.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I didn't believe that was—

ANTHONY WING: There's no such limit.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's no age limit.

ANTHONY WING: In fact, all the usual rules would apply around child booster seats, for example, for young children.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: But to hold an account, that's a parent holding an account for a child. To have an account so that you can use Uber in New South Wales—

ANTHONY WING: There's no limit in the law on that. Individual companies can set their own limits, but there's no limit in the law.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: So it's up to the each company. For example, Uber says, "You don't have to provide an ID on whether you're 18 to have an account with Uber."

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Not to my knowledge. You can certainly ride. It's up to each company. We don't have something in the law.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Minister, do you keep any data on how many young people, that is, under 18, who are, in that case, utilising rideshare vehicles and Uber in New South Wales?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think that's a very interesting question. I'm aware that some of the rideshare vehicles have specifically moved to target particular parts of the market to reassure—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I'm just going by Uber's details. They're saying you have to be 18 years of age to hold an account.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Right.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You might want to be aware of that.

ANTHONY WING: To hold an account, yes, but not to actually ride in it.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: What I mean by "ride" is to have an account—without a parent. I get that children can go with their parents. It doesn't, though, require you to provide ID to verify that you're 18. As such, you have a lot of teenagers and young people, well and truly under 18, utilising Uber and other rideshare vehicles because you're not required by any of these companies to provide ID. Is that something that you have had a bit of a think about—whether there should be some policy change to that effect?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I understand it at the moment, this is largely up to the companies. We should be careful, in doing that, that we make sure there are appropriate standards in place. I'm certainly open to some further discussions on that to make sure that we've got appropriate standards in place in New South Wales. I think these are important services for young people, some of the time, to be able to ride with or without their parents. It's an additional service that some people may well be relying on, so we wouldn't want to restrict—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Yes, they ride it to schools, to sporting events and so forth.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, and we wouldn't want to restrict that. But it is a really appropriate question to say, what are the standards that the State applies.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: What is actually happening is that a lot of kids under 18 are using it. They do have accounts. Uber and these rideshare companies are not policing or monitoring the fact that they're perhaps not over 18. I put to you, Minister, that a lot of parents are actually expecting or relying on their children to use Uber to get to events and even to get to schools. I don't think there's anything monitoring that at all at the moment.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There are a couple of different categories where they may be travelling: one, where they have a family account and they're dealing with it that way. That would deal with the Uber

requirement that an account holder—and that would be more about the payment facilities—is over 18. Or you may be right: There may be instances where young people are simply saying—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You're right. It may be they rely on a parent account or their own. In any event, they're entering these vehicles on their own or they're going into what is a shared Uber where there's a complete stranger next to them.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: To have a passenger transport code registered licence in New South Wales, do you have to have a Working with Children Check, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer to the commissioner.

ANTHONY WING: No, that is not generally required. The passenger transport code relates particularly to having the necessary medical standards, but a Working with Children Check would only be required where the working with children check Act requires it.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Minister, do you know that, in Transport Tasmania, they now require everybody who wants to have an ancillary certificate—they call it an ancillary certificate there—to actually have a Working with Children Check if they want to be an Uber or rideshare driver? Are you aware of that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wasn't aware of that specific provision. I know that Minister Haylen was doing significant work on enforcement across both taxi and rideshare. It was one of the areas that she's been particularly active on. I think that's been a very strong agenda of the Government in its first couple of years. I'd like to see that continue. I wasn't aware of the specifics about Tasmania, but I'd be happy to be briefed on those.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: If you can look into what Tasmania does, because we have a lot more young people utilising rideshare vehicles and Ubers and so forth and, given they are required—the drivers there—to have working with children clearances, I would have thought perhaps we would consider that too, given the number of people that we have registered as rideshare drivers. The reason this has come to my attention, Minister, is that I had an incident brought to my attention last week where a 13-year-old girl was in an Uber. It was a shared Uber, and there was a 40-year-old male using the vehicle as well. She was actually going to school, so she was put in the vehicle to go to school. She was running late to school, and she was about 13 years of age.

The driver was particularly rude and aggressive to her. It came to me to think that perhaps we should be a little bit tougher on who these drivers are, given that parents are relying on Uber and rideshare vehicles to get their children to school. The fact that you've got Tasmania out there ahead of the curve, making sure that vulnerable children and so forth are cared for and that drivers are monitored in that way, I'm just putting to you that perhaps that's something that your Government should consider.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These are really essential services, whether they are taxis or rideshares. Families are using them to—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Yes, I include taxis as well. What I'm seeing more commonly is Uber and rideshare vehicles. And the fact that you have shared Uber trips now as well, where people don't even know who the stranger is in the vehicle. In this case, it was a 40-year-old male sitting with a 13-year-old girl and she was being dropped off to school. The incident didn't involve the male, but the driver was particularly aggressive.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's a good point. I want to continue to raise the standards here if there are ways that we can do that. There has been a particularly strong focus on enforcement. But I think we should look at a range of levers here, including training and getting the companies to assist to raise standards, particularly given—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Perhaps you could make sure the companies actually do ID checks for anyone wanting to have an account. That would be a first, I would have thought. I am surprised you can hold an account without an ID check.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You've raised that issue and I'm very happy to look at it.

The CHAIR: Minister, I have a general question again, because of the interim nature of you holding the Transport portfolio—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: A point that the Opposition has made repeatedly in question time.

The CHAIR: With various things like the member just indicated, is there a policy for you to put on hold some new initiatives and things to look at until the new permanent portfolio holder comes in? Are you in a holding pattern for Transport as Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That's not my experience of the last five weeks.

The CHAIR: So for these new initiatives that you're committing to today, is there going to be a document that you will provide or are you going to get them underway before you lose the portfolio?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't want to speculate about the future. That's really a matter for the Premier.

The CHAIR: Do you want the portfolio of Transport?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry?

The CHAIR: Do you want the portfolio of Transport?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These are matters for the Premier. I encourage you to ask him about that. But things are certainly not on hold. I've been commissioned as the transport Minister and I've been heavily engaged in Transport issues over those five weeks—quite a broad range of them.

The CHAIR: Minister, according to the latest People Matter Employee Survey for Transport for NSW, just 41 per cent of people answered positively to the statement "My senior executives listen to employees." Does that indicate that there is a leadership problem within Transport for NSW that you need to have a look at?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would want to know a little bit more context around the figures but, on the face of it, I would be concerned by that. It is one of the things that the secretary and I have spoken about—the need, in an organisation this big, to focus on culture. I know it's been a focus for the secretary. It is ongoing work. It's also very, very important. We should expect big public sector agencies to be leading the way in these areas.

The CHAIR: If it is senior leadership, is anything being done for, potentially, an external assessment of senior leadership with the general staff cohort? There are complaints from people—I do have a few people contacting me, again, as whistleblowers, if you like—who are concerned and think that their concerns aren't being listened to and that some of the people in director positions may be part of the problem. I don't want to go into specifics, obviously. But doesn't the result of the people matter survey—and if you have a look at it there are quite a few. For example, just 36 per cent responded well to "I feel my senior executives support my career advancement." They are generally quite low. Doesn't that indicate that there could be a problem and you need some independent investigation as well—not the senior leadership investigating their behaviour and culture?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, in my dealing with Transport officials, I have found them extremely professional.

The CHAIR: I am sure they are very professional to the Minister.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, and I am conscious of that distinction. As a Minister, I do want to recommend to you that I have found Transport is a very professional organisation. Secondly, the specifics that you are raising, of course the Government would take very seriously. I invite you to provide any of those, confidentially or offline, if you think they're helpful. Thirdly, those results aren't good enough. That is of concern, in an organisation this big, if people don't feel their managers are listening or don't feel that they have that ability to have their career supported. I'm confident that this is a matter that is being treated seriously by the secretary and by the senior leadership. We will judge those results first before going external.

The CHAIR: There have been concerns expressed to me about the way in which the back-to-work policy was drafted and around the consultation. This is probably getting a bit into the weeds for you, Minister. But it was a process that essentially involved a handpicked group of staff without much consultation. It was more a dictation than a consultation. Mr Murray, what's your response to that?

JOSH MURRAY: Thank you, Ms Faehrmann. I would say, on the PMES, we do acknowledge that the scores that you read out are low. As the Minister said, we would seek to change those. One of the other ones that was low was rating the management of change in the organisation. I am not surprised by those. In fact, the executive team and I expected this to be a fairly tough year for the survey because of the amount of change ongoing in the organisation. I think it's worth noting that it was only in 2019 that two of the State's largest public sector agencies—Transport and Roads—were brought together just on the eve of COVID occurring. A lot of what we're working with now are divisions and branches that were put almost into a temporary holding pattern while all of that was worked through.

Very significant is the amount of change that's going on. We really acknowledge that that has a large impact on people. Our chief people officer is here and can answer some more questions about that survey if you'd like. I would make the point that while participation and engagement in this year's PMES was slightly down, a number of our results outstripped the public sector averages, in particular for safety and our focus on safety. It is

very important to us as a team to ensure that remains one of the standout markers for Transport. We will continue to put in place plans that develop on all of those other areas.

In regard to workplace presence, that's a process we are going through at the moment. It has had a big impact on Transport. There has been a lot of feedback. The team and I have been presenting across the organisation and we have been collecting. We are in the process at the moment of collecting that feedback. I would expect the number of feedback pieces to rise. People have expressed a lot of personal information about how these policies affect them as part of that process, which we are taking on board. I give you the assurance that even if there have been elements that people felt were clunky since Transport first conveyed that, we are going through a very detailed process. The team and I have been personally involved in that.

The CHAIR: I might come back with further questions about that later, if need be. I have asked questions about the Central Coast rail line in the past as well. It appears that the Central Coast train isn't getting any better. Its on-time running isn't getting any better. I believe, for the past year, the intercity data suggests that the Central Coast line performance has only been above 80 per cent for two months. It regularly drops below 50 per cent. I understand that there has been a big increase in complaints to even local MPs' offices. What is the Government doing? I think I got some commitment last time. Why is the Central Coast line so abysmal, recognising that it is an area that the Government is looking at dumping a hell of a lot more people in, in terms of its housing policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Chair, there have been some obvious issues with on-time running as a result of industrial action. Those matters are well known to the public. I might throw to Matt Longland on some of the detail.

The CHAIR: I think it's comparatively, in terms of the Central Coast line.

MATT LONGLAND: I do acknowledge some of the challenges on the Central Coast for passengers travelling on the rail network. As we have discussed previously, it's a very challenging alignment given the age, the grades and the very steep alignment geotechnical conditions in that part of the network. What we are doing, and what we committed to do when we last spoke, is to review in detail the areas that we can look at to prioritise performance improvement. In positive news, we have commenced the rollout of our new intercity fleet, the Mariyung train. Our first train went into service in the first week of December. We've now got five trains in service. We're progressively rolling that new fleet out. Feedback has been very positive from passengers about the experience, the reliability and the accessibility of that new train. We're also doing targeted works around rockfall and flooding. You might recall we discussed some of the challenges—Cowan Bank, Cockle Creek. Some of the work we're doing is to really look at what we can do to provide more resilience in the corridor.

The third area, as I mentioned, is around freight. It's a mixed corridor, with steep alignment. In fact, the steepest alignment on our main line network is in that section on the Cowan Bank. That has resulted in the locomotive failures—freight trains that are unable to lift their load on that steep grade. We also measure the condition of rolling stock as they pass a certain point on the corridor that tests for any elevated temperatures in any of the rail wagons' axle loads. Those two combined have resulted in issues around being able to navigate passenger trains around freight trains. They are areas that are more challenging, given the importance of that corridor for freight. There is priority in place for passengers in the peak periods. We have seen that the freight issues have become a problem in the interpeak period, when we're pushing more freight trains through that corridor. What we intend to do is to continue rolling out that new fleet. That will address some of the challenges we've had, particularly with the older V-set trains, and we will continue to work on prioritised maintenance on those key pinch points along the corridor.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, how many battery electric buses are anticipated to be in service on Sydney roads by 2028?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Well, we won't meet Andrew Constance's claim that we'll have the entire fleet electric by 2030.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm asking about you. You're the Minister. It's not a trick question. How many by 2028?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Something that became clear around this table is it would take until 2047. I won't be making wild claims, like Andrew Constance did, about how quickly this electric bus rollout will happen.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, it's not a trick question. While you're the interim transport Minister, it's about how many electric buses you anticipate will be in service on Sydney roads by 2028. What is Transport's policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Ms Ward, I do want to apologise, but I am still alarmed at what the former Minister did in this space.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We're here to talk about you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It was a wild claim—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You seem to only want to talk about the previous Government. What I'd like to talk about is you and electric buses.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —that came as a total surprise to the public and the agency.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's on the website. I can help you out. On your very own website, it does say there. How many electric buses are anticipated to be in service on Sydney roads by 2028, according to your own website?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm happy to take that on notice or to refer to the agency.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can someone look up your own website while he is filibustering.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Well, if you've got it there—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, feel free to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I don't need your commentary. I'm asking the Minister about his own website.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't want to misstate on a question that specific, Ms Ward. You know that—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: There are plenty of people here; there are plenty of people watching. Does someone want to look it up? How many are currently awarded?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry, how many?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many electric buses are currently awarded?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll hand to Mr Collins.

HOWARD COLLINS: There are 180 electric battery vehicles in service.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just how many are currently awarded, Mr Collins. I'm sorry, I've got very limited time.

HOWARD COLLINS: It's quite an extensive list. I'll go as quickly—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many?

JOSH MURRAY: It's about 300 in the current procurement. Obviously under Bus Panel 4 we have staged rollouts of further procurements which are being worked on.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, what percentage of local content will be completed for each of the four manufacturers?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The Government's commitment is clear. It's really looking at a 50 per cent local content target.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes. This is your announcement in December 2024. You announced the bus order. So 50 per cent of local content will be completed for each of the four manufacturers?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll take the specifics in relation to those individual contracts on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You announced it in December. The bus order was announced, so what is the percentage of local content for the buses that you ordered in December 2024?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: When you say that I announced it, I think you are referring to the former Minister.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's your Government policy, announced in December 2024. What is the percentage of local content for those buses you ordered?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I've affirmed the Government's target. We're working towards 50 per cent local content by 2027.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is the policy "working towards" or is it "50 per cent"?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. What we're anticipating is that there will be a minimum of 50 per cent local content requirement from 2027 onwards for fleet procurements.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: To clarify, you've taken on notice the percentage for each manufacturer.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: You're asking about specific contracts and I'd like to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: From the December 2024 order—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm happy to have the officials answer now or in the afternoon.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: They can do that this afternoon. I've got limited time with you.

HOWARD COLLINS: There's a long list of—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We can run you through those.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, can you take on notice the percentage for each manufacturer from the December 2024 order? Or we can deal with that this afternoon, Mr Collins.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We've got all that information. We'll be able to take you through it this afternoon.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'll move on. Will the Yutong and Foton city buses, as part of wave one of the Zero Emission Buses program, be at least 90 per cent complete when they're driven off the ship at Port Kembla later this year?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would want to take that on notice as to the very specifics—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Why?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't want to provide an answer—again, I'm happy for you to put that to Mr Collins. It's a very specific question, though, Ms Ward.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. Mr Collins?

HOWARD COLLINS: In terms of the order of 101 two-door city buses from Foton, whether they're literally driven off the ship or taken off the ship and finally assembled, I will have to take on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I do want to make the point that this is great news for Nowra.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but I want to be very specific about the completion of the announcement.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This is 100 jobs as this rolls out, and I cannot believe that Andrew Constance is opposing it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All you want to do is talk about the previous Government.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's more specific than that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What I want to talk about is this Government and clarity about your announcement. Minister, I will ask you again: Will those buses be 90 per cent complete when they're taken off the ship at Port Kembla later this year?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Some of my comments about the former Government have been quite praiseworthy, and I have already taken that question on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So jobs in Shanghai is good for Nowra?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. We are creating a pipeline here of jobs in Nowra. That's great news for Nowra. I can't believe the Opposition is opposing this.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: They preferred the jobs in Spain.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can't believe you're taking Andrew Constance's lead. This is very huge news for Nowra.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: This is a very serious matter.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: Spanish jobs are better.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I don't need your commentary.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: If we get this right, this could be a game changer down in Nowra and you are trying to oppose it here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, all you want to do is talk about anything other than your Government's program. I'm asking about your Government's programs.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I'm upbeat about this program and what it will deliver to Nowra. It is going to be more than 100 jobs.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you, we've heard that.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's part of a broader aspiration for what we can do in New South Wales.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, I want to ask you a question, in the limited time that I have. Are you aware what the term "disassembled knocked-down design" or DKD means?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I wouldn't want to give you a definition without seeking some advice on that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do the officials know? Mr Murray—DKD or disassembled knocked-down design?

JOSH MURRAY: I'd need some more context, Mrs Ward.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Collins? Anyone?

HOWARD COLLINS: I can give you a view here. Initially, a bit like British Leyland and many other designs which came in previously, it's a common term. But the intention is that as this factory is established and as Foton gets established, there will be more local content and less direct input.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but I'm not asking about the intention, with respect. I'm asking about the term "disassembled knocked-down design". What does that term mean?

HOWARD COLLINS: Generally those vehicles are imported and the final assembly is made to comply with the regulation and rules. Additional equipment like Opal facilities, seats and other things are added locally.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are the Yutong and Foton buses DKDs?

HOWARD COLLINS: Initially, I believe some of those vehicles—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What do you mean by "initially"?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think the initial order will be to speed up the process to get those much-needed buses into areas which are so important.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I understand all of that. I'm just interested in the order.

HOWARD COLLINS: They will arrive as imported vehicles, and then the progress will be to ensure that more content, more assembly, is done locally.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you, but I'm asking about the order in December 2024. You're clear that the Yutong and Foton buses will be DKDs. That's right, isn't it?

HOWARD COLLINS: They will certainly be imported vehicles.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And they will be DKDs.

HOWARD COLLINS: They come in various levels of subassembly. Whether they comply to that general term, most of them are brought in and then finally assembled.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's right.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd just make the point that this is a gateway to more than 100 jobs for the region. We've got to work through this.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I've heard that, Minister, but I'm not asking about the jobs. That was yesterday. Today we're dealing with Transport and buses, so let me ask about that and you can talk as much as you like outside of here about other things. Jobs in Shanghai are very grateful. They really appreciate the Government's local manufacturing policy. For each of those manufacturers, how much of the product is made in Australia?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think it's quite a remarkable position to put in that question, given the Coalition's record of sending—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, I'm asking you. Why are you dodging today?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: This was deliberate policy to privatise and send these contracts offshore under Andrew Constance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Why can't you answer your Government's contract position? I thought you'd be bursting at the seams. This is your policy.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We are making our best endeavours to create jobs here and change the policies we were granted.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, Jobs was yesterday. Today is Transport, so let's talk about transport.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The approach was the opposite under Andrew Constance. It was jobs offshore.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That was yesterday. Today we're talking about transport.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: He was quite clear he wanted to privatise all of transport.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, let's talk about your portfolio and your government policy as you sit here today.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'd be happy to do that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: For each of those manufacturers, how much of the product is made in Australia?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm happy to take that on notice. I've been clear about the goal. We've got a number of levers here that we're using to drive that goal. Of course you've got to build up over time. This is about reshaping the pipeline and producing long-term jobs, but this is a great step forward down in Nowra.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you're the Minister for Chinese jobs?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think, given the Coalition's record, given Andrew Constance's record, it is astonishing that you can put that question.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're the Minister for Chinese manufacturing.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's astonishing. I'm genuinely surprised that that is the line you're pursuing. It's very inadvisable. It's not up to me to tell you how to ask questions, but I wouldn't have gone there.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You've had the opportunity. For Bus Panel 4, can you explain how the contribution margin is used to define local content by Bus Panel 4?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would want to refer to officials on that specific question.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray or Mr Collins, for Bus Panel 4, can you explain how the contribution margin is used to define that local content by Bus Panel 4?

JOSH MURRAY: All of the 10 providers that have been pre-approved for Bus Panel 4 to contribute through that process around their local content guidelines—as the Minister has said, we have a 50 per cent target that comes into place, but we cannot sustain a 50 per cent target from the current available market.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But I'm asking about the contribution margin specifically, in the very limited time I have.

HOWARD COLLINS: Even the most Australian bus that we're buying from Custom Denning is 62 per cent. That is because, and if you know the bus assembly industry history well, chassis—Volvo, Scania, Mercedes—tend to be made abroad. All those components are included in that assessment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Collins, Minister or Mr Murray, what is the contribution margin in layman's terms?

JOSH MURRAY: It is one of the elements that, through the Bus Panel 4 commercial processes, is factored in to assess all of those manufacturers. Mind you—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, what is it?

JOSH MURRAY: I don't have the detailed assessment of what that is. It's through the contracts team that is assessed. But, mind you, we look at all of those providers for different parts of our bus supply chain, whether it be rural and regional buses, ZEBs or the particular buses like we have ordered for Western Sydney airport.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But my question is about the contribution margins, so can I just—

HOWARD COLLINS: In layman's terms, and certainly we can provide you the Bus Panel 4 details, it's labour, it's original manufacturing of components, it's all those things—the interiors, the tyres.

JOSH MURRAY: Equipment.

HOWARD COLLINS: Everything is calculated in quite a formulaic way.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, so, can the profit margin between a company purchasing a bus from China and then selling it to the Government count towards the contribution margin?

JOSH MURRAY: I'd have to take that on notice in terms of the calculations as they're applied in the contract.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's not a calculation. Can it count in any way?

JOSH MURRAY: All of those matters are assessed in the value to New South Wales.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's not what I'm asking. I'm asking can the profit margin between a company purchasing a bus from China then selling it to the Government in New South Wales count towards the contribution margin?

JOSH MURRAY: We'll take some advice on that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you take on notice, then, if the profit margin has been used as a contribution margin?

JOSH MURRAY: We'll take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have any of the suppliers used the contribution margin to meet their local manufacturing or local content provisions for the Government?

JOSH MURRAY: I think it relates to your previous question. As I say, we'll take the contribution margin question on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Specifically, whether the profit margin has been used as the contribution margin for each of those companies—if you could itemise that in your response.

JOSH MURRAY: Sure.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you been provided advice or a recommendation concerning ordering the next tranche for the new buses fleet to be built from Victoria?

JOSH MURRAY: Already one of the providers that has been selected in the first tranche, materials do come through Victoria. Again, these are offshore-manufactured chassis but there is local content through that process, which conforms with the policy.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, have you been provided that advice or a recommendation about ordering that next tranche? Which one is it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's obviously a fair bit going on with these contracts. I'd want to take that on notice. I would make the point that we're building up here a pipeline. You're referring here to some of the complexities. The Government's goals are very clear, and Transport is working through how to implement those. I'd see that as the normal pressures as we try to turn the approach in the way that the former Minister was very much driving and that I support.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You keep wanting to talk about the former Minister and I keep wanting to talk about your Government policies as you sit here. I'll move on.

JOSH MURRAY: Could I just say, though, in regard to the next tranche—the next wave of those—that's commercial in confidence and we've not yet been provided a recommendation about the next tranches, so I wouldn't want to speculate on who will be involved.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, when we ordered the Volgren buses, which are built in Victoria, what benefit does that have to the New South Wales economy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The secretary has just indicated these are procurement processes that are in train, and it'd be inappropriate to speculate about who these contracts are going to be awarded to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Why? What are we hiding?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These are commercial processes with commercial players who stand to benefit themselves.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right. I'll move on.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm open to any questions that—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Let's ask the questions then.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Let me make this distinction: I'm open to providing information which is of use to the public. I'd be very cautious about answering questions that may benefit one specific provider or another and their narrow commercial interests. I'd be cautious about that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Then I'll ask you a question, if I may get one in. When a bus is built in Victoria, what benefit do we receive to the New South Wales economy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We'd certainly have a bus, which would transport passengers around New South Wales.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm talking about the economy, the benefits to the New South Wales economy.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Most of these contracts, and I'm speaking more broadly here, actually involve components from a range of places, and they tend not to be—we are a single nation. There are many New South Wales businesses I've visited who are making components for—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You visited places interstate? I'm going to ask you again, Minister, to be clear. Can you explain what the benefit is to the New South Wales economy when a bus is built in Victoria and we buy it here?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer to officials.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm asking you. You're the Minister. You want to talk about jobs. You want to talk about New South Wales. You seem to only want to talk about the previous Government, the rest of Australia and your visits there.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These questions show a remarkable ignorance of how the manufacturing process works in New South Wales, in Australia and around the world.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You just don't know. You don't know, do you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There are many New South Wales businesses benefitting from the fact that they're making components of a range of products that are then built elsewhere in Australia. Those benefits—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, there's nothing in the talking points about this, is there—that the buses built in Victoria have no benefit to the New South Wales economy. That's right, isn't it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There probably is something in the talking points, but I'm not using the talking points.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Well, you're struggling to find something.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm struggling to understand the question.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can someone please search it up and text it to him? I just want to know how Victorian jobs help the New South Wales economy.

JOSH MURRAY: A robust manufacturing—ZEB is going to have immense investment over coming decades. Battery electric buses—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm asking the Minister and also the Minister for jobs. He wants to talk about jobs. Let's talk about that. How does that help New South Wales? You should be across this.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We're going to see a transformation in the transport jobs in New South Wales as this manufacturing policy rolls out. It's also, to be clear, probably going to help Victoria as well. That's a benefit to them—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is that your job?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —but it's really rebuilding New South Wales jobs that we're looking at. You've asked a range of questions that indicate, yes, it's difficult. Let me put this to you: It's made a lot more difficult by the policies we were left with. That's what we're tackling here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, I'll ask you about your portfolio. How do jobs in China and jobs in Victoria help the New South Wales economy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Your sudden interest in this after 12 years in government is encouraging. I'd describe it as very encouraging. I take it as a wholesale endorsement of the direction of the Government. But it is important to say the details of this—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you the Minister for jobs in New South Wales or the Minister for jobs in Victoria?

The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM: Point of order: This is the budget estimates hearing for Transport. We dealt with Jobs yesterday.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'll move on.

The CHAIR: The member has said she'll move on, if we're happy to leave it there.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, who would receive the payroll tax for the procurement order if it is built in Victoria?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Just ask the question again, please?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: If it is built in Victoria, who would receive the payroll tax for that procurement order from New South Wales?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I assume if the labour is for a firm manufacturing buses—if that's the question you're asking—in Victoria, then the Victorian Government will receive that payroll tax.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That is a concern, isn't it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, I wouldn't put it as high as being a concern.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're not concerned?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The manufacturing chains are very complex. New South Wales companies benefit—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sending jobs and payroll tax to Victoria and you're not concerned?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would expect, for a range of Victorian goods that are manufactured, you will find a range of New South Wales firms that benefit from supplying components or expertise or services to those companies. That's the nature of a modern—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So jobs in China, jobs in Victoria and payroll tax to Victoria, that's okay with you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: That is particularly the case between New South Wales and Victoria because you're talking about 70 per cent of the Australian economy.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I will move on. Minister, when can commuters expect Sydney Trains to reach its target of 92 per cent on-time running consistently?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As I indicated before, the on-time running has certainly been impacted by some of the events that the public well knows about, some of the industrial action that was taking place. We're grateful that we've moved out of that period with the assistance of the Fair Work Commission. The briefing to me has been that that should have a very positive impact on on-time running and we'll move back towards some of the targets, but—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When can we expect that target to be met?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: —I'll refer to Mr Longland on the specifics of your question.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Very briefly; I have Mr Longland this afternoon.

MATT LONGLAND: I do acknowledge the impact that industrial action has had on performance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. When can we expect it?

MATT LONGLAND: We're currently sitting at about 85 per cent across the network for peak on-time running. The target, as you said, is 92.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When can we expect it?

MATT LONGLAND: We're working really hard, both through operations and infrastructure, to improve performance and hopefully passengers will see that in coming weeks.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But my question to you, Minister, is when can we expect to see that running consistently? Since coming to office, your Government has only hit the reliability target twice. The last time was in January 2024. When will it hit the target again?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer you to the answer that has just been given by—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You can't answer that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Longland has answered that question very successfully.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you not asking Mr Longland, "When are we going to hit our reliability?" We've got all this disruption on trains. What is your expectation about a date when we should hit reliability on our train services?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think Mr Longland has answered your question very successfully.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And you haven't.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Well, that's a matter for you to judge.

The CHAIR: Minister, what is the New South Wales Government's policy on container shipping?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: We're broadly in favour of container shipping.

The CHAIR: I really would hope that there is more. Have you got an official policy?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Are you asking about containerisation of a particular—

The CHAIR: Ports.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Of a particular port?

The CHAIR: No, just broadly. The Government, I understand, is finalising a policy. Is that correct?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: On containerisation?

The CHAIR: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I will refer you to the agency on where we're up to on that.

JOSH MURRAY: Ms Faehrmann, Transport has been working with our freight partners on a number of efforts that improve the efficiency of the ports. There is a number of reviews coming to bear on that. Ms Mares, did you want to cover the freight angle?

TRUDI MARES: I'm not sure if you're referring to the freight reform program and the review?

The CHAIR: I will ask a different question at this point because I can follow that up later today. I understand NSW Ports is in the stage of getting approval for a State significant infrastructure development to expand the DP World terminal. Minister, I know you've followed this while you've been in Opposition as well. Has the Government given any assurances that, generally, the ports policy will be favourable to them over the Port of Newcastle? This is getting into the situation of the limits on the Port of Newcastle that many people have been following for some time. What is happening with that in relation to the NSW Ports proposal?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think the next step forward on this will be when the freight reform work is released to the public. There has been some very serious work spearheaded by Kerry Schott and a team who has been working closely on this. It is likely to reflect on the questions that you're putting. Certainly, in Opposition, we were very critical about the artificial arrangements put in place that constrained the Newcastle port. I, as Minister, would like to see a more neutral arrangement. It shouldn't be the case that the Government is putting in those artificial constraints for short-term financial benefits but ultimately long-term economic damage. I think you'll see that. But that next step forward will be the freight reform paper. We will release that publicly and it will chart the direction on exactly the question you're asking.

The CHAIR: What is the time frame exactly for that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It is imminent. I wouldn't want to give you a specific time, but it really will be quite soon. A lot of the work is complete. I've been briefed on it and the Government is expecting to release it shortly.

The CHAIR: If you've been briefed on it, can we expect to see reform to the extent that Newcastle port can indeed become more of a container port without the significant penalties that the former Government said was contained in those deeds?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, I think this is the best way to state the current position. The current port policy has a focus on Port Botany.

The CHAIR: This is the current—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The current port policy. It will remain the New South Wales container port and Port Kembla will be the location of a second port when it reaches capacity.

The CHAIR: Sorry, this is the current or is it Kerry Schott's—is this what we're expecting?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No, this is the current state of affairs. I note those previous arrangements which were in place that charged the Newcastle port, required them to reimburse, have now been extinguished after the IPART determination process and the Act which was passed by the Parliament in 2023.

The CHAIR: All right, so any month, week—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. I think the work that's done in a freight reform—it's the first whole-of-freight look. It's really an excellent piece of work. I've got to talk to my colleagues about it, but we will be looking to release it and will reflect on these questions.

The CHAIR: All right, we'll look forward to that. Minister, I've asked the former transport Minister similar questions in budget estimates in relation to the airport stations access fee. I've asked questions about airport workers. This is a question I failed to ask you yesterday due to time in terms of Roads, but it ties into Transport as well. The road into the Sydney International Airport is incredibly congested at the best of times. It is very frustrating that it is a new road and it is one lane. Given that it is a new arrangement for people to get to the Sydney International Airport—it is incredibly frustrating, it's banked up, a huge wait—don't you think that the Government should reconsider its position on the airport station access fee, that arrangement that makes it very expensive for people to catch the train to the airport, because Sydney Airport wants to get the fees every other way? What is the Government doing about that?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, I think you're asking on the road element about the Gateway project which, by the way, is operating very well in relation to the domestic and the international terminals, but you're asking about a specific element that I'm happy to take away and have a bit more of a look at. Overall, that project is working very, very smoothly. In relation to the station access fee, I'm aware of the issue. I've spoken to the airport about it. If you've got the sort of employment challenges that the airport has got, it is having an impact on that. We are constrained with the agreement that was entered into in 1995 that is still in place until May 2030. That is a significant constraint on government policy setting here. From my perspective, that shouldn't be the end of the matter. I think there's a commonsense question that you've asked previously and that is being put, so I'd like to continue to look at it. But that contract is a significant constraint.

The CHAIR: Pop that on your little handover document, if you don't end up keeping the Transport portfolio, because it's an important one. There's the worker access fee, as well, so there's the general access fee—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It's the worker access fee that, to me, is the most commonsense question. But it's still a constraint.

The CHAIR: Sydney airport's apparently working with the Government through the budget process of a proposal. Do you have any updates about that? Again, I think it's been more than a year that this has been ongoing, to try and get that access fee removed entirely for Sydney airport workers?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I won't, obviously, confirm anything about the budget. I will confirm that Sydney airport's been very cooperative and looking at a range of ways that they might contribute to help to do this. They're obviously not the only player in the precinct who's got significant workers, so that's a real complexity, and of course the ultimate complexity here is the tight contract that was signed that's in place until 2030.

The CHAIR: Strategic Cycleway Corridors program—the Government has just committed to, within the New South Wales Active Transport Strategy, delivering 100 kilometres of new strategic cycleways. That's across the whole State, mind you, 100 kilometres, which isn't that much at all. That was agreed to under the

Coalition, that 100 kilometres. Is the Government looking at extending that, or increasing the investment in active transport and cycleway infrastructure?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I feel obligated to really call out the work of Minister Haylen in this area. She drove this area very strongly, and it was a real priority for the agency. As a result, we are looking at better ways we can embed active transport in the ordinary business of the Transport agencies.

The CHAIR: One question—I'll jump in, in relation to this, then. I was advised that last budget estimates, where I think a question on notice, that a business case is being developed for that. What's the update on the business case?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'll refer to the officials on the specific business case.

TRUDI MARES: We have—just to update your previous question—\$45.5 million in the current year's budget, and \$121 million over the forwards and over 200 grant-subsidised active transport projects, along with the 21 active development and delivery projects. I can bring you the timing on business case work after the break.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Minister, I'm just going to get some documents handed up to you. On 21 February Transport for NSW entered into a contract worth \$4½ million for the permanent cycleway on Bridge Road in Glebe. What I'm handing up to you is an independent safety audit that was conducted, and I draw your attention to page 53 with the auditor's conclusions, that say it is likely to increase—

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry, which page?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Page 53. The auditor's conclusions state that "it's likely to increase the conflict, number of incidents, and ultimately the chance of potentially severe collisions between two or more vehicles, vehicles and cyclists and cyclists and pedestrians". That was provided to the department both in October and December last year, and yet the department didn't respond to that report until February this year, after the tender was awarded. So my first question is were any actual changes made to the design or the project in considering this report that basically says it's serious concerns around vehicle collisions, collisions with cyclists, collisions with pedestrians?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I know this has been a much-discussed particular cycleway. I can't see the reference you're making to page 53 in this document. There is not a page 53. But I accept the characterisation you're making. There have been changes to the scope. I'd probably want to refer you to the officials—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I might pick up with the officials in the afternoon. I've got some other questions I want to throw you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: But I know there's been much discussion on this, and there have been changes as a result.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: We might pick up with the department and see what those changes are in the afternoon. Minister, given that Government members of the upper House inquiry into e-scooters and e-bikes supported a recommendation to allow these devices on footpaths and a speed limit of 15 kilometres per hour, has the Government's position changed from the advice that was given to them by the Road Safety Advisory Council that said, "Don't allow them on footpaths and keep the speed at 10 kilometres per hour"?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, I'm very grateful for the work of the upper House committee. I think it has been one of the good examples of that committee's work. The Government's certainly taken that work seriously. Of course, we've also got to have regard to the advice of the Transport agencies, including the Centre for Road Safety, as we formulate our position. I have been briefed on those matters. We're still formulating the Government's position. It is a detailed area, so it would be unfair to say we've taken the step forward that you're asking about.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Are you aware that in Queensland accidents involving e-scooters and e-bikes is now the second highest reason for admission to emergency, and that their department and their Government is reconsidering their stance on e-scooters and e-bikes on footpaths?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I am aware of some of that dynamic. I'm aware of the hospital admissions issue, but perhaps not the individual specifics. I've spoken to the Queensland Government about their regulatory arrangements, including how they're working, over time. I think my view, without going into all the details, is that we can learn some things from the Queensland experience and the changes they either have made or are considering. The Government response in this matter is due in May 2025, to that individual report. But work is ongoing in this area.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: The interesting one I found, the Road Safety Advisory Council briefing paper that was done in 2024 stated that the minimum age for riding an e-scooter is 16, but then also states that they can have a maximum blood alcohol level of 0.05. How do you respond to that contradiction and discrepancy? We're saying that you can be 16 and, by the way, you can have a couple of drinks while you're riding an e-scooter.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I think it is a contradiction, and I think any government final landing in this area should make sure that we're sending the right signals, rather than contradictory ones.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can I just go to Maritime for a bit? The Evans Head Classic is a fishing competition that attracts thousands of people to that area—obviously crossing over into your portfolio of Jobs and Tourism et cetera. Currently, the bar crossing is about 50 per cent silted up. That was before Tropical Cyclone Alfred came down upon us. The Richmond Valley Council is refusing to dredge that crossing. Are you and your department prepared to do some emergency dredging before the Evans Head Classic in July so we can actually be having a fishing competition, rather than a sandcastle competition?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: When's the specific date in July?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: It's 4 July to 7 or 11 July, I think. It's quite an extensive competition.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm not aware of the issue. I can understand the impact that's having on a key event. Do you want to pick that up with the officials this afternoon to get what information you can? But I'm certainly happy to deal with that request. I don't know the background, but I think it's a good question.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes, sure. Where are we at with the Maritime Infrastructure Plan, Minister? The last one expired in 2024. Essentially, it's supposed to be the master plan that takes into consideration the inclusion plan, the Maritime Safety Plan. I guess it's the bible in terms of what we do with maritime infrastructure, and we're over a year overdue for actually seeing it. How do we build stuff when we don't have a plan to do it?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Very good. I'll refer you to the agency on that matter.

HOWARD COLLINS: Obviously as you know, Mr Banasiak, \$360 million from fees and licensing over the next four years. The ED of Maritime has certainly identified a number of areas, one of which is the new boating infrastructure and dredging plan, and I will certainly take away your comment on Evans Head and see what we can do about that. That is laid out, and asking obviously again, as we had the formal process for contributions. We do have a strategy of investment of a number of locations in terms of maritime infrastructure. Also, as you know, Maritime has taken on board a number of former Commonwealth assets in terms of jetties and other Crown lands. We're working through that infrastructure plan now.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: This plan was due mid-2024, from my understanding. That was the last evidence you gave, Mr Collins. We are now into the third month of 2025 and there's no sign of it.

HOWARD COLLINS: I think what we have done in the interim is provided good information to the industry of our more short-term and medium-term plans for Maritime, including the \$44 million investment plan for both dredging and also infrastructure and also a number of infrastructure programs which are currently ongoing across the State, the achievement of which has in the past been very successful. But I'll take on notice the actual plan and when is the date, if we intend to publish that, for that overall strategic infrastructure plan.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Banasiak, in relation to Evans Head, can I just formally take your question on notice so we definitely get you a response. But I can indicate that in the Government's Coastal Dredging Strategy, Evans Head is one of the nine priority locations, but we'll come back with a specific answer on notice for you.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes, that would be great. If we could get an indication as to whether it will be done before July, that'd be great.

SALLY WEBB: Mr Banasiak, just add to Mr Collins' response there, I can confirm that the Maritime Safety Plan is progressing and the actions in that plan are continuing to be completed.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I was asking about the Maritime Infrastructure Plan. You've got lots of plans on your website and not a lot of action.

SALLY WEBB: In addition, a discussion paper on a review of the Maritime Infrastructure Plan is being prepared and is due for release in the middle of this year.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Shouldn't we have really had that discussion paper out well in advance? The last plan ceased in 2024. Shouldn't we have been forward-thinking and actually planning for that and having

a discussion paper ready to go even while that other plan was still in existence? That seems like common sense to me.

SALLY WEBB: We want to ensure that that plan is informed by community and stakeholder input.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Minister, what's your view about keeping Glebe Island port?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Firstly, the Government's unapologetic about its housing priority. We just actually have to lift the number of houses that are being built in New South Wales.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you, but I'm asking about the port, not the housing aspect. What's your view on keeping the port? As one of your responsibilities as interim Minister, what advice have you received about keeping the port there or the impact of removing the port?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I understand your question. However, I think you have to start at that place, to say it is such a priority to drive housing for this Government. However, I do understand the issues that have been raised about the importance of the port as a key part of our supply chain. I have been briefed by Transport on that. I've certainly spoken to the former Minister about that and had the benefit of her perspective. There are some really serious land use conflict issues here that the Government has to sort through. A decision has not been made which would impact on the port, but there has been plenty of public discussion as well, and I've noted the position of some of the business groups, who have put a strong case.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, I understand and appreciate those. They've been quite vocal about their concerns. Will the port stay there or will the port go?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's no Government decision.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Who's making that decision?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I might ask you to put that to the agency just so we properly capture everyone who's involved in that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I can do that this afternoon, but are you in the loop on this decision-making process?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The scale of that decision would certainly be the subject of Cabinet discussion—Cabinet or its committees.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you making that decision or is there another Minister or another group?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: There's a Cabinet Office process to deal with these issues, so obviously it impacts on a range of Ministers.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But someone has to take a paper to Cabinet. Who's the responsible Minister? Not you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I won't be commenting on the Cabinet processes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Not you? But you just said a decision will be made.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It would be inappropriate to—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We're just trying to understand who will be making that decision. Who will be taking that to Cabinet? Is that you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It would be inappropriate to disclose who will be taking a particular Cabinet paper—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is it not you?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It would be inappropriate to disclose those Cabinet processes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a timeline?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I can tell you, though, it is a Cabinet Office led process. I think that's—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, but somebody needs to take it to Cabinet for that decision to be made.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I agree with your observation.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Someone is the lead on that, that's how Cabinet works. Is there a timeline on the decision? When will it be made?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I would need to take that on notice. I wouldn't want to mislead on that. Obviously it's a complex issue, but I'm happy for you to pick that up with the officials.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you won't be part of that decision-making, or you will?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I anticipate I will be involved in that discussion.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Assuming you stay in the gig.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: It has already been the subject of discussion at a top level in the Government. As you would expect, given that there's—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a timeline for this year, then?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: As you would expect, given that there are these housing pressures, we're looking at every option we can. But there has also been significant commentary on this in public, so as you would expect, of course, it has been discussed at a—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Could you expect a decision to be made this year, in 2025?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I wouldn't want to comment on the timeline other than to say that I've taken that on notice.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Minister, can I just confirm with you the last point to point commission annual review? Online it says it's at 2022-23. Where is the 2023-24 annual review?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Sorry, I missed the last part of that.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I want to know what's the last point to point commission annual review. Online I can see 2022-23. Is there a 2023-24 annual review?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm going to refer to the commissioner because I understand we have an update on this.

ANTHONY WING: We are finalising an update and we'll put that online.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: So it's not online yet?

ANTHONY WING: It's not online yet.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Do you know why there's delay?

ANTHONY WING: We've had a change of Minister, and so I want to make sure the new Minister is aware of it before we put it online.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I think the last Minister could have done it, given it's 2023-24. I'll leave it at that. Minister, I need to know whether Transport for NSW and the point to point commission have a policy regarding unaccompanied children who are transported in a point to point trip via taxi, Uber or other vehicle. Is there a policy document?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Commissioner?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Are you aware, Minister?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I'm not aware whether they have a policy document. It's a good question.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Transport for NSW, is there one? Mr Murray?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll refer you to the commissioner.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Mr Wing? Yes or no answer. I know you've got the child restraints. I just need to know yes or no. I haven't got time.

ANTHONY WING: So the question is "Is there a general policy about unaccompanied children?"

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Is there a policy regarding unaccompanied children who are transported in a point to point trip, being a taxi, Uber or other vehicle?

ANTHONY WING: The rules apply the same as for everyone else, which is there are strong rules around—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I'll take that as a no. There's no policy.

ANTHONY WING: There are strong rules around checks on drivers—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You've got a child restraint policy; you don't have one on that. Minister, back to the 172,000 point to point drivers—and that's for your 2022-23 data; I don't have the 2023-24 data. I suspect that number is higher. Does Transport for NSW or the point to point commission hold any data about how many of those drivers have a Working with Children Check?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I have noted your sensible question, but I'm going to have to refer—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I know, but I want this specific question asked.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Exactly. I'd refer you to the commissioner.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Can I just ask Transport for NSW first? Do you hold any data in that regard?

JOSH MURRAY: I don't, particularly, but it would come through the commission, I would expect.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: You don't. Minister, you don't know whether there is data is kept or not. Is that what you're saying to me?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I don't hold it and I don't know the answer to the question you're asking. But, Commissioner?

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: Mr Wing, would you like to answer that question?

ANTHONY WING: We don't have data about working with children checks. We would have to get that from the Working with Children Check area. What we have is strong data about all the checks that are required and done on drivers before they're allowed to drive.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: So you have no idea how many of the 172,000-plus point to point drivers we have in New South Wales hold a working with children clearance check?

ANTHONY WING: The requirement under the law is that strict checks are done on them. They are required to have background checks.

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: They just have to fill out a form.

ANTHONY WING: They are required to have background checks. We actually run an online portal, which is checked 70 million times a year by industry, which gives near real-time updates on all these drivers. We provide all that information. But that's all about the requirements that are currently in the law. I think you've asked the Minister about the Working with Children Check—

The Hon. TANIA MIHAILUK: I get it; the law is not there. I just want to clarify that that data is not sought, and you have clarified that you don't seek that data.

The CHAIR: Are there any questions from Government members?

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: No, thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much, Minister, for making yourself available two days in a row for us. The officials will be back after lunch, but that's the end of your time with us. The Committee will now break for lunch. We'll be back at 2.00 p.m.

(The Minister withdrew.)

(Luncheon adjournment)

The CHAIR: Welcome back from the lunchbreak. We'll kick things off straightaway with the Opposition.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you for coming back, everybody. Mr Murray, when were you first made aware of the complaints regarding the culture of the point to point commission?

JOSH MURRAY: Thank you for the question and, as mentioned earlier today, we've also had the opportunity just to clarify some of the points made. I should stress the advice to Transport is not that this is an investigation by SafeWork. However, there have been some complaints that have been conveyed to SafeWork, and a review is happening.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: A review by who?

JOSH MURRAY: By SafeWork.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So SafeWork are not investigating—

JOSH MURRAY: That's my understanding.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: —but they're doing a review.

JOSH MURRAY: It's not a formal investigation, but they have instituted some reviews with the point to point commission, which includes the provision of information from the commission and some documents. Transport does not have a large degree of information about what that constitutes. That hasn't been shared, but we have been in contact with SafeWork. Additionally, to try and bring this to a close, because it has been going on for a number of months since SafeWork, we understand, began that review process, we have instituted some culture work from Transport and the point to point commission so we can also ensure that there aren't any issues that we need to follow up on separate to that. It's a work in progress, but it's difficult for Transport to know exactly what SafeWork is doing, where they're up to and when they will close it out for those employees that may be impacted. I think, this morning, you referred to 30 complainants. We have no evidence that that is the case, but we do know that there are potentially five staff who have been speaking to SafeWork about that issue.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you for all of that. There's a bit to unpack there, so I'll go into that. How many formal complaints are there, if there's not 30?

JOSH MURRAY: As I said, we believe—again, these aren't complaints to Transport, but we believe the number may be five individuals that are talking to SafeWork. But, again, I don't have formal identification of that through SafeWork. We have asked for information, but that is with them at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When did you ask for that information?

JOSH MURRAY: I believe that there was work done in December and January to gain more information through this process.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you don't have a large amount of information. But have you asked if there are these 30 complaints, or have you asked if there's any more than five?

JOSH MURRAY: We have asked, and our information is there are not 30.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you've been told there are only five.

JOSH MURRAY: The information to me is that we understand there are five, but we don't know the level to which they are providing information. That's why we have done the other process that you referred to this morning, which is a Transport-initiated process to look at any cultural concerns in the point to point commission so that we can put this matter to bed more quickly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Who's responsible for that work then? Is that under your leadership, or is that the sole purview of the point to point commissioner or SafeWork? It seems there are a lot of different bodies here. Who is ultimately responsible for this?

JOSH MURRAY: That second piece of work that I just referred to—the culture work—is being conducted by Transport.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are the complaints themselves being dealt with by SafeWork or by the point to point commission?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, this is what we're trying to—Transport doesn't have visibility of the work that SafeWork is doing. That's their role to do that. We have provided some information, and we have sought some information. But what we're doing is our own proactive piece of work to try and close out any issues which would be our responsibility anyway through Transport.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What's the difference between an investigation and a review?

JOSH MURRAY: You'd have to direct that to SafeWork.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But I'm asking you. You have clarified with SafeWork that they're not doing a formal investigation; they're doing a thing called a review. Did you not say, "What's the difference?"

JOSH MURRAY: I understand that an investigation is a more formal piece of work. These are some concerns that have been brought to their attention, which is outside of a normal process, obviously, for either a personnel-style complaint that would normally come through Transport for NSW—and there are other processes

if the person is not satisfied there. But this information has come to them. We've been advised by them that this is not a formal investigation, but it is a review of some matters that they have become aware of.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But some contact was made to you, personally, raising these issues also. So it was brought to your attention. That's correct, isn't it?

JOSH MURRAY: That's correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So when you say that they've gone off somewhere else, it's actually come to you as well. What steps have you taken since those complaints came to you, outside of the SafeWork complaints?

JOSH MURRAY: That's why Transport is doing its own work to identify any cultural or other issues at the point to point commission which we have limited information about. But we are exploring those. Again, I don't want to breach any confidences around some of those matters, but we're obviously following those through to ensure that we can be clear about any issues that are raised through that process.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is that culture work separate to the Transport internal standards investigation, or are they the same thing?

JOSH MURRAY: That's the same piece.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The same thing—just different names. Is that an investigation or a review?

JOSH MURRAY: I wouldn't necessarily call it either. It's Transport looking at any cultural complaints at the point to point commission, based on the fact that we know SafeWork has had some interest and has not yet closed out those processes. It's not necessarily our role to ask SafeWork to provide all of that to us. They may have different areas they want to look at but, certainly, we want to be assured that we're doing everything for the employees of the point to point commission, if they have concerns.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When it was first raised with you, why was the Minister not told—either the current, interim Minister or the previous Minister?

JOSH MURRAY: Because it was very difficult for us to get information as to what were the exact concerns. As I said, we understood that SafeWork had some interest. We wanted to find out who was in fact involved and what those elements were while still protecting people's identities or anything that they wanted to bring forward. My advice is that work continued on that through December and January, but we have been trying to clarify exactly what SafeWork was doing through the process as well.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but separately to the SafeWork complaints, complaints were raised directly with you. So you were across those details and those complaints. That wasn't a matter of going through SafeWork, given that they were not a part of those direct reach-outs to you. So why—

JOSH MURRAY: Again, I wouldn't want to talk here about things that people bring to me, except to say that I receive emails from employees across the organisation and our agencies every day of the week.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm sure you do, but my question is this—

JOSH MURRAY: So it would be wrong—sorry, Ms Ward—to qualify those as complaints. I do receive people bringing me information that I make sure gets to the right place but is also handled confidentially, if that's what they ask of me.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm not asking you about the confidential handling. I'm asking why, when they were brought to your direct attention, separately from SafeWork, you made the decision not to raise it with the former Minister or the current Minister?

JOSH MURRAY: I am the employer in this regard, and I have to make sure that items are looked at properly so that I have all the information before I then go and escalate them to that degree.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: At what point do you escalate it to the Minister and say, "We have had a number of complaints from employees which are of concern. SafeWork is doing an investigation. They've come to me directly"? At what point do you brief any Minister?

JOSH MURRAY: I'd come back to what I said earlier: I haven't had a number of complaints from employees.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you had more than one?

JOSH MURRAY: Not that I'm aware of.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You've had some direct complaints to you, though.

JOSH MURRAY: I know I've got at least one person who has come to me with some information that I've passed on to be looked at.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But you haven't raised that with the Minister, and you didn't think that was something you needed to do.

JOSH MURRAY: In an organisation of 30,000 people, I obviously inform the Minister or Ministers of multiple operational or people elements that happen every day of the week. But I also have to do my own due diligence on where those elements are up to and make sure that they're being looked at by the appropriate authorities.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What will be the outcomes of your culture work?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll have to wait and see when that's complete, and then it will—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What's your expectation of the outcomes of that work?

JOSH MURRAY: I don't know yet.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You don't have an expectation of what will be the outcome.

JOSH MURRAY: That report hasn't come back to me at this stage.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What would be the outcomes of the internal investigation?

JOSH MURRAY: No, that's the same piece of work.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You don't have any expectation of what those will be.

JOSH MURRAY: Information was sought in December; information was provided in January. I don't want to go into it too much more than that, but that will now make its way to me so that we can have a look as to what it identifies and how many people it may require us to talk to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Wing, can I ask you: What is the nature of the complaints?

ANTHONY WING: We have been approached by SafeWork. As the secretary said, we were told that they were commencing a review based on a number of complaints.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The nature of which was what?

ANTHONY WING: We haven't been given much detail about them—either the people involved or the complaints themselves. I understand that SafeWork needs to properly look at it and go through its review.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Were there any allegations of bullying?

ANTHONY WING: We've got allegations of interpersonal conflict. I think that's probably what was there. But what we don't have are details. That's the difficulty.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Certainly. Are there any issues of bullying in your organisation, in your view?

ANTHONY WING: I hope not but, if there are, I certainly want to address them. We are working with SafeWork. We are answering all of their queries. I look forward very much to any further information. We definitely want to address it if it occurs.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are there issues of nepotism in your organisation?

ANTHONY WING: Certainly not that I'm aware of.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: None have been brought to your attention?

ANTHONY WING: Of nepotism? I've not been advised of issues of nepotism, no.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are you aware of any issues in your organisation?

ANTHONY WING: We have had SafeWork come to us and say that they have had five complaints and that they are conducting a review. I would suggest that is definitely the case. We've had that brought to our attention. But we have not got the details. We are looking forward to getting more from SafeWork eventually.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We're in March now. This came about late last year. How long will it take?

ANTHONY WING: I would love to be able to tell you but I don't—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you asked SafeWork?

ANTHONY WING: Yes. We have been told that they are continuing to conduct reviews. They've not escalated it to an investigation, as far as I'm aware.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you asked why not?

ANTHONY WING: Why it hasn't been escalated?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes.

ANTHONY WING: I presume they have made decisions that they don't see a need to escalate it.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You don't see a need?

ANTHONY WING: I would like them to give us any information that they have so we can take appropriate action. That would be very good.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What are the KPIs for compliance officers on shift?

ANTHONY WING: All compliance officers, obviously, are required to work in accordance with the directions of their managers. They may have rosters at various times, depending on the workload.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I am not talking about the rosters. I'm talking about their KPIs while they're on the job. They are compliance officers. What KPIs do they have in place to do their job?

ANTHONY WING: Compliance officers are required to comply with the directions of their managers. They are out there working extremely hard. They are often there at seven o'clock in the morning at the airport for the first flights. They are often there late at night, past midnight, for major events, and on Saturday nights in the city.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I am not asking about the rostering. I am not asking about their shifts. I am not asking about their managers. I am asking about when a compliance officer is on shift, what KPIs do they have to fulfill?

ANTHONY WING: They are required to meet the directions given by their managers about where they go, what kind of work they do and where they are patrolling at that time. Before any major event, we will have a compliance activity plan that will set out what we expect of them for that event. Those are the requirements. We often have to set different rosters depending on what happens.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: With respect, I am not asking about rosters, and I have limited time. Do they have a minimum number of compliance activities that they are required to carry out during their shift?

ANTHONY WING: They work very hard. In the last year, my compliance officers have inspected 16,000 rideshare and taxi vehicles.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, so when they are on shift—I am a compliance officer. I have turned up on time for my roster. What is it that I have to do during that shift?

ANTHONY WING: You have to do what you are expected to do by your manager, which may involve going to those places, going to the airport or going to the city and patrolling those ranks. There will be a specific plan.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do they have a certain number of cabs that they are supposed to check?

ANTHONY WING: They have activities that they have to do. They have inspected 16,000 vehicles in the past year. The number of cabs or rideshare vehicles that they inspect is going to depend on how many are at any particular rank or rideshare pick-up area that they go to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you can't provide to this Committee any clarity on the compliance officer's role, having turned up for their shift, about how many rideshare vehicles and cabs they're supposed to inspect and what steps they are supposed to take.

ANTHONY WING: What we provide them with is where we expect them to be looking. After all, how many they inspect depends on who is there and how many are there at the time.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you take on notice please, Mr Wing, for the past three months, all the plans for compliance officers?

ANTHONY WING: Yes, sure, I can take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: They turn up for shift and they're given a plan by their manager. Can you provide to us the past three months worth of plans?

ANTHONY WING: Yes, but I do want to say that they are extremely hardworking.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I've heard that. I'm sorry, I do have limited time. I'm happy for you to put that in your answer. What are they doing when they are on shift? When you provide that information, the information that we are after is what it is that they are doing—detailed information.

ANTHONY WING: We have on-street inspectors. They are either out in uniform—they are patrolling ranks, they are going through rideshare pick-up areas and they are inspecting vehicles. Some of them are in plain clothes and they are jumping into the back of vehicles and catching them. They have issued more than 1,000 fines just for taxi-fare related offences in the past two years.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. I am interested in their overtime for this financial year and the last financial year. Could you take that on notice to provide how much overtime has been paid out this financial year and last financial year for those compliance officers?

ANTHONY WING: Yes, I will take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The enforcement notices that have been issued in the past 12 months—on notice, can you provide them in itemised form and by month?

ANTHONY WING: By enforcement notices, do you mean prosecutions or fines or—is that the kind of thing?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What is it that they do? If they are issuing notices or issuing fines—whatever you call them—could you take on notice for the Committee how many of those, in itemised form, have been issued in the past 12 months?

ANTHONY WING: Yes. Look, a certain amount of that is on our website, but I'll take it on—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And by month. "In January, there were this many fines and enforcement or compliance notices", and what the nature of them was.

ANTHONY WING: Can I just say, overall, in the past year, they have issued some 2,000 fines all up. Just for taxi-related fare offences, in the past couple of years, they have issued over 1,000 of those. They are issuing plenty of fines. We don't have targets for fines. That would be like a revenue target.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many complaints for overcharging has the point to point commission received this year and last year?

ANTHONY WING: I would have to look for overcharging.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right. Can you take that on notice?

ANTHONY WING: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many tickets have been issued for overcharging?

ANTHONY WING: In the past couple of years we have issued more than 1,000 fines to taxi drivers for overcharging or similar offences such as refusing to use the meter.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you take on notice a specific question: How many complaints have been made to the commission, again for this financial year and the last financial year, from passengers? That is the number of complaints from passengers, not fines—that is a separate question. This one is about the passengers in the back who are making complaints—how many of those. Could you provide that to the Committee?

ANTHONY WING: I am happy to do that. We have a hotline that people report to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, let's go to that. How many complaints have been made to the hotline?

ANTHONY WING: I would have to go look for the numbers, but there have been several thousand complaints. As I said, more than 3,000 people have received refunds through the hotline. We've also been issuing fines as well. My officers have been doing both plain-clothes operations as well as on-street operations.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure, but on notice you'll give us that particular number of how many complaints for this financial year and last financial year?

ANTHONY WING: I'll take that on notice, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: If you're able to break it down into the nature of those complaints, that would be very helpful.

ANTHONY WING: We'll see what we can find, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many of that are overcharging, how many of that are not turning the meter on—I think you've just suggested that that is something that you're able to identify.

ANTHONY WING: Yes, we can go through and look for that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you have that number to hand about how many complaints have been made?

ANTHONY WING: I think I will have to take that on notice, especially for the breakdown.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. How many of your officers are on mental health leave?

ANTHONY WING: I'm sorry, what was the question?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many of those compliance officers are on mental health leave?

ANTHONY WING: We have two officers who are on—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Or other work issues.

ANTHONY WING: —WorkCover leave.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Two in total?

ANTHONY WING: We have two officers on WorkCover leave, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What is the average annual salary for a compliance officer, with overtime?

ANTHONY WING: I will definitely have to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many compliance officers do you have?

ANTHONY WING: I don't like to talk too much about exact numbers because that just helps people who are trying to avoid covert work get around it. Let's say approximately 30 across the State.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're not prepared to tell this Committee how many compliance officers there are?

ANTHONY WING: I'd prefer not to give it exact numbers. Of course, I will if you definitely need to know, but I would say there are approximately 30 across the State.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Will you also take that on notice and give us the exact number of compliance officers employed by the point to point commission in New South Wales?

ANTHONY WING: Yes.

The CHAIR: I have some questions about ferries. The Government recently announced the return of the ferry service to the Elliott Street wharf in Balmain. I'm wondering if there are any more details on that, including a timeline of when that will be operational. Is there anybody here to talk—Mr Collins?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes, there has been an announcement. We're working on the safety checks and the installation of the equipment for its recommissioning. If I don't find it in the meantime, I will find some information for you regarding the projected return to service. It also requires us to make a ferry service change, and we've looked at a number of options of how that wharf can be serviced.

The CHAIR: Yes, that's correct. I understand that it will be incorporated as a stop on one of the three current routes in the second half of this year. I'm also interested, Mr Collins, on the whether there's public consultation on that and whether there'll be opportunities for commuters and stakeholders to feed into those options.

HOWARD COLLINS: Along with my colleague from the community and place team, I think that there certainly is an intention to ensure that we engage with the local community prior to it opening and also get feedback. We do think we are fairly limited in what services we can provide, and that's due to the fact that we only have 40 vessels at the moment. Obviously, as we grow our vessel fleet, with the arrival of the Parramatta River class and also the retention of more of the First Fleet, we might be able to do a more comprehensive change. But, at this stage, that's one of the constraints.

The CHAIR: The Glebe ferry—

HOWARD COLLINS: The Me-Mel?

The CHAIR: The F10 service. There is the question about the Opal network. The Government has said plans are underway to incorporate the F10 service into the Opal network by the second half of this year. How is that going, Mr Collins?

HOWARD COLLINS: That certainly is our intention. We're working through that issue. We're also working through the opportunities and understanding of the impacts of the new fish market and the options of a ferry service there. As you know, we only have one of those small Me-Mel vessels, so we really want to make sure that we get the maximum use out of that. But, also, are there other options going forward to provide more of a service to that area? As the Government has said, it has high potential for improving access for people by the water.

The CHAIR: That's the next question. That's around the potential Annandale stop. Again, that would be that service, at this stage, just serviced by the one boat. Is that correct?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes.

The CHAIR: Are there plans to at least double capacity?

HOWARD COLLINS: We're looking at that. The difficulty is we don't think it's advisable to order another one of those small vessels. They're very limited in their operation. But we've got to take into account the wharves they serve and the type of facilities which are there at the moment. Part of our ferry strategy going forward is to look to provide regular inner-harbour-type services, which will support more access for those areas.

The CHAIR: What work is being done in relation to looking at those ferries, then? I understand that in relation to the Annandale stop—Rozelle Bay—because of the shallow nature of that bay, that smaller vessel has to be used. Are there other vessels that fit more people in that you're looking at? I assume dredging isn't an option?

HOWARD COLLINS: It's a last resort, but that is part of the strategy. The Parramatta River class vessels have a very low draft, as they call it. Whether they're able to operate in that area, we're doing that investigation. We're expecting further funding to be granted, which will give us the opportunity to open up more of the services in Rozelle Bay, for example.

The CHAIR: What does opening up more of the services in Rozelle Bay mean, Mr Collins?

HOWARD COLLINS: We're looking at, in the next three years, the opportunity for Rozelle Bay. They are also looking at a committee progressing urban renewal plans in the Bays West area. We're working with that master plan to understand what this means for ferry operation because, as you put in more housing or change the current way those bays operate, we want to make sure we're linked to those plans. I know Trudi Mares has been working with that. For example, with the fish market, it's not just the ferries. We're looking at light rail; we're looking at the bus connections. There are a lot of other projects in that area which will change the set-up of our ferry services.

The CHAIR: In terms of the Government's commitment to a ferry service at Annandale, when can residents expect to see that ferry service?

HOWARD COLLINS: In the detail, the Government has certainly committed to this. In terms of the actual funding envelopes for this work, I would take on notice what has been provided, because I think not all of those plans are currently funded in Transport's budget at the moment. But, as we work through the ferry strategy with Government, I do expect those things to become more solid, and we could then give you some timescales.

The CHAIR: It doesn't sound like this financial year at the very least. It doesn't potentially even sound like the next budget. We'll come back to it at the next budget estimates. Maybe we'll get the same answer. On buses now and the Government's commitments while they were in opposition—from opposition Labor promised to reverse the Coalition's cuts to the 370 bus service. As far as we've heard, we haven't heard anything about Labor not intending to meet that commitment. Is there any work within the agency around the 370 bus service in terms of restoring the Liberals' cuts?

HOWARD COLLINS: I know that we've done a lot of work. We have, so far in the two years the Government has been in power, changed and added some of those services. The former Minister has always said that they have a commitment. The timing of those commitments obviously may vary. I will take on notice if we do have some time frames. And as my colleague Trudi Mares knows, for the 370, we are going through the review of a number of those bus regions in terms of services. We've made some improvements or some changes in the eastern suburbs and the northern beaches. The difficulty we have and the practical thing at the moment is we are

desperately short of vehicles. So promising reinstating services—I'm sure at the time of the new Government, they weren't aware of the state of the vehicles and the loss of those articles. But we are now seeing, as Minister Graham said earlier today, that the number of vehicles arriving and the repairs is a very, very live project.

The CHAIR: Is it vehicles or drivers, Mr Collins? Another question I have here is around the alternative city bus service for Annandale, again in the inner west. Quite a few constituents there have suggested that a service that operates between Johnston Street and the CBD via the Anzac Bridge would make a significant improvement in their lack of general access to transport. In January last year the former Minister for Transport said that couldn't be achieved due to driver shortages. I understand it's a combination of both, but has the driver shortage in this instance been addressed, for example, to assist with a potential bus service for those people in Annandale?

HOWARD COLLINS: This time last year, certainly the Minister and I were fully aware of the state of the driver shortage, with over 550 drivers missing. We have worked pretty hard on that. It's not a game of whack-a-mole, but you think you've got something under control and then something else appears. Of course, we knew that there was a delay to the delivery of the electric fleet and the infrastructure that goes with it. But then, on top of that, we lose 83 vehicles. It changes from one particular resource constraint to another. But I genuinely believe, if we keep working on the bus recruitment—and we have been very successful on that—and we now focus on the return of the fleet and new vehicles, this time next year we'll be in a much stronger position. I do think it's time that buses actually got that attention.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Ms Webb, on notice, are you able to provide the Committee the advice that the Centre for Road Safety provided to the Government that informed the regulatory change that saw e-bikes go from 250 watts to 500 watts?

SALLY WEBB: Yes, I can take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Wing, I asked you some questions in the last budget estimates hearing about the review of the Act. You came back saying that's going to start on 1 August 2025 and then the report will be tabled on 1 August 2026 so, in reality, we're probably not going to see any action on this until probably the new Government comes in in 2027. What representations have you heard from the industry about the issues that they're having with the Act and the regulation as it stands?

ANTHONY WING: Obviously, Mr Banasiak, I can tell you about the representations I've received. The actual review will be run by Transport for NSW. I might as well ask them if they've received others. We've certainly had representations about the level—this is about the regulations themselves—of the authorisation fees in the regulations. They are—I don't know if you're across these—essentially annual fees paid by all authorised service providers, and they range depending on the size of the service provider. We've had some smaller service providers argue that the fees should be lower.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can I just go to that? Some of those smaller providers that are advocating for a lower bracket—because it goes in brackets, from my understanding, and zero to 20,000 trips is the lowest bracket—are actually tour bike operators who would probably never reach 20,000 trips in a year. Is that the case?

ANTHONY WING: Yes, that includes tour bike operators who would really be at the lower end of that of that bracket, as you say.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Did you pass on any of those concerns to the former transport Minister around how tour bike operators are feeling disadvantaged or unfairly pigeonholed into this Act?

ANTHONY WING: Yes, I met with one of them in Wollongong. We've also had correspondence with others and explained that the fees are set in the regulations, so I have no power to vary them. They would need to be varied by the Minister, generally, on the advice of Transport for NSW as the policy department. I said that I would take that up the line. What I did was I raised it with Transport for NSW. They briefed the former Minister's advisers. I understand, at the same time, that this provider's local member also wrote directly to the Minister raising the issue.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do we know how many of these tour bike operators have stopped paying their authorisation fee—so effectively gone out of business since they got put into this regulation?

ANTHONY WING: I know of one—and this is the one I was speaking to and met with—who has surrendered his authorisation. We don't really have a definition of tourist bike operators. I don't have any information on others, but I know of one, yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: So there's no way of identifying tour bike operators within these authorisations?

ANTHONY WING: No, they're not required to tell us that they're tour bike operators as opposed to anything else.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How would you do specific compliance on those people to make sure that they're adhering to the Act if you can't necessarily identify who and where they are?

ANTHONY WING: What I'm saying is that we can't just pull out of the data how many tour bike operators would have surrendered authorisation because of the fees. What we do is we audit people based on risk. We get reports from people, we do our own investigations and, when we go and audit them, we will look at are they complying with the law.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I've just been informed by some people in the industry that over 10 have ceased trading because of the fees and that it's not financially feasible, obviously, combined with what happened with COVID. I go to some other questions on notice. Mr Murray, I asked you about development of a strategic business case for the medium-term bus plan. How much of that \$24 million that was earmarked has been expended so far?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll ask my colleague Ms Mares to talk about the medium-term bus plan.

TRUDI MARES: We've drawn down \$10.6 million but we have only spent, I think, three-quarters of that to date. I'll just have to get the exact figure for you. If you'd like, I can take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes, that'd be great. I asked questions around the Centre for Maritime Safety and its funding allocation, which came back at \$5.5 million and a staff of 14.75. I'm wondering whether I could get a breakdown of how much of that \$5.5 million is attributed towards staffing.

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, we can take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Who is on the "Maritime Investment Committee"? That came back as an answer to a question on notice: a mention of a "Maritime Investment Committee". Who is on that committee?

SALLY WEBB: Mr Banasiak, do you mean the maritime investment committee? I'm not aware of that, but I'm aware of the Maritime Advisory Committee.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: The answer I got was:

The Waterways Fund has a separate governance committee, the Maritime Investment Committee. The Waterways Fund is subject to the normal Transport for NSW financial policies and Treasury approval processes.

So who is on this "Maritime Investment Committee"? More broadly, what's their experience in maritime infrastructure planning and delivery?

JOSH MURRAY: We'll take that on notice—just check that you've been given the right name of the committee there as well.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: If it's the wrong name, the second question still applies: What's their experience in actually delivering maritime infrastructure?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm sure we can come back to you quickly on that one.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Another answer you came back on was about the Eden Wave Attenuator. You said there was \$9.4 million paid from the Waterways Fund. Can you explain how that answer of \$9.4 million for a commuter wharf upgrade contradicts with the answer to question on notice No. 3127, where you state the following:

One hundred per cent of the fees have been reinvested directly back to recreational boating in NSW.

How does the commuter wharf upgrade benefit recreational boating?

JOSH MURRAY: I would have to qualify that just with the responses you've been provided, but obviously the expenditure from the fund is governed by its terms of reference. We just need to marry those up with the project that you're referring to.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How much has been expended so far from the demolition of the Manly Sea Life building? I think it was \$10.6 million.

JOSH MURRAY: I'll just ask Ms Drover to check that one.

CAMILLA DROVER: We may need to take that on notice, I think.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: No problems at all. Do we have a start date for the construction of the Darling Point Wharf, Ms Drover?

CAMILLA DROVER: I don't have it off the top of my head but, if you give me a minute, I'll see what I can bring back.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Sure. I'll leave that with you if you want to come back. Another question I asked was around the \$3.1 million for the Manning River entrance and you said that the council is responsible for that project. Have they actually applied for any funding for this project under the new Boating Infrastructure and Dredging Scheme?

JOSH MURRAY: I think we can take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes, and what their committal has been in terms of their contribution. Can I get an update on the vacancies in Maritime too, Mr Collins?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes, I can talk to that. Every week I go through a process for filling roles. We do have a handful of vacancies at the moment for boating safety officer and education officers. If you want the detail—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Just on notice, how many of these vacancies are currently being backfilled and how many are being advertised.

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes. It's an ongoing process. Our intention is always to ensure those frontline posts are filled.

The CHAIR: Thank you.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray, or perhaps Mr Regan, has advice been provided to Government concerning industrial relations implications of the Transport Administration Amendment (Sydney Metro Governance) Bill 2025?

JOSH MURRAY: I think you'd have to stipulate what you mean by that. We're obviously working through that at the moment. We have officers from—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Any industrial relations implications for that structure.

JOSH MURRAY: We are covering off all of the governance implications of the changes that have been progressed through that bill. I'm not aware of any specific industrial relations matters that are in the front line of those changes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Did you say you don't know of any?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm not aware of any specific industrial relations matters that are at the front line, as I would say, of that change. Obviously, we're working through structural reform to the governance side, but it's not specifically an IR consideration.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: All right. Mr Regan, are you aware of any?

PETER REGAN: That's my understanding as well.

JOSH MURRAY: I should say the employees will remain unaffected. The employees of Sydney Metro, the organisation, will be unaffected by the governance change, which would make it unlikely for IR issues.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So will the bill have no industrial relations implications to Sydney Metro operations moving forward?

JOSH MURRAY: Not that we envisage.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You're not aware of any and advice hasn't been sought or provided on that?

JOSH MURRAY: No.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Regan, do you support those changes?

PETER REGAN: Those changes are a matter for the Government.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Metro West—what's the current forecast date for the line-wide contract to be awarded?

PETER REGAN: The Linewide contract, which is the power and rail systems contract, is in its request-for-tender phase at the moment. The bids for that contract are due in the next month. And we don't have an exact date yet for the award, but I expect it will be around the third quarter of this year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What is the current forecast date the trains, systems, maintenance and operations contract will be awarded?

PETER REGAN: That contract, which covers the trains, systems, operations and maintenance for Metro West—the tenders have been received. They were received just prior to Christmas. They're currently being assessed, at the moment, again with an expectation of award around about the same time as the Linewide contract. Those contracts are quite interlinked in their work, so again I'm expecting around Q3 this year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Will those carriages be built overseas?

PETER REGAN: We haven't selected a preferred bidder at this stage and that's obviously a decision for Government. There are different tenderers who have offered different solutions for those trains.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are any of those solutions offered involving overseas—

PETER REGAN: Yes. There is no current manufacturing capability for automated trains in Australia.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So none of those would be wholly Australian.

PETER REGAN: That's right.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are there local content rules for the procurement of the carriages?

PETER REGAN: We have significant local content policies across Metro West, and obviously some significant components of Metro West can only be delivered locally, particularly the construction, the trades and the like. The procurement for key items—we do take into account the local employment and local content plans that those bidders can provide. But in the case of the rolling stock, it is highly specialised. They do come as a set off production lines globally; they don't come in components.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: A train set, so to speak; you have to take it all or nothing?

PETER REGAN: That's right. Just to clarify that a little bit further, it is also the integrated nature of the train itself with the signalling system, so they are part of the same system and hence the way they're packaged together, the trains and signals. That's the system. It's quite a different technological solution.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is the capex for the new contracts already in the Government's pipeline?

PETER REGAN: Yes, it is.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That is already budgeted in the four years in full?

PETER REGAN: It's definitely within the Metro West budget. I think some of the expenditure would extend beyond the four years, but it's within the existing budget for the project, correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you. Can I ask about the Mariyung fleet? How many Mariyung carriages are currently operational, as of today?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll ask Mr Longland to talk to that.

MATT LONGLAND: Thanks, Mr Murray. We've currently got five trains in service each day on the Central Coast and Newcastle line. They're operating 17 services per day. My advice is we've got two additional trains coming into service later in March. We are progressively rolling those trains out, at the moment only on the Central Coast and Newcastle.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How many carriages is that?

MATT LONGLAND: The trains come in—you can do a combination of four carriages, six, eight or ten, based on how you couple the trains together. At the moment we're operating eight-car consists, so two four-car units coupled together.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Two times four-car units by five.

MATT LONGLAND: Correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So how many carriages? Plus two more that are coming.

MATT LONGLAND: Currently there are five eight-car sets, so 40 carriages are in service.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And the two that are coming will be how many carriages?

MATT LONGLAND: They will be eight-carriage trains as well, is my understanding.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Eight-car carriages, two by fours, so the total number of carriages. Thank you. How many are forecast to be available by the end of the year? So those four plus the additional two—sorry, the five plus two?

MATT LONGLAND: It's a progressive rollout. We're obviously working through. There are three key areas around the implementation. The first one is the actual train modification in terms of the new operating model.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sure. I just need a number: How many will be operational by the end of the year?

MATT LONGLAND: By the end of this financial year?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes.

MATT LONGLAND: I'd probably need to take that on notice, if that's okay?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Okay, and also by the end of the calendar year.

MATT LONGLAND: So end of the financial year and the calendar year?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, please. How many are forecast to be available—just the number.

MATT LONGLAND: The number of carriages? I'll give you the number of trains and then we can multiply it by carriages.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, that would be great. Thank you.

MATT LONGLAND: Okay, end of financial year and end of calendar year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you very much, Mr Longland. Is the fleet currently providing an all-stations service on the Newcastle line?

MATT LONGLAND: Yes, it is. The fourth and fifth trains came into service about two weeks ago and they're now stopping on an all-stops pattern. The next two that go in in late March will move also to a weekend pattern. We'll be starting to spread the service out through the week.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Terrific. When is the fleet forecast, as of today, to service the South Coast line?

MATT LONGLAND: South Coast will be calendar year 2026. The rollout pattern is—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just the date.

MATT LONGLAND: I don't have a date. Ms Drover and I are working together on the rollout. I'm certainly not aware of a specific date. The phasing is Central Coast-Newcastle, which we're on at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sorry, just South Coast. So when is South Coast forecast to come on?

MATT LONGLAND: The calendar year will be 2026. I haven't got a month.

CAMILLA DROVER: The deployment plan is the Central Coast, Newcastle, then the Blue Mountains and then the South Coast, so we'll get the Blue Mountains in and then the South Coast will follow that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When will that rollout be complete for all carriages in service for the South Coast line?

CAMILLA DROVER: I don't have a definitive month for you or date. We're just focused on getting Newcastle in and, as I said, then the Blue Mountains and then the South Coast is the last deployment, which was always the case.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And what about the rollout of all of the Mariyung fleet, all of the carriages for the whole fleet? When will that be complete?

MATT LONGLAND: In terms of the phasing, as my colleague Ms Drover highlighted, it's Central Coast, Newcastle, followed by Blue Mountains, followed by South Coast.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, I've heard that. Just the whole lot—when's it due?

MATT LONGLAND: We'd have to take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: If you could. So that is all the trains and carriages in service, what the taxpayer has paid for and ordered. When will all of that be online?

MATT LONGLAND: All 62 trains in service?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes, please. Is that forecast to be first quarter, second quarter 2026 or complete by end of 2026?

MATT LONGLAND: I think we'd probably need to provide that detail on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And your expectation for all carriages in that order, is that—do we have a year for that? 2027? 2028? 2030?

MATT LONGLAND: It will certainly be a lot sooner than then. As I said, 2024, in December we started the rollout on the Newcastle, Central Coast. Late 2025 will be focused on the Blue Mountains, 2026 on the South Coast. Now, in terms of the duration of the rollout, we need to take our time to ensure that we can line up the training, the accreditation, the infrastructure—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just looking for the final number when it's all online.

MATT LONGLAND: That does take time.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Okay, thank you. What's the total cost for the modifications?

MATT LONGLAND: The total cost is within the envelope that was identified in the State budget. In terms of the project delivery, my understanding is that the next four years in the current budget, \$973.8 million. We're confident that we will be within that budget.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So total cost across the four years for the modifications—\$973 million?

CAMILLA DROVER: I can clarify. The budget was reset, as you may be aware, in late 2023. We're still working within that reset budget. The program is still within the current funding envelope and those modifications are part of that funding envelope.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The Tangara fleet—where is the business case for the Tangara fleet up to?

MATT LONGLAND: The Tangara has obviously two elements. The first is the life extension of the current fleet. We've got 55 eight-car Tangara trains that we operate primarily on the T4 line. So sector one—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just the business case, Mr Longland, if I may. Where's that up to?

JOSH MURRAY: I might just clarify if you mean the Tangara life extension, which Mr Longland has just started on, or the future fleet, which is the replacement for the Tangara?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Let's do both.

MATT LONGLAND: Excellent. I'll finish on the life extension and I'll ask the secretary to talk to the new fleet.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Actually, let's just do the new fleet. Let's not worry about the extension. Just do the new fleet. I know what you're doing.

MATT LONGLAND: It's a very exciting project.

JOSH MURRAY: I'll ask Ms Drover to talk to the future fleet.

CAMILLA DROVER: You may be aware that in July last year we launched the Trains for NSW document, which was a 30-year vision for the replacement of all the fleets in New South Wales. The first business case we're working on is the replacement of the Tangara fleet. We're in the strategic business case phase of that. So that's where that status is at.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So you're in strategic business case and the new fleet final business case is?

CAMILLA DROVER: That will be commencing this year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: First half, second half?

CAMILLA DROVER: It's about the middle of this year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Given we're in March—

CAMILLA DROVER: It's commencing shortly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So will that be available for an investment decision by 2027?

CAMILLA DROVER: That's our intent.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: My understanding is the Government is planning to design a brand-new train using internal resources. Is that correct?

CAMILLA DROVER: I wouldn't quite categorise it as that. What we are looking to do is standardise the design so that every time we need to replace a particular fleet—and noting we've got multiple fleets across New South Wales—that we're not redesigning all the components every single time. We'd like to come up with a standard design which reflects a standard operating model and provides some consistency so that we can get some economies of scale out of the manufacturing process, but also so we provide a consistency to our staff and workforce et cetera. So that's our intent.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That would be a unique design though, wouldn't it, rather than an off-the-shelf design?

CAMILLA DROVER: Some of the components would be, or specific to New South Wales, for example. The suburban fleet, as Mr Longland of course knows, is a double-decker suburban fleet, which is somewhat bespoke to New South Wales. So there would be some elements which are particular to New South Wales and reflect our existing infrastructure. There'd be other items which would be standardised, and there would also be a reflection that, with time, technology does change. But we're talking about more of a standard design as it relates to the customer-facing components of the train, and also the workforce-facing components of the train.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Speaking of the workforce, then, is the union involved in the design?

CAMILLA DROVER: The union has been widely consulted on the approach. We're not actually at the design phase at the moment, given we're only in the strategic business case phase. There will be engagement with the unions and the workforce, but we're not at the design stage per se at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But the union's involved in ensuring the standardised design?

CAMILLA DROVER: I characterise it more as involvement of the workforce, when we get to that stage. As would be normal for any train design, manufacture, procurement process.

JOSH MURRAY: I would say, just to add to that, when this process kicked off the unions were invited, along with the national rail advocate, to participate in the original market sounding. And then Ms Drover's event last year, which showcased the future trains market release, the unions were certainly at that event—not just the train crewing unions, but the manufacturing unions, obviously.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How does liability work for a construction partner of a train that they haven't designed?

CAMILLA DROVER: That's very much some of the issues that we're looking at at the moment, and will be considered as part of the business case: the approach to the design, but also the way the program is packaged up and procured and what is procured. That's the work we're doing at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So who would take the liability responsibility, then, to ensure that that standardised design or new design—or whatever you want to call it—is functional, considering it hasn't been used before, it's not off the shelf?

CAMILLA DROVER: As I said, there'll be different facets of the design. And just to reiterate, it's more the customer-facing aspects of the design, and also parts of the design that impact workforce, particularly operating model. But say, for example, the traction on the train, the traction braking, that could be a system that the supplier would design and deliver. So I think we're just working through that detail at the moment. What makes sense. And what elements can be standardised and then built on a consistent basis, and which ones will not be.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is that being designed to have a guard outside the driver?

CAMILLA DROVER: We are assuming that the current operating model used in Sydney Trains will be the basis of the Tangara fleet, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's a yes?

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And the liability question—am I correct in understanding that could be different liability for different components?

CAMILLA DROVER: Exactly.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is that normal?

MATT LONGLAND: I'm happy to maybe add a couple of points.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm just struggling with it, because ordinarily you'd buy a train off the shelf and liability would follow. If you have component parts, it seems like it's different.

JOSH MURRAY: As opposed to metro, New South Wales for Sydney Trains has never bought a train we would describe as "off the shelf". You certainly buy a manufacturer's base, but no train for Sydney Trains, in its history, has been regarded as off the shelf.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But it's been a very long time since Sydney Trains has designed its own design for a train, so that is unique in a sense. It's been many years since that has been the case.

MATT LONGLAND: Certainly, I think the intention is to develop a functional specification about the way the train will operate, customer features, ensuring that we get a level of modular operation between operating the train on multiple parts of the network. The actual construction and manufacture of the train clearly would be the accountability of the train manufacturer. And we have history in New South Wales, both in the Hunter and also in Western Sydney, a depth of understanding and design and manufacture of trains.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: A long time ago, Mr Longland, not recently. It's been a very long time since we've designed a train in New South Wales. So, in your words, are we designing a new base?

CAMILLA DROVER: Just to reinforce what Mr Longland said, I don't think we're doing detailed design of the train. But, as Mr Longland said, some of the design parameters et cetera we will be specifying.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In your words, are we designing a new base?

JOSH MURRAY: We will have specifications, which we are going through, that setting stage, which we will give to this process. That is the same as previous procurements. We develop specifications. We give base standards, such as the operating model—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Which previous procurements?

JOSH MURRAY: —and then that is put to manufacturers to come up with proposals that meet that desire. And, usually, they operate from fleets that they may have already put into play.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But we haven't done it this way before where we have specified and put the design together, whether we're intimately designing it or specifying component parts. That hasn't been done before.

CAMILLA DROVER: If I can give you an example. For example, on the Mariyung fleet, an awful lot of work was done on human factors and particularly the accessibility requirements or outcomes of that train. We would like to not redo some of that work, but pick up some of that very good work and apply it to the next fleet. That's the sort of consideration that we're doing. If it's working well on a new fleet, then why not re-use it and leverage that, as opposed to starting again or waiting for a manufacturer to come up with their own considerations in that area, for example.

JOSH MURRAY: I think the other unique point is that, over 30 years of train procurement, they've either been not procured or procured at once, across successive terms. What we are trying to do here with the long-term look at the plan is to ensure that these procurements can roll from one to the next, and that has precluded the ability to have that level of buy-in.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just quickly on buses in the last question. Is the Brookvale Bus Depot expected to be completed by the middle of this year?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes, electrification of the bus depot.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: On track?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Good afternoon to all of you. As you have probably clocked onto by now, I come to Transport estimates every session to ask about accessibility of the transport network. I asked some questions on notice and got some answers in relation to how many train stations are currently independently accessible across New South Wales. I was told that only 253 out of 353 train stations are independently accessible, which means there are still 100 stations that people with disability can't use independently. Given that the original deadline for all States and Territories to make all train stations accessible was 2022, I think, how are we this far behind?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll ask Ms Drover to talk to the specifics of the program. We have received significant budget funding over the last two years, so we are going through a rollout of new stations, including the design phase of the next round of accessible stations, and we have a number of delivery partners who are rolling from one to the next to speed up the process. But, Ms Drover, I'll ask you to give any detail.

CAMILLA DROVER: I absolutely accept that we haven't met the target that was set some years ago. I think we're in the same situation as many other jurisdictions across Australia, but we have certainly committed all the funding that we've been allocated to date and are expeditiously getting on with those station upgrades, but also ferry wharf upgrades. You'll note in the last month we have also opened two new ferry wharf upgrades for accessibility. Definitely with any new infrastructure being delivered, like the metro program, it's all accessible stations. There are some challenges with legacy infrastructure, particularly stations that are over 100 years old, but, as per our website, there is a criteria for how we prioritise the stations. It's based on demographics and acceptability needs et cetera, so we do prioritise based on that, and we're getting through them as quickly as we can, based on the available funding. We'll be approaching Government with the next round.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I can't remember which station it was. Was it Strathfield the recent one that had the issues with the accessible toilets? In any event, we know that when there is an issue even with just one of the lifts at one of these stations, we're getting signs being put up by Transport saying, "If you've got an accessibility need, go an extra station. Go over to the other platform, then come back to this station. You can get up on this platform." It's quite a ridiculously extra amount of effort that people are having to go through just to get around. I appreciate what you're saying, that that these are legacy and that the new ones are accessible, but that's why there was this program.

One of the other questions I asked in that set of questions on notice was how many will be independently accessible by 2027 under the current funding, under the Safe Accessible Transport program. I was told that by the end of that program we'd still have 94 stations that won't be independently accessible. I then asked a further question, which was the estimated timeline for when we would have fully accessible for all of the 353 stations across the network. I was told that Transport couldn't tell me the answer. Given that we've only got six new ones that will be fully accessible within three years and we have another 94 to go, my calculations are it will take us another 47 years to get full access. We're looking at almost half a century before people with disability and mobility needs can move around our twenty-first century network. Again, how can this be, and what are you doing to make this faster?

CAMILLA DROVER: I can talk to that. We obviously hope it's not that long, and it will be a function of funding. But I can share with you all the projects where we're doing development at the moment, including those where we've got target engagement underway, where we're got construction underway, where delivery contracts have been awarded and where we're actually in delivery. I could take you through those or I could provide that on notice.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: I'd be really grateful to get that on notice.

CAMILLA DROVER: There is quite a lot of information, but I can assure you we have many, many projects against each of those categories, so we've got a rolling program of development, engagement to understand community need, procurement, delivery et cetera.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: If I could turn to the point to point commissioner—I think you know what I'm going to ask about as well. Apologies—I don't know if it's been raised at all so far today, but this taxi rideshare disability discrimination news story. I have previously been in these estimates asking about what the commission is doing in relation to the numbers of people who are being abused by taxi and rideshare drivers purely because they've got a disability, like not being allowed to get in, being turned away with their assistance animals and all of that sort of thing. I wasn't surprised, but I was still horrified when I saw the recent media coverage. Can you talk us through what you are doing to ensure that people with disability become a priority for protection under this Government?

ANTHONY WING: Like you, I saw the pictures coming out of Victoria of the Victorian wheelchair taxi driver really abusing the customer, which was horrifying. Yes, we want to not have that happen here and if it does happen here, we want to take action against it. We do actually prosecute and ban from the industry wheelchair taxi drivers who breach their safety duties, and so we have done a number of those. We had one upheld just last week by the District Court, which was good to see. So we will take action and ban drivers who do the worst things, but we know that not all customers or passengers feel comfortable in reporting things, so very recently we've started doing covert operations in wheelchair taxis based on the successful covert operations we were doing last year with Guide Dogs NSW. We ran the first of those recently. The good news out of that is we didn't see any severe safety breaches. The bad news is we still had to fine two drivers for starting the meter before the passenger was loaded in.

We'll continue to do those because I think they're an important backup to following up on reports and complaints et cetera. The Government announced this just before Christmas, but we're also developing training as well so that we've got consistent statewide training for wheelchair drivers. One of the things we got feedback on consistently across the State last year when we did the round tables was that, yes, there was safety training out there, but people were reporting quite inconsistent customer service, depending who they caught it with and who they went with. So that also is being developed, and we'll make sure that is rolled out across the State so that everyone has that training. Training's good and it needs to be backed up by enforcement, as you would undoubtedly agree.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: Yes. Can I ask—because one of the reasons that they caught that Victorian example was because they were looking at it for fraud purposes. Obviously a lot of people with disability are non-verbal. They're not able to actually talk about their experiences. Has there been any thoughts about randomly looking at CCTV coverage in New South Wales to see if any of this is happening? These people can't speak for themselves, so it's particularly ripe for exploitation.

ANTHONY WING: We did look at that. I suppose we can really only pull down CCTV footage when there's a reason to do it. We have to have a complaint or a report or suspicion; otherwise, there are workplace surveillance laws et cetera. But that's exactly why we've started doing covert operations. If we can't pull down the CCTV footage and if some people can't report it, that's where we need to go and work with volunteers to get these drivers—any drivers who do this kind of behaviour.

Ms ABIGAIL BOYD: A number of people have expressed to me that they're quite frustrated because they have been talking about the discrimination that people with disability have faced in this industry for some time, and they feel that action has only been taken now because they've also uncovered this fraud component where people are being overcharged. Suddenly it's not just about people with disability, so we are giving it a bit of attention. Do you have enough resources from the Government to actually properly target the experience of people with disability and ensure their safety?

ANTHONY WING: We're simply just prioritising it. We've also been spending—and you've asked me about this before. We've also been targeting those rideshare and taxi drivers who refuse guide dogs and other assistance animals. The fine went up for that to \$1,000 last year. We've issued 15 fines in the last year to rideshare and taxi drivers for that. But we also, as I said, are doing covert operations as well, where we just get in or we work with volunteers from Guide Dogs NSW.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'll go to some questions from your annual report from last year. In the section on safer waterways, it mentions a maritime behaviour change campaign. How much did that campaign cost and where was that money drawn from?

HOWARD COLLINS: I'm aware of the campaign. I'll take that on notice in terms of the costs.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can you also take on notice as to where it was drawn down from—whether it was drawn down from the Waterways Fund?

HOWARD COLLINS: I'd imagine it would have come out of the Waterways Fund. In general, education—as you know, the Waterways Fund consists of a whole load of expenditure, of which one is boating education.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: That section also talks about receiving some new purpose-built incident response vessels. Are we still using Yamba mechanical engineering to build our maritime vessels?

HOWARD COLLINS: On the section regarding—we have actually deployed those vessels up in the north of the State in the last few days. Regarding Yamba, that marine company, I'll take it on notice and let you know.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: No problems at all. In the financial overview section, you talk about \$16.2 billion being spent on a significant capital works program. How much of that \$16.2 billion in capital works was spent on recreational boating facilities and infrastructure? I'm happy for you to take that on notice.

HOWARD COLLINS: That was last year's report, so it's last year's funding as opposed to this year. I'll take that on notice and give you—just to confirm, the investment committee you talked about, Mr Banasiak, to answer that question, is chaired by Mark Hutchings. It has some very good, very experienced people in the MIDO team, and does bring in, also, engineers to understand that. That's that particular team, and I'm happy to give you more detail.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Any other details you can provide about that team, on notice, would be great. Can I just go to the number and remuneration of senior executives. How many staff within Maritime are paid under the Transport senior service levels of one, two and three?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think currently it might be eight or seven. I'll just double-check that.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'm happy for you to take it on notice, and where their salaries are drawn from—whether they're drawn down from the Waterways Fund as well?

HOWARD COLLINS: I will again take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Still on employee remuneration, outside of the senior service level. There's a table 21 in that annual report. How many employees, in each of the annual salary brackets, work within the Maritime section of Transport for NSW, and where are their salaries drawn from?

HOWARD COLLINS: Just as a general point—I think it is important and might help you—certainly all of New South Wales waterways management, marine pollution control response, the safety campaigns, the boating officers, the education, aquatic events, insurance assurances, investigation of maritime incidents, they're all drawn from the fund. Really, the operation of Maritime is not just on recreational boaters; it is also about the Maritime roles where that fund provides that hypothecated situation.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Going to the section of the report about overseas travel, there was a Maritime Infrastructure Delivery Office officer who went on an overseas trip to New Zealand for a public administration program. Can you advise us what the total cost of that overseas travel was?

HOWARD COLLINS: All those items are disclosed and published. I know this individual was part of a government-wide program for senior service individuals.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I couldn't see the individual cost within the annual report.

HOWARD COLLINS: It's actually published separately, I understand. We'll certainly make that available to you. I don't know whether it has been recently published.

JOSH MURRAY: I've certainly seen a post-trip report that should have gone on the website. If not, we'll make sure that's conveyed through to you.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Excellent—and whether any alternative professional learning opportunities were considered before approving that expenditure?

HOWARD COLLINS: There were a number of other government officials from all sorts of departments on that particular course, I understand.

JOSH MURRAY: Mr Banasiak, I do have, through Ms Drover, responses on Darling Point, Manly Sea Life and Bridge Road, if we cast our mind back. Would you like those now?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can we do Darling Point and Sea Life now, and then I'll come back to Bridge Road when I finish with Maritime.

CAMILLA DROVER: The demolition of the Manly Sea Life, which is now Manly Cove West, given it's gone—\$4.2 million was the delivery cost, which included the demolition.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: And Darling Point?

CAMILLA DROVER: We have finished the detailed design for that project, and we're waiting for the delivery funding for that. Similarly, Manly Wharf 3—the detailed design for that project is also complete.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Sticking with the annual report, does the consolidated revenue for 2024 for boat licences and registrations account for the full impact of the fee increase that we saw last year, or will we see that full impact in 2025?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think the annual report covers up until this last financial year. The fees were changed at the beginning of this financial year, so they'll be in—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: So we'll see the full impact—

HOWARD COLLINS: The full impact in next year's annual report.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I am going to press a little bit on this marine infrastructure plan. I put to you, Ms Webb, at the end of the session, as to why wouldn't we have started the process of redoing this plan while the existing 2019-2024 plan was still in effect. Why did we wait until the plan lapsed before we started

doing any work on the new plan? It would seem that you'd want to start that process early so it would be a seamless transition, which it hasn't been.

SALLY WEBB: I accept that, but what I would say is that there has been considerable additional work that has been undertaken by the team. In particular, there has been the dredging work that's been undertaken, the boating infrastructure and emergency repair pool, community grants programs et cetera that have been worked up. There has been a lot of focus on that and priority to some of those. We don't believe that the delays in the review of the Maritime Infrastructure Plan have had a significant impact on our investment in boating infrastructure. And the work that's being undertaken now—we are looking to consult with the Maritime Advisory Council before that, as a next step.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: The advice that recreational boaters are actually receiving from Government, including the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, Marjorie O'Neill, is that the Maritime Infrastructure Plan should really be driving all that other stuff that you mentioned, not the other way around. I appreciate you've done some extra work in that space, but the advice I'm seeing in front of me is that it's really the Maritime Infrastructure Plan that should be driving all those other smaller components, like the Maritime Safety Plan, like the Disability Inclusion Plan, like the South Coast Boating Network Plan and the other 101 plans that you've got on your website.

SALLY WEBB: I note we have an existing plan. We look at the range of initiatives to support Maritime that occur out of that, and certain of those have been worked on over the past couple of years. We acknowledge that there is also work going on to refresh the Maritime Infrastructure Plan, and the timing of those has meant that the others have come out ahead of the next refresh of the Maritime Infrastructure Plan.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: With the new funding scheme, can you tell me how many applications have been received for that scheme? Anyone—not necessarily you, Ms Webb, if you don't hold that information?

SALLY WEBB: We might want to clarify just which scheme, as well.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'm talking about the one that was announced by the Minister at the boat show—the Boating Infrastructure and Dredging Scheme.

HOWARD COLLINS: The BIDS, yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How many applications?

HOWARD COLLINS: The 18 and the something million—yes, \$44 million in total, with \$28 million towards public boating amenities over four years and \$16 million for dredging.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes. A lot of that dredging money had already been allocated, though, to pre-existing projects.

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes. I will take on notice if we've had applications. I know that there has been a lot of consultation in that area. While we're talking about dredging, Evans Head—Mr Banasiak, I'm sure the ED for Maritime will contact you regarding the opportunities we could do to accelerate that work, if possible.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Excellent. Thank you for that.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Mr Murray, could I touch back on the delays to the south-west metro, if that would be possible? In terms of the cost of the delays—I think it was touched on earlier—can we explore that a bit more?

JOSH MURRAY: Ms Merton, we will try and assist you, between myself and Mr Regan. Obviously, we are going through a process at the moment, as I think was referred to, about the sequencing of that work, so not all costs will be immediately apparent to us. This is something we're now working through, both to look at opportunities but also if there will be flow-on impacts in that community that we need to take into account.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: In an event like this—and I'm sure we've had experiences like this before—some of the costs would include what?

JOSH MURRAY: Some of the elements we've called out—and I'll come to Peter. But, most particularly, what we're talking about is the sequencing of the capital works, which has to occur during set times on the network, and ensuring that our delivery partners can be deployed for enough time at those particular junctures and that that can be properly scheduled out with them. Mr Regan?

PETER REGAN: Thanks, Mr Secretary. I guess you could break the potential cost impacts into a number of broad categories, the first one being prolongation—just extending the time expended by all parties doing the work. That's the cost on the government side of managing the works and the cost of the contractors who

are on standby or who have been ready to do works but haven't been able to get on and do works. There's a broad package of prolongation. To the extent that the project delay extends beyond the original time frames, there's also prolongation of the replacement bus costs, which were put in place for a particular period of time. Certainly, the commitment has been made by the Government that the replacement bus service will remain until the line opens fully as a metro. So there is an increased cost there.

I think probably the most challenging aspect of this, as the secretary alluded to, is that, where access to the line has been unable to be achieved as planned, that access has had to be replanned, and it's not a matter of simply going in the next day or the next weekend. There's a long lead-in and a long sequence of works to match up potential impacts on the adjoining rail network—Sydney Trains and the ARTC freight network—with other planned works and with other essential maintenance, and to ensure that the disruptions that were needed to finish the disconnection between the previous Bankstown line, a part of the Sydney Trains network, to allow it to be converted to the metro. Those works have had to be done when Sydney Trains lines and the adjoining freight lines are shut, for safety reasons. There is quite a long lead time to reinstate those time frames, and it's potentially longer than the time by which the actual impact itself was in place.

At the moment we're working all of that through. In each case, we've got six or seven key contracts with private sector delivery partners that have all been impacted, so we are working through the process of discussing with them the costs that they have incurred and the costs that they will incur. We are looking for opportunities to resequence works to try and mitigate some of the time that has been impacted, but there are certain aspects that, at this stage, we're not in a position to be able to compress. In particular, we haven't been able to commence the testing of the trains because we haven't been able to power on the system. We expect we'll be able to do that shortly, and that will then give us a good sense as to how much time needs to be provided for to reset the program through to opening. We won't really know that until we're into testing but, certainly, something we won't do at this point is compress the testing program. It's absolutely essential that we run through and get a really good sense of how well the system is working before looking at any opportunities in that regard.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Mr Regan, if you could just remind us—and I think we touched on it this morning—what actually is the length of the delay envisaged on this, in terms of the cost?

PETER REGAN: There's been a number of different impacts. If you look clearly and just specifically at where delays have been impacted by different types of industrial action, where works weren't able to be completed, it's about 135 days of delay. Now we are looking at how to reprogram and reschedule. But, as a starting point, it's likely to be at least day for day.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Sorry, I didn't hear that.

PETER REGAN: At least day for day for the 135 days of impact. We don't have a final date yet. We need to work that through once we get closer into the testing and continue that work with Transport and Sydney Trains. As the Minister indicated, the intent is to open as soon as we can in 2026, but we're still working that through.

The CHAIR: Which line was that for, Mr Regan?

PETER REGAN: That's the Southwest Metro—the Bankstown line conversion.

The CHAIR: In relation to the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport, are elevated walkways being factored into the designs? That is, of course, for the access and egress for rescue efforts in incidents. Is that being factored into the design of the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport?

PETER REGAN: Yes, it is.

The CHAIR: What is the design exactly in terms of—I understand there are different elevations that are being discussed. Fire and Rescue might have a different view to Sydney Metro. Are those things aligning, if you like?

PETER REGAN: Yes, they are. We're working to install the high-level walkway. There were walkways at three different levels that were being discussed. I think it's fair to say that there were pros and cons of each, depending on what lens was being looked at. But we have agreed we will go with the high-level walkway, which is most consistent with what has been implemented in the tunnel sections of the existing underground metro lines. That's the basis of the design being progressed.

The CHAIR: And they've been factored into the existing design? They've been tendered for in terms of construction now?

PETER REGAN: The tunnels are built that they would go in. But those tunnels have now been handed over to the railway systems contractors. It's the railway systems contractors who put in the track, the overhead

power and the signalling systems. They will also be installing the walkways. It's being integrated into that installation through the tunnels of the railway system itself. And that's fully underway. The design is highly advanced for that now.

The CHAIR: So no delays, you're saying here, in terms of that walkway and discussions with the union?

PETER REGAN: To be clear, it has added time to the program, and that is part of the delay that we were talking about earlier today. We are still working through the full extent of the range of impacts on that project, and that is one of them, along with the industrial action from multiple parties and along with other procurement issues. That's a little bit more flavour for you on the number of different things that have been worked through. They are now all part of a single discussion with the delivery consortium to try to reset the program to a single end date, and an incentivised target date.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Collins, just continuing with the conversation about the boating infrastructure and dredging scheme, I asked, on notice, how many applications have been received.

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: How many of those applications committed to co-funding, in terms of the contribution from the proponent? I'm happy for you to take this on notice. How many applications were outside of Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong? What was the total dollar figure requested by all the applications? How many were for dredging? How many were for the actual infrastructure? How many might have been for maintenance? Also, could you dissect the dollar figure for those three components?

HOWARD COLLINS: As you probably know, Mr Banasiak, this is an ongoing scheme. People can apply. It doesn't mean to say there's a cut-off and everyone has to get their applications in.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: As of today?

HOWARD COLLINS: As of today, let's give you a full extent of what we have in the process with those geographic locations and co-funding—I think I picked that up. We'll do that. But there is obviously a great opportunity for all components of the industry to continue to look at both those schemes in terms of the infrastructure and any advice and guidance on dredging as well. We would welcome that over this period of time. The scheme is open. It opened in August 2024, so it's relatively early in its process.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Regan, just picking up on some of the answers you gave to my questions about the metro and the emergency incidents, can you just confirm that the interim fix that you spoke about—I've been informed that it was based on a 12-month service level agreement, which is about to run out. Have you costed a permanent solution as part of this?

PETER REGAN: Yes. To build on my answer earlier today, we are in discussions on a number of options. Those discussions include discussions with Sydney Trains, Metro Trains Sydney and Fire and Rescue NSW. The original agreement also included an option to extend the agreement so it doesn't just drop dead. We'll utilise that as necessary. Certainly I'm confident that we'll reach a good long-term agreement.

The CHAIR: It's afternoon tea time. We'll have a break until 3.45 p.m.

(Short adjournment)

The CHAIR: Welcome back to our final session this afternoon. We'll kick off with questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can anyone help with Opal cards? Mr Murray, having utilised the one- or two-year contract extension for the provision of Opal services, what's the current drop dead rate? When does the contract finish?

JOSH MURRAY: We are currently assessing the tender responses for the main RFP. That process is underway at the moment, and we will be reporting back to Government shortly on the progress of that tender.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But on the current extension, what's the finish date for that one? Parking the tenders for the new—

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, that is the end of 2026 for the first two-year extension option.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The exact date for that without further extension is December?

JOSH MURRAY: I believe it's December 2026 for the first Cubic two-year extension.

BRENDA HOANG: September 2026.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Will you be using the second extension?

JOSH MURRAY: We believe we will use some of the second extension, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: For how long?

JOSH MURRAY: That is not determined. We have another two years available to us. We have begun the process of identifying that we would exercise some of that contract extension, timing TBC.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You won't be trying the new Opal software three months before the election?

JOSH MURRAY: Again, we have a tender that is currently being assessed that will help us look at those time frames and ensure that we have the right certainty for the rollout of the system.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But that new Opal software wouldn't be in place and being used three months before the election. That's right, isn't it?

JOSH MURRAY: Given the current extension will go—

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's not a blame game; it's just a timing question.

JOSH MURRAY: I'm just thinking about where our timing is, rather than election. The extension that we have is September 2026, as we've just said. Yes, we would anticipate that we will go into that next contract extension. But I can't tell you at that point where we will be on the ramping up of the new provider, because that's currently being assessed. When I say "new provider", I mean the contract.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It wouldn't make sense, three months before an election, if in March you extended even until December or January and then were rolling out a new system almost in what you call pre-caretaker—I don't subscribe to it—or in caretaker or the months before March 2027.

JOSH MURRAY: All I would say is that that's not part of the steering committee's deliberations. We're looking at the contract availability that we have under the current Opal system and then Opal Next Gen. The tender has not come up to the steering committee for consideration yet. It's being assessed. That will give us the availability of when we think new systems would start to come online.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Even if the tender was put out there and was awarded, that couldn't be in place before March 2027, could it?

JOSH MURRAY: We'll have to see what comes back in the coming months. We're assessing the tenders at the moment. That will give us the biggest clue to the rollout schedule of Opal Next Gen.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Clues are good. If the second extension is used, what would be the drop dead date for that?

JOSH MURRAY: Then it would take it to September 2028.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In terms of the procurement of those new Opal tenders, what's the status of those?

JOSH MURRAY: The main tender is in assessment at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The eTendering website says that for the RFI, the response from the department will be 31 March 2025. Is that still on track from the department?

JOSH MURRAY: We did extend some of the tender validity period because the bidders all asked us for additional information. We did that in collaboration with all of those that were participating. I would have to take on notice whether that date relates to our pre-extension date or whether that has been taken into account.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When will suppliers know of the next stage?

JOSH MURRAY: When we finish the tender evaluation, we would notify all players.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When would that be?

JOSH MURRAY: In the coming months.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm trying to understand the timeline because it's obviously a big issue for the public to know.

JOSH MURRAY: The contract respondents are all aware of the current process and timing, and have obviously submitted their applications. We're working through that. They're aware of the expected timeline for coming back to them.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm trying to understand how it's working. There's no trick in any of this. It's just the timing. The date for extension of the tender validity is for how long?

JOSH MURRAY: We added three months to the response time frame. That has now moved into evaluation.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's expected to take until when?

JOSH MURRAY: It'll be early in the second half of this year, I would anticipate. But I'm happy to take that on notice in terms of any guidance that we've given them.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Thank you. There's no trick in it. What's the budget for the upgrade.

JOSH MURRAY: Ms Hoang?

BRENDA HOANG: Currently at \$567 million.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: That's \$567 million?

BRENDA HOANG: It's \$567.9 million, to be exact.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We just found another \$900,000. That's good to know. How long would the new contract be for?

JOSH MURRAY: That will be part of the tender assessments.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But what is the proposal? Is it three, five or 10 years?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll take that on notice. It's longer than that, but I will take it on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You do know?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm just not sure of the exact number. I don't want to mislead you here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What progress has been made on the Opal Next Gen upgrade since the delays identified in the 2022 business case?

JOSH MURRAY: The program is continuing to a level that we're satisfied with. I think you're referring to some of those media reports which related to an original business case and some other—what we would say are outdated—documents. Certainly the current program and the budget that Ms Hoang has identified are all being met, with the proviso of that extension to the tender open period for the bidders.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is September 2027 still the targeted go live date or has there been further slippage on that?

JOSH MURRAY: I believe that would be still the anticipated date.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Do you want to check that or do you believe that is so?

BRENDA HOANG: If I could just add to what the secretary said, it will be very much dependent, again, on the evaluation of the tenders and what has come back in terms of what the tenderers have put in their tender around timeline.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So they have set their own go live date?

BRENDA HOANG: No, but they will set within the tender what can be done, and we have also asked for some innovation included in there. When the tender has been evaluated in terms of the content and dates, that's when we can definitively say when the go live date will likely be.

JOSH MURRAY: Without going into too much detail for the purposes of an open tender, delivery program and any early deployment as well as cost will all be factored into that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Of course. You'd definitely think so. In terms of that go live date, it would be a question of planning for that but also those tenderers and the public having an expectation about whether it's a year after or what the blow-out is.

JOSH MURRAY: They were the targets that were set within the tender response documentation. We'll be assessing as to how bidders come back to be able to meet the targets that they have been asked to look at.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What contingency plans are in place to ensure that the Opal card readers remain functional until that new system is fully deployed?

JOSH MURRAY: That's a significant consideration from the team. It does relate to the contract extensions with the current provider that you've just spoken about and their contract of service for delivering this current system. We work with them very closely on ensuring that we have good response rates to both day-to-day maintenance and the longer term availability of that technology.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is there a contingency plan in place to extend them?

JOSH MURRAY: The contingency plan is the contract extensions that we've just spoken about. That requires that provider to continue to provide that level of service, and we work with them very collaboratively on that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And the existing local readers will be in place until the new system?

JOSH MURRAY: Correct.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And they'll be fully functional?

JOSH MURRAY: Correct, that is part of the program.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What actions have been taken to address the projected \$154 million annual shortfall in fare revenue due to the reader shortages?

JOSH MURRAY: I'm not sure of the shortfall that you're referring to.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I haven't made it up; there's a projected shortfall in the fare revenue. What action has been taken to address it?

JOSH MURRAY: We do have, obviously, availability considerations on the technology. No technology is available 100 per cent of the time. The performance is constantly monitored in terms of the various formats of the Opal readers that are available and when they're online, but that is factored into our revenue projections. It's not something that is identified as an additional risk or impact. It is part of the availability of all readers.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have bus operators experienced increased operational issues due to Opal system failures?

JOSH MURRAY: About this time last year—and it was discussed at the time—we had connectivity issues with the rollover of the on-bus technology, which was also related to the move away from 3G. Modems that were on board on buses had to be reset. That is quite a sensitive technology, and some of the fixes that were put in place didn't work the first time around. I don't have it to hand—I'm happy to take it on notice—but we certainly monitor on a weekly basis the availability of on-bus readers. We are within our performance guidelines around those.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Has there been an increase in customer complaints related to the Opal system failures?

JOSH MURRAY: There was at the time. Certainly, within Transport, we've been very mindful of getting on buses and finding that readers don't work. My colleagues around me here all let each of us know when we've detected one of those buses. We let the team members know, who follow that up with the individual bus companies. I think it's fair to say that the on-bus Opal reader is the most sensitive of all of the technology that we have. That's one of the reasons why Opal Next Gen will look to a more robust technology. It is 20 years old now.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Murray, are you tapping off?

JOSH MURRAY: Always tapping off.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How is Transport addressing those concerns?

JOSH MURRAY: We did have a replacement program, working with the provider. They tested a number of technologies and also a different patch that ran the software for the on-bus modems. That has definitely settled down. There are still failures and we encourage people to report those. We work with the drivers but also the companies, but that has definitely stabilised in terms of the number of machines that are out on any given day. It's within about a 2 per cent tolerance.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I don't know what that means in terms of raw numbers.

JOSH MURRAY: Well, 98 per cent of them work, according to the figures that we receive, but we do monitor for any spikes or any losses of network.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Where are we up to with the DKD designs on the buses and the manufacturing—the contribution margin?

JOSH MURRAY: We're taking that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have you got that information this afternoon though? Are we able to step through that?

JOSH MURRAY: Unlikely to have that this afternoon. Obviously it's part of the contractual basis. We have got the team providing some information for you, but I don't anticipate we'll have that today.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But you can confirm that the contribution margin, and profit counting towards the contribution margin, is being used, right?

JOSH MURRAY: No, I can't confirm anything around the use or calculation of the margin. We are looking into that, to your specific questions, and we'll take it on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you explain to me, then, if profit counting is used at all towards the contribution margin?

JOSH MURRAY: No. Again, we'll have to look at that outside of this forum so that we can understand the calculations from the team, but I won't have that while we're here.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I don't need the detailed calculations, though; I just need to know if it's being used.

JOSH MURRAY: I don't have that information yet, Mrs Ward.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But you will provide that on notice?

JOSH MURRAY: Indeed.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How much of the supply chain of Transport for NSW procurement comes from organisations on the United States Department of Defense blacklist?

JOSH MURRAY: I would have to take that on notice. I'm aware of the reference to the blacklist amongst the Chinese battery supply companies. I'm aware of how that has been raised by US lawmakers, or certainly it was during the election campaign last year. I'm not aware of any other providers that have been named in relation to that that might have any connection to the Transport supply chain.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you take that on notice, including any companies that Transport is aware of?

JOSH MURRAY: I should make the point that the blacklist you're referring to relates to defence products.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Certainly, but I'm just interested in transport.

JOSH MURRAY: It would be unlikely to have any connection between us and defence products, but I'm happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And if you can take on notice that detail about what steps were taken to provide that answer, I'd like to know what steps you took to provide Parliament with that answer.

JOSH MURRAY: No problem. I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I want to ask about Parramatta Light Rail.

JOSH MURRAY: I might ask the coordinator general to discuss some of those elements.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Mr Collins, where are we up to on Parramatta Light Rail stage two? Is that fully funded?

HOWARD COLLINS: For stage two, I will exit left and hand over to my colleague Camilla Drover.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Ms Drover is the future; you're the existing—got it.

CAMILLA DROVER: You're aware that we've received both State and Federal planning approval for stage two?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes.

CAMILLA DROVER: We've awarded the contract for the enabling package for Parramatta Light Rail stage two. That was awarded. Construction is well underway, so that's the enabling bridge. We're working towards the final business case—updated business case—for the balance of Parramatta Light Rail stage two.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is stage two fully funded?

CAMILLA DROVER: The State has reserved funding for it: over \$2 billion. We are in discussions with the Federal Government about the balance of the funding, but no.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: As it presently stands, is it fully funded for stage two on the present funding?

CAMILLA DROVER: No.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I think the previous Minister confirmed that, so I just wanted to see if there was any update to that. Putting aside the Federal Government conversations, that's not, as it presently stands, fully funded for the whole of stage two.

CAMILLA DROVER: Not the balance of the project, no.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The enabling works package is not the major works. That's correct, isn't it?

CAMILLA DROVER: The enabling works is part of the full stage two project. It's 1.3 kilometres of a new light rail bridge across the Parramatta River. I believe it's the first crossing of the Parramatta River in about 30 years. That will provide a crossing for pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: The business case isn't complete. You're still waiting to do the final business case.

CAMILLA DROVER: It's an update to the final business case, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When will that be completed?

CAMILLA DROVER: We hope to do that this year.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So to complete the updated, final business case in 2025?

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Back to the funding, did you say that the New South Wales Government is seeking Federal funding to complete the project?

CAMILLA DROVER: The New South Wales Government has provisioned \$2.1 billion towards the balance of the project.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Sorry, did you say that you are presently—New South Wales is seeking funding from the Federal Government?

CAMILLA DROVER: There have been some discussions with the Federal Government about the balance of the funding.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You are presently having those? Sorry, I just couldn't hear you.

CAMILLA DROVER: There have been discussions with the Federal Government about contributions towards the balance of the project.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Have those discussions concluded?

CAMILLA DROVER: I don't believe they have concluded.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Is New South Wales seeking additional funding from the Feds, as we stand here today?

CAMILLA DROVER: I believe so. They have previously, yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What was the response previously?

CAMILLA DROVER: I'm not sure those discussions are concluded.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are there further discussions to get an outcome?

CAMILLA DROVER: I believe so. I believe those discussions are still in train.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What would be the balance that would be needed on a fifty-fifty basis?

CAMILLA DROVER: It would depend on the final business case, which we are updating, so the exact figure will be subject to the completion of that work.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: How much are we seeking? We've gone to the Feds to say, "Help us out". How much are we asking for?

CAMILLA DROVER: I'm not sure we've put an exact number on it because that will be subject to the final business case. It's more an in-principle discussion.

The CHAIR: I just wanted to ask a question about the upgrade of Tom Uren Place at Woolloomooloo. I understand that in March 2023, TAHE and the City of Sydney reached an agreement that TAHE would fund and deliver the upgrade, in consultation with the community. Once the upgrade was complete, the city would enter a 50-year agreement to take on the ongoing management and financial responsibility for Tom Uren Place. This is the place in Woolloomooloo owned by Transport for NSW. Where is that up to?

JOSH MURRAY: Owned by the Transport Asset Manager, which is the new entity that replaces TAHE, so, yes, owned by Transport. I'm certainly aware of those discussions. I would have to seek the exact status for you on notice. I may be able to come back to you this afternoon on that.

The CHAIR: Just a bit of recent history on this: In November last year the member for Sydney asked the former transport Minister a question on notice about the status. The Minister at that time said the city and TAHE were in discussions about the proposed works and a development deed. I understand that Transport for NSW may have now told the City of Sydney that they don't have the capacity to design and deliver the upgrade. Is there something substantial that has happened, Mr Murray, if that indeed is the case? That is what I'm hearing from a number of stakeholders as to why this may not be going ahead.

JOSH MURRAY: Again, I'd like to get that detail for you specifically. I don't have it in front of me. I know it has been a project that has been difficult, from both stakeholders and agencies working together, to get the right outcome for the community. A number of avenues have been tried while that was under TAHE's management. I'll get an update for you and take that on notice so that we can provide the latest detail.

The CHAIR: That would be useful. Going to buses, and a particular bus route that constituents have contacted me about, the 252 bus route used to go all the way into the city. It now terminates at North Sydney. Basically, to get into the city, people need to either change and get another bus or change at Crows Nest or North Sydney to get onto the metro. Is it a common occurrence, Mr Collins, that some bus routes have been stopped in their tracks to funnel people onto the metro? Is that really necessary, given that apparently in that area there are many buses that seem to just go by people standing, waiting to get on the bus, because they're so crowded?

JOSH MURRAY: I might answer that one initially, Ms Faehrmann, if that's all right.

The CHAIR: Sure.

JOSH MURRAY: Certainly at the time of the opening of the extension of the metro, we did institute a number of changes, both on the Pacific Highway corridor and also the M2 corridor, in terms of bus services that, rather than carry all the way through and add to any congestion on the Harbour Bridge or the north of the city, would instead use Victoria Cross or Crows Nest metro stations to channel more people through. I would have to say that, overall, we were really impressed by the way that passengers in the north of the city—not everyone, of course—did adapt to those. It suited their travel plans and there were a number of other transitional bus arrangements that were put in place, for a number of months, actually, while we ensured that people got used to the metro services in the north. I would have to look more particularly at the 252 and the impacts on that.

I did want to add to one of your previous questions that, in the last 12 months in metropolitan Sydney, we've made more than 1,000 bus service additions across the city. We have done that by utilising services such as the change to metro and by being able to redirect services to other areas. We've focused on school bus services as the first element there. We're doing a twice-yearly analysis of where other bus routes could be modified to produce benefit for more people. Then thirdly, as a priority, we're looking at growth services. We're adding net additional services to the region. But all of that is being done under the elements that Mr Collins spoke to, which is at the moment our highest capacity buses—the articulated and the bendy buses—are at capacity on the Parramatta Road, Victoria Road, Pacific Highway and Pittwater Road corridors.

The CHAIR: Thank you, that is useful information. The 252, as I understand it, is a 12-minute bus trip, so it does seem a bit odd—or a bit ridiculous, as this person actually says—that they have to include a change to the metro, which does inconvenience, for example, more elderly passengers and passengers with a disability. I've put that on your radar now. I'm sure you've got many on your radar. They've also said the 288 and 292 bus routes,

as well as 251, are very often over capacity, zero space in the morning, going past people by the time they get to Lane Cove. As we know, there are many complaints.

JOSH MURRAY: Those Gore Hill services were deliberately targeted during the opening of the metro. Your correspondent talks about 12 minutes to keep going into the city. I do recall at the opening of the metro we looked at that. It may be 12 or up to 17 minutes from, say, Crows Nest then into the city on a direct run, whereas the metro is six minutes under, with just two stops before you get to Martin Place.

The CHAIR: The Western Sydney Airport metro once again, Mr Regan: We're expecting it to potentially be delayed now beyond April. You've said here today it will be delayed beyond April 2026?

PETER REGAN: That's our current expectation, although we haven't resolved discussions around the actual revised date. But we do expect that there will be a change.

The CHAIR: When will that change be announced?

PETER REGAN: When we finish the discussions with our contractors and delivery partners. Clearly, we need to land those discussions—and there is a lot of interest, understandably, from the Federal Government as well, and from the airport company—so we are working to ensure that once we have a firmer range, we can be up-front about that.

The CHAIR: The next question may not be to you, specifically, but say the airport opens to flights that potentially come in at 4.00 a.m. What is being done to ensure that those passengers who arrive at that time of the morning have transport that gets them to where they need to go, and we're not talking about an expensive Uber or taxi?

TRUDI MARES: I'm happy to take that, Peter, thank you. We're working with Sydney Metro on any alternative services if there are delays to opening for the metro line. In addition, I know we have discussed before the bus funding that we've received, and there will be six new bus routes. At the moment they're scheduled to run on 30-minute frequencies from 5.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m. Rail runs until midnight and starts again at 4:30 a.m. and there are NightRide buses in place. But we are looking at the whole network, and part of the planning work we're doing immediately is also looking at whether we can fund some additional services to meet the gap. We're actively looking at 24/7 services.

The CHAIR: So we've got at least a six-month delay. It will be longer now for the Western Sydney Airport. We're hearing it will be longer, at least, by the time the Western Sydney Airport is operational and those first flights hit. So what happens to the passenger that arrives at 2.00 a.m.? You've just said buses from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. or 5.00 a.m. until 10.00 p.m.

TRUDI MARES: It is 5.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m.

The CHAIR: What's there at 2.00 a.m.?

TRUDI MARES: That's what we're currently funded for. We're doing all the planning for it, and it'll be subject to an investment decision to be able to extend the services. But we are looking at NightRide options and other service connections.

The CHAIR: So is that a guarantee that passengers that arrive, let's just say, between 1.00 a.m. and 5.00 a.m., for ease—that they will have public transport to, say, get into the city or get to the North Shore?

TRUDI MARES: We're committed to putting the best services in that we can. We're definitely doing all of the planning for that, and we are putting things up through the budget process. So we'll be able to confirm in next estimates.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Ms Drover, I invite you to come back to me with those answers on Bridge Road, the cycleway. I believe you had some.

CAMILLA DROVER: Yes. I've been advised the Bridge Road Friends, which is a community group—they did commission their own road safety audit. That was done in August last year, and that was sent to the secretary under a letter dated 3 December last year. You might note that we are upgrading the Bridge Street cycleway. It was a temporary cycleway that was jointly developed by the City of Sydney and Transport.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes.

CAMILLA DROVER: It's now being developed as a permanent cycleway, so we have been working very closely with the City of Sydney, and we have implemented some additional safety measures for the cycleway.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Were any of those safety measures in response to the findings of the independent safety audit conducted by the friends of—

CAMILLA DROVER: Some of them align with some of the concerns raised in their own road safety audit, particularly around—we are putting in two additional raised pedestrian crossings, and that's to prioritise the pedestrians and increase the visibility of pedestrians on that safety. There's also new and increased signage and new and increased line marking. And we're also reinforcing the previously implemented 40 kilometres per hour speed zone for the alignment. The other thing I should note is the contract has been awarded. The works have not yet started on site, but before the works are complete and they're operational, we will be doing our own independent road safety audit, a further audit. That will be ahead of the new facility opening for cyclists, and that will be an independent audit done by a party that hasn't previously been involved in the design or the delivery of the infrastructure. We also will be responding to the Bridge Road Friends in the coming week, within a week.

JOSH MURRAY: I also can confirm that the travel report that you spoke about is on our website, the New Zealand training trip. The total cost of that exercise was \$2,190.97. The full report is available there, if you would like to look at that. For your question on the Centre for Maritime Safety, \$2.6 million of the \$5.5 million relates to staff labour costs.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Can I just go to back to Maritime—can I go to some of these plans that are on your website. The *South Coast Boating Network Plan*—I don't expect you to give me a detailed rundown on every boating access improvement opportunity, but can you tell me how many? Because obviously there's quite a few there, and some of them are medium- to long-term prospects; some of them aren't prospects at all. But how many of those—just a number figure—are you actively considering and how many are you in the process of actioning?

JOSH MURRAY: I'll ask Howard.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I'm happy for that to be taken on notice, Mr Collins. There's a lot to look at there.

HOWARD COLLINS: I know you've got limited time. We definitely have a number of those schemes. As you know, Maritime now has responsibility for an additional 121, I think, wharves and Crown land matters. And there's a lot of interest, certainly in the South Coast, about improvements from what was a pretty neglected system of maritime features before. I certainly can provide you those if you want more detail of progress today.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Sure. And, I guess, the same with the Kiama Harbour revitalisation plan, whether you have any updates as to progress on that. On notice, any updates on where we are with that.

HOWARD COLLINS: I will certainly provide you with that. I don't have it here.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Yes, that's fine. Mr Wing, can I just go back to you with some point to point questions. With the Uber rank and hail trial at the airport, for want of a better term, when is that trial due to finish? Do we have an end date?

ANTHONY WING: The Uber PIN trial was started in September. It's due to run for 12 months. So that's the expectation.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Have you seen an increase in fines or infringements being issued at Sydney Airport since the introduction of that trial?

ANTHONY WING: No. We put quite strong safety rules around the trial, including that there should be a boom gate, that Sydney Airport has at the entrance; and also that Uber needs to put its own staff at the kerbside to also make sure that people are complying with the requirements. But we continue to go through it, both to get data out of Uber, but also to visit it ourselves—and, again, both in-uniform and non-uniformed officers as well.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: If you had to put a figure on it in terms of man hours in compliance, how much would there be, since the trial?

ANTHONY WING: I'd have to take that on notice, but I think it's essentially people who are already at the airport, so they will also make sure that they go through the Uber PIN area as well.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Do you have permanent staff at the airport, stationed at the airport?

ANTHONY WING: They're not permanent, but they're regularly there.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: And by "regular" you mean?

ANTHONY WING: Several times a week.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Several times a week?

ANTHONY WING: If not more, depending on busyness of the airport et cetera.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: No problems. Can I go to the press release that was published around the driver vehicle dashboard? Can you confirm that includes rideshare drivers, as well? Or is it just taxis? I know the press release talked about tackling dodgy taxi drivers but didn't talk about tackling dodgy rideshare drivers. Does the dashboard capture them, as well?

ANTHONY WING: The current dashboard, even before that edition, has information about every driver—rideshare, taxi—and any changes to their eligibility. And that's where I said earlier, I think 70 million checks are done a year on that by rideshare and taxi companies. But what we've added most recently—that was under the press release—is information about fines that have been issued for taxi drivers who overcharge or refuse to use the meter. That can be checked by anyone that they are applying to work for, whether it's rideshare or taxi company. We've also added information about rideshare or taxi drivers who refuse guide dogs, as well.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: And is there any way to measure how often rideshare companies are checking this, versus taxi companies are checking? Obviously, the concern is that rideshares, overseas company—possibly limited interest in the minutiae of our regulatory system. How often are they checking to see whether there's dodgy drivers that they don't want to hire?

ANTHONY WING: There's probably two parts to that answer. The first is that Uber, for example, runs its entire driver database past the dashboard every second day. And DiDi is a similar amount. I'd have to check exactly, but similar. In terms of their ability or willingness to comply with the regulatory system, I should just point out that we actually do take action against all companies, including Uber and DiDi, for any failures to check their drivers, and I'm currently prosecuting Uber. You may be aware I'm currently prosecuting Uber in the courts for allowing a number of Uber Eats drivers to carry passengers, which is obviously not allowed under our law. They have made the changes to fix that, as we directed, but I still believe that they shouldn't have allowed it to happen in the first place, and we're seeking fines. And similarly, last year I prosecuted and fined DiDi, and they received \$100,000 in fines as well. So we do make them pay attention to the local regulation.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: That's excellent, thank you. You talked about a "two strikes and you're out" system. What do you constitute a strike? Are you talking about an infringement notice or a prosecution?

ANTHONY WING: The change to the law that the Government made late last year is that if there are two convictions for these overcharging offences after 6 December, that will see the person banned completely from the industry—and not just that they can't drive for a taxi company, they can't drive for a rideshare company or anything like that.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Is there an appeals process or not at all?

ANTHONY WING: A magistrate has to convict them. But if they are convicted twice, it's automatic. There's no appeal.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can I just pick up on one of those points that you raised? Did I hear you say that that you can check on individual drivers?

ANTHONY WING: We have information that we provide to the industry about any drivers.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It's only industry, so your industry portal? An individual passenger can't get in and check how many prosecutions they've had or compliance issues?

ANTHONY WING: They can't. For reasons to do with the Privacy Act, there has to be consent given. No, that's not possible. It is essentially the company that the driver is with or wants to work for.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Further on the bus contracts—perhaps to Mr Collins or Mr Murray—in relation to the contract management procedures, has Transport for NSW conducted a formal review of contract management procedures and delegations?

HOWARD COLLINS: In general terms, the taskforce went into great detail of the operation and management of those contracts. We've had the Auditor-General's report as well and we are actually carrying out an organisational change. As I said earlier, we are strengthening and changing our personnel involved to ensure that we carry out the management of the contracts in a way that obviously those recommendations came forward from the taskforce and the Auditor-General.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm aware of those two reports, but in terms of Transport for NSW, is there a formal review being undertaken by Transport for NSW of those contract management procedures and delegations?

HOWARD COLLINS: As part of our organisational review of our organisation, the best thing we can do—and we know of the limits of the current team—is to put in two things. One, end up with an organisation with

the capacity to deal with those matters but also we're putting in some additional resources to deal with a number of those contract issues which are outstanding at the moment.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I understand that is forming part of your wider reorganisation, but I'll ask again: Has Transport for NSW conducted a formal review of those contract management procedures and delegations, Mr Murray?

JOSH MURRAY: Our response relates to the bus taskforce and ensuring that we meet the 58 accepted recommendations of the formal reports of the independent bus taskforce. They are the blueprint for the changes that we're making within the Coordinator-General's division, and the bus contracting team. As Mr Collins has just said, we're adding resource to some of those key roles around contract management, asset management and obviously the focus with our private bus companies around driver numbers and ensuring that they also get the fleet through that asset management approach, which up until now hadn't been a strength of the operation of the contracts.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In relation to the Auditor-General's recommendations, one of which was to review and address gaps in contract management procedures and delegations, just to be clear, there hasn't been a formal review of those contract management procedures and delegations? I think I understand you said it is part of your wider—

JOSH MURRAY: We certainly believe it's complementary to the work that is underway to respond to the taskforce.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I'm sorry to be pedantic, but there hasn't been a formal review separately?

JOSH MURRAY: No.

HOWARD COLLINS: You could do one or the other. You could go in there now and have another formal review and look at it or we could get on with organising our team and having effective resources, which does the job, and that's what we're doing. To supplement that, because obviously organisational changes take some time, with the secretary's permission, we are now creating a number of teams which will assist in a number of areas. That includes contract management, a vehicle allocation fleet, the setting up of a team to deal with the pending contract renewals and supporting some of the optimisation of bus timetables. Those are all ongoing.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Are they new staff and new positions or is it reorganisation of the existing team?

HOWARD COLLINS: It's a combination of the two. To do this fast and effective, sometimes you can't reorganise your current resource. We will bring in experts in the short term, but eventually the organisational changes we are live and going through now will reflect the organisation and also support those taskforce and Auditor-General recommendations.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What specific gaps or issues have been identified in contract management procedures since 2023?

HOWARD COLLINS: Without going through the whole taskforce recommendations or the Auditor-General's recommendations, there are some clear headlines.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: This is to address those recommendations, so you referenced both the taskforce and the Auditor-General's report. Addressing those recommendations is now on Transport, so what specific gaps or issues have been identified in the contract management procedure since 2023?

HOWARD COLLINS: It's capacity and depth of skill sets, to be honest. It was okay when we were doing the normal day-to-day thing five years ago with STA, but we now have a fully contracted out metropolitan and outer metropolitan bus system, and those contracts are quite complicated. Therefore we need the capacity of numbers, dealing with the volume, and also the capacity of people. We've got great people who've worked really hard, but we need to make sure in the operations area we focus to ensure we have the right level of resources.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Can you be more specific? In the operations area, what specific roles?

HOWARD COLLINS: I thought I was being, but I'll try and be even more specific. In terms of Transport, the taskforce clearly says that this mode has been neglected over several years. My role is to bring some of the thoughts and processes that I bring from other modes to say, how do we get things done? One of those is we were struggling with a number of trains, so we ordered more Waratahs. We are struggling with a number of buses; we're ordering more buses. It's practical things which make the change.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So within those contract management procedures, though, what specific gaps in those have been identified?

HOWARD COLLINS: As I said, it's about skills, whether that's legal, contractual, understanding and turning around claims, of which there are many from the current contracts.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: You can assume I know the answer.

HOWARD COLLINS: Providing that information is all part of that.

JOSH MURRAY: I would say, in addition to that, the structures as they were and the resource capacity meant that there was very little flexibility in adjusting to what bus contracts brought forward and the changes that we want to see, as was just mentioned in the previous question about linking in with new services like the Metro, so being able to be more responsive to our bus providers is one of the elements that we are changing. We are working to have some specific responses to that. The other key one that leapt out of the Auditor-General's report, which the team is working on, is complaint management. There wasn't the space to both run the contracts and respond to public feedback, notwithstanding we knew that there was dissatisfaction with the services as they were being provided.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What about working with the providers themselves with that flexibility that they may need to provide services?

HOWARD COLLINS: We've really strengthened the engagement with our providers. Part of David Callahan's role, who is supporting me in the taskforce, is to have regular—even last Friday, I think, we had a forum with all the providers. We work very well and collaboratively on driver recruitment. There are a number of other areas that we want to work with the providers and also manufacturers and the supply chain itself.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: What ability is there for them to provide that feedback on what flexibility might assist them to meet those timetabling changes working with the penalties that are obviously difficult for them?

HOWARD COLLINS: Greater than before. I think the important thing is we're not a "roll over and just hand out money" transport organisation. We are quite firm in how we manage those contracts.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: So I've heard.

HOWARD COLLINS: The organisation's provided those contracts. But there again we want to be reasonable in our approach, and I have twice-weekly engagements with senior figures from those contracts as well as my team to understand their issues.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: One of the other recommendations from the Auditor-General was establishing regular audits of operator responses to customer complaints, which we just talked about. Has Transport for NSW established a formal audit process to assess the accuracy and effectiveness of operator responses to customer complaints?

JOSH MURRAY: We're working on that now, our response.

HOWARD COLLINS: That's something we'll be setting up. This got all devolved down to the separate bus companies. The questions were raised about their effectiveness and timeliness. Certainly we, as well as Ministers, get complaints about that lack of response. We believe there is a new system, and we're working on a process, as recommended, to assure that those things are being dealt with.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: When you say you're working on a process, is that process establishing a formal audit process?

HOWARD COLLINS: We certainly support that recommendation, but we will have a process.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: But is that what the process is that you are undertaking now?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: It is?

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: In relation to the progression of those recommendations to be completed by December 2025—so this year—and implementing strategic planning and enhanced data analysis, can Transport for NSW provide examples of how strategic planning has been used to address recent or emerging challenges in bus service performance?

TRUDI MARES: I'm happy to talk to that. We have referred before to the Medium Term Bus Plan. We've got a dedicated service planning team that is looking at the 10-year horizon for services for bus, as well as short term, so up to three years. I think Mr Murray touched on this earlier. They are focused on growth services

and timetable optimisation, so opportunities to make changes that benefit the passengers within the timetable, and also a focus on school services, which we know we get a lot of feedback on. That has resulted in some of the uplift in services already, but we'll have a plan for the next three years. Then the 10-year program really looks at growth, airport, other land use, and we are uplifting planning capability to support that.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And working with those providers on timetabling, do they have an ability to have input into that?

TRUDI MARES: Yes, they do.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Rather than just being penalised for not meeting the timetable that has been strictly—if there's some flexibility, they can very often prioritise, for example, schoolchildren, when there's a shortage or some other issue, over private charter or other issues.

TRUDI MARES: Mr Collins's team does that daily, I would say. But then they also receive feedback from the operators that they can implement as part of the contract and timetable changes. That is absolutely data we use for the medium and longer term planning as well.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: If I could pick up the issue of buses relating to the North Shore and the northern beaches—and I appreciate the Minister earlier today was announcing the acquisition of new buses. In terms of the removal of the bendy buses—articulated buses—when were they removed from service?

HOWARD COLLINS: I think it was about October. I haven't got the actual date, but it was last year. A little bit of backstory—I'll try to keep it short. These vehicles, built in 2005 and 2006, had a slightly different body design. STA had found cracking on them before and done some welding up, but when we did a thorough investigation on one of these vehicles, we found that the cracking, when the vehicle was completely stripped down, was sufficient for our engineers to recommend that the fleet was withdrawn. That's 83 vehicles. Most of them, or 50 per cent of them, are in the northern beaches area. At present, six of them are all taken apart.

We are working. We've built the prototype. Volvo have provided the new modified turntable chassis, which makes the vehicle flex in the middle. That vehicle should be going through its final engineering design assessment. And then those six vehicles we've airfreighted in from Volvo—10 of the chassis—and others will come by ship. We're productionising that. We're going to go to tender for the repair of up to 50—maybe a larger number—of those vehicles to speed up the response. Because if you have one manufacturer doing it, you get a long line of buses waiting to go.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: So that was the removal of 83 articulated—

HOWARD COLLINS: Eighty-three. They're not all for the North Shore, but over half of them were, and therefore you were lacking that capacity, which was much needed on the North Shore services.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Mr Collins, what did that represent in terms of the loss of seat numbers and capacity and passenger numbers—the removal of 83 articulated vehicles from the bus fleet?

HOWARD COLLINS: I could give that on notice—a lot. An average rigid bus has capacity of 50 seats plus a few standing, where we know—and I use most days—those articulated vehicles coming down Elizabeth Street carry over 100 people at a time. So we had a significant loss. It's a shortage of vehicles itself, and then the ones we could substitute were smaller, so it's like a double whammy. That's why people have been waiting at bus stops. That's why there has been a challenge for us in moving those people from that area.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: As you rightly say, the impact on commuters has been significant. I make reference to the very strong representations from the member for Willoughby, Tim James, on this. I think there have been over 50 representations relating to this. We've got reports still coming from—and I recognise Anna Usher of the Mosman Collective. We've got reports of 700-metre queues, commuter chaos, kids late to school—that was as of 26 February—then, on 4 March, another report of 400 commuters waiting and queues at the CBD out of control.

HOWARD COLLINS: Yes, I've been there. There's even a post from me with probably about 2,000 people that David Callahan and the great bus people were trying to load on that particular day. We do know there's an issue. We can't deny it. This is a major issue. We're very grateful the Minister announced some additional double-deckers and some additional articulated vehicles. This will come.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: In the interim, what can be done to alleviate this situation before the new vehicles hit the road?

HOWARD COLLINS: We are doing everything possible: marshalling, identifying. We have prioritised schools. We don't want to leave schoolchildren behind. Therefore, adults—I apologise to you now. You may actually have longer to wait and your services are disrupted.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: In terms of some more specific details around that, Mr Collins, is that something you might want to take on notice?

HOWARD COLLINS: At the end of the day, let me be frank about it: There's not a lot you can do if you haven't got a bus to drive, and I can't conjure up buses from thin air for Sydney. There are specific requirements. We have held on to old buses. We're readjusting the fleet. As soon as those electric vehicles arrive in Brookvale, we will cascade other vehicles around the network to share the pain of those vehicles being removed.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: I go to Mr Regan to pick up on issues around the industrial action relating to the delay on the Metro Southwest. I quote from the Minister's media release relating to these delays. Industrial action has been very disruptive. Mr Regan, what would be the financial cost? I appreciate we've gone through the environment, but what is the financial cost of this industrial action?

PETER REGAN: That's a question we're working through at the moment. Within the project budget we have contingencies for certain—

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: Is that something you could take on notice for us, in terms of the financial cost?

PETER REGAN: Just to be really up-front, we don't have that answer yet because, as I mentioned earlier, we are still working through with each of our contractors what the impacts will be, and we need to resequence it. Once we've got a better sense, we'll use the contingency, obviously, we've got in the project. It may not all be incremental, but it is used. There's definitely been a budget impact, so we'll work it through.

The Hon. RACHEL MERTON: In terms of interim measures on this, we're getting reports from commuters on the T8 line that you're overloaded—no room. Is there anything being done in that space?

MATT LONGLAND: I'm happy to address the T8 line specifically as a result of the Bankstown line being closed. Yes, in addition to the use of the Southwest Link buses to Sydenham, we've seen an increase in the number of passengers travelling up to Lidcombe on the rail network, on the T6 line. Also, some are heading south to access the T8 line into the city, particularly the faster trains that run from Campbelltown. That is a pattern that we've seen. We generally see the middle of the week being busier than the Monday and the Friday. We haven't had people left on platforms but, certainly, trains are fuller, and we're seeing that some of that patronage may well be passengers that are coming off stations that were on the Bankstown line.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I was just going to follow up very quickly—sorry, no mercy rule—and I want to thank you all for being here today too. On the buses, Mr Collins, if those buses are due to be delivered—did you say September this year?

HOWARD COLLINS: Which buses are we talking about?

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: North Shore. The new bendy and the northern beaches.

HOWARD COLLINS: The new diesels and bendies will, I think—clarifying—start to be delivered towards the end of 2025. Yes, certainly, September-October we might see those first ones coming through, depending, obviously, on the order process and the delivery.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Foreseeably, until then or even starting then, there is not likely to be a change for those people on the North Shore and northern beaches.

HOWARD COLLINS: Repaired artics will be back. We're hoping, as the Minister talked about earlier today, that the first of those vehicles will be back on the road April-May. There will be a steady stream of those coming back—probably at least 50. There will be the arrival of the electric vehicles into Brookvale and other locations as those deliveries get made. Custom Denning are delivering 25 vehicles which will allow us to move forward with displacement of other vehicles.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Just on that, are there any other buses, to your knowledge, that might be available that may not be in that area and may not be within that zone that could potentially be made available? Any buses sitting idly? Pardon the pun.

JOSH MURRAY: Ms Ward, that is one of the levers that we have, in fact, pulled through the Coordinator-General's office. It does mean that some Sydney commuters in areas outside of the North Shore and northern beaches as well may have seen some older buses back on the road, where we've been able to re-provision

those for service. We've also moved some of the double-deckers that may use the M2 corridor onto the northern beaches.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: We'd be grateful for those historic ones that you bring out on the Harbour Bridge.

HOWARD COLLINS: We did a great job with Biennale, with heritage vehicles.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Grateful for anything, thank you. We're not getting a Northern Beaches Tunnel, so a bus would be good.

HOWARD COLLINS: I even thought about Boris's bendy buses, but they don't fit.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I've only got three questions and, hopefully, we can call it a day. Mr Wing, just finally, on the trial at the airport, is there a terms of reference or a set of metrics you are going to use to measure the effectiveness or the impact of the trial after September?

ANTHONY WING: For the parts that I did, which is, essentially, putting safety obligations on, I have a compliance framework for measuring that. The broader policy question will be something that I think Transport for NSW will probably have to advise the Minister on. But I would certainly have a compliance framework for assessing that part of it.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Murray, will there be a set of terms of reference that you'll use to evaluate effectiveness?

JOSH MURRAY: Yes, that's correct. We'll work through that with our policy team and in conjunction with the point to point commissioner.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Mr Collins, the sand management trial has finished but, obviously, the system is still being used. Has the review of the trial started yet or is that—

HOWARD COLLINS: You're talking about the—

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Sorry, at the Coffs Harbour Boat Ramp.

HOWARD COLLINS: The Coffs Harbour sand management trial. Yes, I think we—Mr Sandy or whatever the guy who's facilitated that. That was on his registration, when I was there at Coffs Harbour. Yes, I think the trial has concluded. We are evaluating that now. We've had some experts in to understand whether the challenge of that particular area is going to be maintained or whether we have to continue to carry out a permanent sand management plan.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: You don't have an ETA on that review?

HOWARD COLLINS: No. I could find that out for you, certainly, in discussions with the ED on that.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: My last question: One of my staff members has been admiring your tie all day, and he wanted me to ask where he can get one.

HOWARD COLLINS: This is actually New York Transit Museum's tie.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: There's no way he's getting one of those.

JOSH MURRAY: Online.

HOWARD COLLINS: Online, Mark. I would also say thank you for your patience on Kamay Wharf. I know you called it an elephant of a project, but we have seen an elephant recently there, because we've spotted a dugong, apparently, in the area, which is related to an elephant.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I can't promise I won't do a John Farnham and come back and ask more questions.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I've got one more for Ms Drover, and you can take it on notice. We're getting personal now. The Warringah Freeway upgrade—is it possible to get better signage southbound for the Military Road off-ramp? Many people miss it. I've been in an Uber and gone over the bridge and back again, missing the signs.

CAMILLA DROVER: We appreciate that feedback. So it's southbound.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: Yes. Coming from Naremburn, heading south, there's one turn-off in the middle lane to get to the Military Road left turn. If you miss it, you are across the bridge for hours.

HOWARD COLLINS: We could put up on the VMS board, "Mrs Ward, turn left."

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: And Uber driver also. Please do. It's so easy to miss.

The CHAIR: There's a particular one-way street near where I live—

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: I was just about to say, I've got a few requests as well.

The Hon. NATALIE WARD: I have had hundreds of complaints, can I tell you? So many people. It's terribly signed, it's very quick, and it's in the middle of two lanes. It's very easy, and for all those poor tourists.

The CHAIR: Everybody's getting overexcited because we are 40 minutes early, unless the Government wants the final 15 minutes.

The Hon. Dr SARAH KAINE: No. Thank you, Chair.

JOSH MURRAY: Chair, can I address just one point?

The CHAIR: Yes. Mr Murray.

JOSH MURRAY: We will set up a kiosk outside for any other requirements! I just wanted to confirm a previous answer relating to the statement of corporate intent for the point to point commissioner. It was correct that the last edition of that statement was issued by Minister Elliott. A renewed statement of corporate intent is being developed at the moment and will be provided to the transport Minister.

The CHAIR: That's a wrap for today. Thank you so much for attending. Some of you are attending two days in a row. We obviously really appreciate that and the hard work you all do. The Committee secretariat will be in touch for the questions that you took on notice and, of course, we'll have supplementary questions, no doubt.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.