

REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 - TRANSPORT AND
CUSTOMER SERVICE**

UNCORRECTED

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2019-2020

At Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, on Monday 28 October 2019

The Committee met at 19:30

PRESENT

Ms Abigail Boyd (Chair)
The Hon. Mark Banasiak
The Hon. Catherine Cusack
The Hon. Sam Faraway
The Hon. Shayne Mallard
The Hon. Daniel Mookhey
The Hon. Peter Primrose

The Hon. Victor Dominello, *Minister for Customer Service*

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The CHAIR: Welcome to the budget estimates supplementary hearing for the portfolio of Customer Service. Before I commence, I acknowledge the Gadigal people, who are the traditional custodians of this land, and pay respect to the elders past and present of the Eora nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginals present. Today's hearing is open to the public and is being broadcast live via the Parliament's website. In accordance with the broadcasting guidelines, while members of the media may film or record committee members and witnesses, people in the public gallery—of which there are presently none—should not be the primary focus of any filming or photography. I also remind media representatives that they must take responsibility for what they publish about the Committee's proceedings.

The guidelines for the broadcast of proceedings are available from the secretariat. All witnesses in budget estimates have a right to procedural fairness according to the procedural fairness resolution adopted by the House in 2018. Any messages from advisers or members' staff seated in the public gallery should be delivered through the Committee secretariat. Minister Dominello, I remind you and the officers accompanying you that you are free to pass notes between yourselves and also to refer directly to your advisers seated at the table behind you. Finally, could everyone please turn their mobile phones to silent.

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EMMA HOGAN, Secretary, Department of Customer Service, affirmed and examined

WILLIAM MURPHY, Deputy Secretary for Delivery and Transformation, Department of Customer Service, on former oath

DAMON REES, Chief Executive Officer, Service NSW, on former oath

The CHAIR: As there is no provision for any witness to make an opening statement, we will begin with questions from the Opposition.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Minister, for your appearance and thank you to your officials for appearing at this late hour as well, for what I call T20 style estimates hearings. I thoroughly appreciate the time and particularly it being at night-time as well.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Thank you.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Congratulations, Ms Hogan, on your appointment. Minister, I was going to just start there. Ms Hogan was appointed to the position of secretary on 17 October 2019. Has Ms Hogan also been appointed as the Customer Service Commissioner?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: You are in both positions?

Ms HOGAN: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: There is no separate recruitment process, presumably, as a result of the fact that there have been two appointments?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No. She is assuming the same role and responsibilities as the former secretary.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, when did you first become aware that Mr King was intending to leave the public service?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It was about two or three weeks ago. I do not have the precise date in my head.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Given that Ms Hogan was appointed on 17 October and that coincided with the departure of Mr King, was it about that time that you first learnt that Mr King was intending to leave?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It was obviously before that but—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Not much before.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Well, it was around that time. I do not want it to be a guessing competition but it was around that time.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Did Mr King inform you that he was intending to join the Property Exchange Australia [PEXA] organisation as CEO?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: When he informed you did you seek to impose any conditions on him or, for want of a better term, any requirements that would prevent him using knowledge that he has gained as secretary for customer service in his role he is discharging at PEXA?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: My understanding is that in relation to the position on PEXA he excused himself from all decisions within the cluster at the time.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: When you say "excused himself", from when did he excuse himself from any PEXA-related discussions?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I will take that on notice because I am not across all that detail.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I appreciate that as well. But did he inform you at the time that he was going to PEXA that he had recused himself on that or was the first time you learnt that he had recused himself when he told you he was joining PEXA?

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Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again I will take that on notice. I do not want this to be a guessing competition.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Are there any laws or guidelines which govern Mr King's post-separation employment?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am sure there are but again what specific question do you want?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am asking you was any policy followed, and thus any conditions under any policy imposed on Mr King that would effectively mitigate there being any conflict of interest between his now CEO—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That would be governed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and he would be required to adhere to the practices and procedures that are in place for all senior executives.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Did you take steps to verify whether that policy does exist and whether or not it has been followed by Mr King?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I will take that on notice because it is outside my immediate knowledge.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But you are aware of the guidance that ICAC has issued, for example, that says senior public servants ought to effectively serve a period of some leave or some intermediate period before they assume new duties. Are you aware that ICAC has issued such guidelines?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: And was that followed?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: To my knowledge, yes. But, again, Mr Mookhey, if you are suggesting that it has not been followed please give me the evidence.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am not suggesting that.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I am really sorry. It has been like this all day; just going in circles because they do not have questions.

The CHAIR: Do you have a point of order?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: I did not take a point of order. I was just filling them in on what is going on.

The CHAIR: Continue, without the interjections.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Have any requirements or restrictions been imposed on any customer—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Sorry, can you start that again please?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I will try. Have any restrictions been put in place now that prevent contact between the Department of Customer Service staff and Mr King in relation to his PEXA duties?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I will take that on notice, Mr Mookhey, but I go back to the previous response. My assumption is that everything is being done by the book in accordance with the rules because I have absolute respect for the integrity with which Mr King holds himself. He is a man of integrity. I have no doubt that all rules have been followed. If they have not, please bring it to my attention because I would like to know about it.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: When was Mr King appointed as Secretary of the cluster?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It would have been circa 2017 from memory.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: That he was appointed as Secretary?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Sorry, of the cluster, the new cluster. Sorry, I thought it was Customer Service. It would have been at the beginning of the year.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So after the election, was it, when the clusters were formed?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

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The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So we are thinking April, circa 1 April.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Around that time, yes.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Is there any chance we could finish early?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: And prior to that he was the Deputy Secretary of the Premier's Implementation Unit and the NSW Customer Service Commissioner. Is that correct?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So when he came from Deputy—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: So that is why, when I said a couple of years earlier—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes, I accept that. That was the confusion.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I apologise. I did not mean to mislead.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I understand that. He went from being the Deputy Secretary to the Secretary. Presumably he would have gone up to the top State Executive Service remuneration band, which is remuneration band six, is that correct?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I think that is a fair assumption.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Probably from four or five at the Deputy Secretary level?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I just do not have any knowledge about that.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Maybe the public service might be able to tell us.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Sure, but he got a substantial pay rise. Is that correct?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: If somebody is going from a grade to a higher grade, you would assume there would be a commensurate increase in their remuneration together with responsibility. It is normally what happens.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Sure. On his departure, though, did he receive any separation payment from the department?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I will take that on notice because it is not something immediate to my knowledge.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I accept that you will take it on notice. I appreciate that but there is the practice of secretaries when they leave the post of the Secretary being entitled to up to 38 weeks under the Public Service Commission guidelines. Was that paid to him?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I will take it on notice, Mr Mookhey. I am not trying to be obstructive.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am not accusing you of that.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: But, again, I assume that everything in relation to his resignation has been complied with to the letter of the law and if you are suggesting it has not—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: To be fair, I am not. I am just asking in terms of his contract that he was under, is he entitled to that?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I know but I do not have the contract here and, obviously, they are issues that I would have to take on notice because it is not something that I administer.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay, but Ms Hogan was providing what I would determine as a non-verbal response to that question. Maybe Ms Hogan is in a position to clarify whether, under his contract entitlements, he entitled to a separation payment in accordance with the Public Service Commission guidelines?

Ms HOGAN: As the former Public Service Commissioner, I can advise that you are not paid the 38 weeks when you resign and my understanding is that Mr King resigned.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay, that is all we were seeking clarity on—as to whether or not that was triggered or not.

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Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is one less thing we have to answer on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes. That is really all we were trying to get at—whether or not that clause was triggered. Thank you.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is really wonderful. It is just so good.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Ms Cusack, if you could just restrain yourself a bit now, it would be helpful to all of us.

The CHAIR: Order! Just get on with the questions.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You have got everyone here and you do not have any questions; not budget questions.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Just calm down.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thank you for that clarification on that, Ms Hogan. Were you subject to any selection process yourself? And Minister, you can answer as well for this role.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Sorry. What was this?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Just in terms of how Ms Hogan was appointed, given that she was announced on the same day that Mr King left, I just presumed that you went from Public Service Commissioner to this position. Is that correct, Minister?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Sorry. Can you ask the question again?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Was Ms Hogan specifically headhunted for the job of secretary of the cluster or was there any other selection process that was embarked upon when Mr King resigned?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: She was a direct appoint.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Fair enough. Thank you. I want to turn now to the leadership of the Workers Compensation Independent Review Office [WIRO]. Is it the case that you have commenced a public selection process for the head of WIRO? Is that correct?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: And the public aspect of that process commenced last Friday?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes. That is my understanding.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: And you have retained recruitment consultants to assist you in that process?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am not 100 per cent across it because that matter is being dealt with by—I will check with—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I might just table this for the Minister so that he has it.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Thank you.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: You have got it?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to look at it. Thanks.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: It is the job advert that went out last Friday for the position.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am not doubting you.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Has Mr Kim Garling been barred from participating in that process by any chance?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Not to my knowledge.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: He is entitled to participate in that process?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I imagine.

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The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Given that he has effectively been on a rolling contract for the last period of time—I think a period of 12 months—what was the reason, and it might be you have decided to put him on a five-year contract which will be most welcome, now to embark upon this process given that 12 months ago we were asking you similar questions as to the future of his tenure?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: We are currently looking at a whole-of-government review in relation to the personal injury commission—as I think you may know—in response to the joint standing committee chaired by Mr Shoebridge in relation to how we reform the personal injury space in this State. There have been a lot of challenges claimants have had in relation to dispute resolution. I remember when I introduced the—I think successful—compulsory third party [CTP] insurance reforms, I said one of the things we have to do is make sure we finish the journey and tackle dispute resolution. I acknowledged then—as I acknowledge now—that it is a complicated process. Part of my commitment was to make sure that we undertook that reform journey and the joint committee suggested we have a look at a model where we have a personal injury commission and we are looking at that now. That involves understanding what the role of WIRO is—does it remain in situ, et cetera?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I think you were referring to the law and justice committee that at the time was being chaired by Ms Natalie Ward—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, I am. I think David Shoebridge chaired—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: No, he did not chair it. It was Natalie Ward. It is a Government-controlled committee. I was on it too. It is funny that you mention it because one of the other recommendations it made was also to provide Mr Garling with tenure, and to clarify as quickly as possible his contract period. I will ask you about that now because I was going to ask you later about where you are up to in terms of the development of the personal injury proposal. Has the public consultation—or the secretary-led consultation—been completed in respect of that proposal?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I do not think it is completed. No.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Do you have a time line as to when you expect it to complete?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I will take that on notice but I think we are very close.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But we are still anticipating that there will be a proposition put to the Parliament early next year?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am hoping so, yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: One thing we asked, which Mr King took on notice—and I think the answer came back on notice—was whether or not there was going to be an exposure draft for that proposition which would be public, which would allow stakeholders to effectively feed back specifically on the bill. To be fair to him, I think he did make a decision that some of that was your decision as Minister as well.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Is there going to be an exposure bill process that would allow people to vet the detail, given that it is quite a complicated proposition?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, it depends on the reform that we ultimately land upon. You are right: One of the options that could be explored is a complete rewrite, which would be very comprehensive. Another option that we are looking at is simply moving across some of the components of compulsory third party "lift and shift", if you will, so that we can improve the claimant journey. I think as I said last time, my real focus here is to make sure that we do not compound a personal injury with a process injury or process trauma. That is my first focus as the Minister for Customer Service, but then there are a whole lot of stratifications in reform that could apply on top of that. For example, do we ultimately go down the path—and I am not saying that we do; I am just saying that these are questions that are legitimately asked—of harmonising the definitions around the two schemes, which is a big body of work. If that was to happen, absolutely, that would definitely need an exposure draft.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So you are referring—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: But if it is in many ways just—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minimalist.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: —an immediate harmonisation, I will have to make the call on it. I am not going to make a call until we finish the consultation.

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The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay, but we will know pretty soon which of the options you think is likely to be pursued, thus whether there is a need for the exposure draft process?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, but you have my word that if it is detailed and comprehensive I would absolutely want an exposure draft.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Returning to the issue of WIRO, the Workers Compensation Independent Review Office, to the best of your knowledge, is an independent statutory office, is that correct?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So why does that ad say it reports to the Minister?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am not understanding the question.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: It is an independent statutory office, is that correct?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: That ad states: It reports to the Minister. It is word for word what it says.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, I can see that. And?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Is that accurate?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Well, "reports to" in the sense that it follows the policy settings of the Government at the time, of course. But that has been—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay. But that implies that, in fact, you have supervisory authority. That is what I would understand or the colloquial person would understand by the term "report".

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is a portfolio location. That is all it is.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It reports to the Minister on matters in connection with the operation of the legislation, which makes sense. But that has been like that for five years.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am just clarifying that is the understanding of it.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: But that is what it says in the ad.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In 2018 in estimates we asked you whether or not you maintained a high view of the professionalism of WIRO under its current leadership and at the time you said, yes, you did.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, I do.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Do you still have that view?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, definitely.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Have there been any issues in terms of WIRO's performance?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No. Again, there needs to be, and I agree, certainty around the tenure. However, the bigger piece in all of this is what does the reform ultimately look like? I think that is the real issue to be addressed. For example, I have had some discussions with Mr Shoebridge, because he has got some very firm views around this—I think he wants to call it a "personal injury ombudsman" type of thing, which would in many ways adopt the role of a WIRO. There are still very much live issues in place in relation to the reform. Whether WIRO exists in its current form or not is another issue.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Are you contemplating any change to WIRO in its existing form or any modification of its role as part of either that personal injury reform process?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I just think we all have to be open to the fact that if we want to optimise—and again, my job is to make sure that the claimant's journey is as good as humanly possible. My job is not to second-guess where the consultation will go, but there may be an amalgamation of certain roles to ensure a smooth passage.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In terms of an amalgamation of certain roles, what does that cover? What is being contemplated as being amalgamated either with the WIRO or the WIRO being amalgamated into?

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Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Either/or. Again, I am not being difficult or cute. I just do not want to second-guess what the consultations bring back.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Sure, but you are undertaking a public recruitment process on the basis of an existing office with existing powers and you about to lock a person in for presumably five years—is the appointment we are looking at for five years?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It can be up to five years because the current term expires on 13 December 2019.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: It would strike me as perhaps not being prudent that you are contemplating changes to the role or amalgamation of the role and you are about to recruit someone and give them a five-year contract.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I am not suggesting for one moment that we will do that. I am suggesting that I know that a number of people have suggested that that could be part of the journey moving forward. It depends. I think there are about three or four models on the table.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But which one of them is the Government's policy? You are still developing it, I suppose.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, we are doing the right thing. I have got my personal views in relation to what I think good reform looks like but ultimately I want to listen to the stakeholders because they are the practitioners in the field. I will give a lot of weight to that process because this is really complex reform. You know—and I do not want to get too political about it—that John Della Bosca, to his eternal credit, said in relation to green slip reforms, which no-one touched for 16 years, that the reform is like the first 30 minutes of *Saving Private Ryan*, and he was not wrong. It was really complex reform. When I spoke to John at the time, we were talking about personal injury more generally. Again, personal injury in the workers compensation setting is equally difficult reform.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I understand that. In terms of the recruitment process for the WIRO leadership—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I want to get it right. If it means we have to go slow to do that and reform takes two or three stages, I want to bring the stakeholders with me as much as I can.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In respect to the recruitment process, will WIRO have a leader by the expiry of Mr Garling's contract—which is 13 December?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is the whole purpose of this.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes, but is that the actual target to fill the role?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Can I take that on notice because I am just reading this now?

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Minister, can you explain why a Government Information (Public Access) Act request from my office on 5 September 2019 for a consultancy report by Avocado Consulting, commissioned by Service NSW and referred to in the Service NSW 2018 annual report, was transferred to New South Wales police with the following comment: "Service NSW formally transferred your application to New South Wales police on 13 September 2019 as they hold, or are reasonably expected to hold, the information you are seeking." New South Wales police then basically knocked it back and said Service NSW would have it. I am happy to give you copies of this if you like.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to look at it. Obviously, I would like to reference that if I can. Thank you.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: My concern is that Service NSW knew full well that it held this document and was deliberately obstructive by passing it on or deferring it to New South Wales police, which is a breach of the Service NSW code of conduct to "act ethically, honestly, and with integrity". I could cite various parts of the code of conduct if you would like that speak to that. I imagine the people in front of me know that.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to take that on notice. Obviously, I am not aware of the specific circumstance of this but I am happy to look into it and take on notice in relation to your concerns.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Would that include actually investigating this case as apparent misconduct?

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Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: You are suggesting that it is misconduct; I am not accepting that characterisation. But I am happy, as a matter of good faith, to have a look at your concerns and give you comment. I apologise, I am not across every detail.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: No, I can imagine you are not. Would it be fair to say that the Standing Order 52 that is currently in play for this document probably could have been avoided if Service NSW just searched its computers for five minutes, found the document and passed it on?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I am happy to look into it and, with good faith, get back to you on it. Yes, it is not something in my immediate attention.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: Ms Hogan, on 4 July 2019 my colleague the Hon. Robert Borsak wrote to the Public Service Commissioner for NSW, Glenn King, about the marked deterioration in customer service provided by the New South Wales Firearms Registry. Commissioner King wrote back in August saying that a review would be undertaken of the services provided to customers by the New South Wales Firearms Registry. Given the obviously sudden departure of Mr King, can we assume that you were given a formal handover of what work he was doing or any undertakings he had made?

Ms HOGAN: I am not aware of this particular matter. One of my colleagues might have an answer but I do not have a full brief on this matter yet.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: To assist you, I will give you a copy of the letter that we wrote to him and his reply. Could you potentially take on notice whether the review has actually started? And, if it has started, or if it is complete, the insights from that review and any time line for the implementation of any recommended changes?

Ms HOGAN: I am happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: We are flying through these.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: You are very efficient.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Excellent customer service.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: A future job for me. Minister, do you think it is acceptable for a small business owner to have to wait 14 months for a licence renewal to conduct his business? Would you deem that as adequate customer service in any way?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No. Of course it is not acceptable. It is the bane of my existence as well, but governments are big beasts. That is why the Premier, in her wisdom, created this role because we need to start breaking down some of these barriers. Service NSW is a flagship and it shows that you can change culture. It is very hard but you can do it. But it is very, very difficult. Fourteen months is not acceptable but we are working our way through certain things. I can get two updates of a smartphone in that period of time, so it is not good.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: The specific concern is that we received an email, and we receive regular emails like this about the Firearms Registry and the slow turnaround in terms of licence renewals, in particular dealers' licences. It has actually taken over 14 months, including multiple calls and emails. I am happy to table the email or pass it to you. Is there anything that the Department of Customer Service can actually do to make the New South Wales Firearms Registry improve the service it provides or is that beyond your scope?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Obviously the primary responsibility, as you know, is with Minister Elliott as police Minister.

The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: We have had successive police Ministers and successive police commissioners, for want of a better word, drop the ball and drag the chain on improving services in the New South Wales Firearms Registry. Frankly, we are turning our attention to other ways that we can bring them to the table because they are not willing to come to the table by themselves.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, Mr Rees might want to comment further, but obviously the lion's share of reform that needs to be done is appropriately with Minister Elliott. I do not want to speak for him but if there is anything that we can do in concert with Minister Elliott—because I do not want to do something that is not lock step with him—I am happy to look at that. But obviously, Service NSW is not an island, it is a collaboration piece with service at the front, but really it is a massive collaboration with Transport at the end of the day or Births, Deaths and Marriages, or whatever it is. It really is a collaboration model and that is why for us to get some really good reforms around that we would need to work with Mr Elliott. I am happy to give you that undertaking to do so.

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The Hon. MARK BANASIAK: I would appreciate that. To facilitate Ms Cusack's desire to have an early mark I will pass to Labor.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Minister, can I just talk for a moment with you about cybersecurity, privacy and data breaches and ask you or, through you, your officers, about the progress of the implementation of the recommendation of the Auditor-General's report from March 2018, looking at the Government's ability to detect and respond to cybersecurity incidents? Then I have got some other questions in relation to your strategy document that you subsequently released. There are some specific recommendations in that Auditor-General's report. I was wondering if you could give us an update on how many have been implemented and where they are up to?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is really a question for Greg Wells. He is not here. Do you have any specific questions in relation to that?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Mr Wells told us on 12 September that, "We have looked at the incidents and accepted those recommendations. Many have already been implemented and the rest are in train." Given the detailed nature of that report I am looking specifically at which recommendations have now been fully implemented, which recommendations have only been partially implemented and which have not been implemented at all.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is a fair question. Again, it was a pretty comprehensive report and we have responded to a number of them, but it is just that I do not have those numbers in front of me. When I saw the list of the witnesses who were coming today, I just assumed that was not part of the issue to be agitated. I will take it on notice and get back to you.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Please, because it was a major report.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I accept that and I accept the need for security. I have constantly said—I gave another speech today—the four pillars of reform have to be: firstly, privacy; secondly, security; thirdly, transparency; and, fourthly, ethics. Once you get those four pillars in place you can essentially build trust and, therefore, any digital platform, quite frankly. So I understand the imperative around cyber. I think our State is pretty much leading the country when it comes to cyber, but I do accept that there is still a lot more work to do.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Just following from that, and you may wish to take this on notice as well, in relation to the NSW Cyber Security Strategy, which elements of the action plan have been fully implemented, which have only been partially implemented and which have not been implemented at all?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I will take that on notice. We have done a lot but it is not just the strategy. We have got a chief cyber security officer now, Tony Wells, and he is doing a great job, but there is a whole lot of mapping that we are undertaking. There is ongoing consultation with key stakeholders, whether it is academia or the business community, because we have to collaborate because there are so many, shall we say, hostile players in the market and every State and Territory needs to lift their game when it comes to cyber.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: In your view then do you think the threats are becoming worse or are they declining?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Around the world cybersecurity is becoming more sophisticated, both offence and defence, and particularly with the onset of artificial intelligence [AI], it is becoming not just sophisticated but quite deep in relation to how some of these hostile players are playing the game now. So absolutely, as I said, it is one of the four pillars that we need to lock down. There will never be a time ever in our future where this will not be an issue anymore. It will be a constant issue in the digital world that we live.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: In estimates on 29 August of this year, the budget estimates hearing on Police, Commissioner Fuller stated that the NSW Police Force needed more resources to deal with cybercrime, in particular to protect older people who may be targeted. At page 4 he talked about every year going back to the Expenditure Review Committee [ERC] seeking additional funds and he said—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It is a joy for all, as you would know as a former Minister. It is a joy for all Ministers to go and knock on the door of the ERC.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It is indeed.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: We all love it. They just keep dishing up presents.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: But where there has been an Auditor-General's report where a senior Minister has acknowledged growing influence and the threat of a New South Wales Government cyber strategy—

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Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: And a complicated influence as well. Not just growing but in terms of numbers complicated.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: He said:

I still go back doggedly every year and argue why we need more money to look at cybercrime and other sorts of environmental changes.

On page 42 he said:

We know that cyber-type crimes are not just attacking governments and big business but they are looking for opportunities from all walks of life.

I know you would agree with that.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: There is no doubt about that.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Will you support the commissioner's call for more funding for Police in relation to fighting cybercrime?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I do not want to walk on the Minister for Police's patch. It is cybercrime. There is a difference between cybercrime and cybersecurity. That is why Minister Elliott is responsible for that part. We do have to work very closely with one another. In many ways I think we described it inelegantly before that I build the wall and he defends. We try to make sure that the system is intact but he then goes out there and tries to prevent it from being breached.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Your field marshal is saying he needs more soldiers on the wall.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again that is a matter for the Minister for Police and the Treasurer. Again I would not second-guess that. It is a real issue but the resourcing of it is not my portfolio. It is a fair question.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Can I talk to you about the issue of digital exclusion.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, of course.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I know you would be familiar with data showing, for instance, from the Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] from 2016-17 that 13 per cent of people do not use the internet, 45 per cent of people aged 65 and over do not use the internet, and I could go on with the other statistics. Essentially the question is, Will the Government guarantee that citizens will always have the option to access services in a real-world or non-digital form?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: To provide a broad statement right across the board I don't think is going to help anyone. I think the general proposition is right, that is, this generation is still in the twilight zone where we have people like my mum who, quite frankly, are not digitally engaged, as much as the fact that her son is a digital nut—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: She is a great cook though.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: She is a fantastic cook. She is a very good cook, my mum, and I love her dearly but she is not digitally engaged. Every time I see people like my mum, it is a constant reminder to me that there is still a significant section of our community that do require services. Your proposition broadly speaking is correct. That is why we have Service centres. We put the EQ, as I say, at the front of Service centres, the people there. And then we have digital kiosks and we try and encourage people to translate and get comfortable with computers. But not everyone translates.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Given the focus is on digital and the fact that people like your mum do not use it—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It is definitely one of my focuses.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: —is there a policy or a position to improve services for people who do not wish to access services digitally, as opposed to \$100 million, for example, in the Digital Restart Fund?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, our current policy settings should, by the whole, cater for people who are not digitally engaged. This digital wave has really just started to come over us but in a massive and a very fast way. That is why anything we are doing that is new, such as Service NSW, is an inclusive model by the whole. If we need to transition, then we make sure that we bring everyone—as much as we can—with us.

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The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Is there a stated policy?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: About digital inclusion?

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Digital inclusion.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am just trying to think off the top of my head.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Again, please feel free to take it on notice.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, I will take that on notice.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: It is not a political trick, as you would appreciate.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No, no, no, it is a legitimate question. But, again, the policy is designed—everything that we are doing around the policy settings is making sure—that digital is, obviously, the preferred thing for the overwhelming majority of our people here in New South Wales. Overwhelming majority; indeed, those that are most vulnerable. People think the vulnerable cannot afford a phone; actually, they do, and they want access to better services and faster services that can be delivered digitally. In fact, I was given this speech time and time again. People say, "The poor can't"—I went to Mumbai. In Mumbai, in the slums of Dharavi, the poorest of the poor had mobile phones. So it is not so much those that are not connected—pardon the pun—but those that are disengaged, like my mother's cohort. They are the ones we have to cater for.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, I want to turn to some policy questions in relation to, effectively, the answers that have come back from the State Insurance Regulatory Authority [SIRA] as well. But they are policy questions, which are best directed at you. Firstly, by way of update, have you been provided with a copy of the Dore review? Where are we up to on that? This is the review into icare that has been commissioned by SIRA. SIRA, I think, said at the last hearing that they anticipate it being public around October.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes. Sorry, I forgot the name of it. Yes, I think that is in draft form. I have not seen it.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: You have not seen it, but it is in draft form. Do you have a timetable—will that document be publicly released, firstly?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I assume so.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Do you have a timetable for when, by any chance?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No. I have got to find out when it will be finalised.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But that has effectively been commissioned, as Ms Donnelly said at the estimates hearing, to inquire into the decline of return-to-work rates by the nominal insurer. That is your understanding?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, that is what SIRA's job is to do.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Are you awaiting the recommendations of Ms Dore in terms of formulating a policy response to that particular issue?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, of course.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thank you. Just checking on that. Some of the answers that have come back—I want to talk about two, specifically—the first is the rise of psychological injuries that the data reveals. It is quite astounding. I rarely do this, but I congratulate SIRA for having the data on this as well. But it is effectively going up by a third every year. Is there a policy that is being contemplated by the Government as to what it should be doing in this respect?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: In relation to workers compensation claims?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes, because it is obviously a rise in cost on the scheme and it has got to have pretty significant premium implications. Is this something that has been brought to your attention?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, if one of the proposals after the consultation is completed is to have wholesale reform in relation to changes around definitions and the like, then that is one of the areas that we would need to explore. But at the moment it is not on the cards.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Specifically, though, the reports do come back and say the level of psychological injury being created, effectively—or at least successfully claimed against—by workers against the

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Department of Education has been troubling. That is, to be fair, in respect to some questions that the Hon. Mark Banasiak has been asking. Are you aware of any specific work that SIRA or icare or the Treasury Managed Fund have done in respect of the Department of Education, which is obviously a government agency, as to why there is such a rise?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No, I do not have that information. But I am happy to take it on notice and find out.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I mean, there have been 2,000 in the past three years. That is troubling, you would agree?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, any injury at work is never good. But I do not know what the trend is or what the benchmark is, so I would just have to get back to you.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay, I appreciate that. I will put the other one to you as well, which is, specifically, the number of psychological claims on notice has come back as 3,486 in 2016-17, and in 2018-19 5,280 were accepted, with 13,000 being accepted over that period of time. It is rising sharply. I am wondering if there is any policy response that the Government, or SIRA for that matter, are contemplating in respect of particularly the rise of psychological injuries?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to take that on notice. Again, I am not across that level of detail in relation to the claims in workers comp.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I suspect you might need to take this on notice as well. I welcome any other advice that might be available. The number of work-related harassment and/or workplace bullying claims has gone up significantly too—close to 30 to 40 per cent—from 1,644 in 2016-17 to 2,369 in 2018-19. Is this prompting any consideration of action?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: This might be a question to Ms Hogan. This arises from the return of information that has come in respect of GovConnect. Do you have the answers on notice that were provided by the department?

Ms HOGAN: What page are you looking at?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: It is not paginated, which is quite annoying; nor are the answers delineated by number either. How about I ask you the questions and give you the document. Effectively, we pursued this in the substantial estimates with Mr King in the public service section. It has come back; I appreciate the fact that the data has come back. In 2017-18 the net overpayment amounts to public servants was \$837,578. The following year it went to \$1,534,780, which has effectively doubled the overpayments. There are 344 overpayment appearances in 2017-18 to 587 in 2018-19. The balance outstanding in 2017-18 of \$284,885 has gone to \$777,000 overpaid to public servants. Why all of a sudden has this gone what appears to be pear shaped?

Ms HOGAN: I have not had a briefing on this yet. I did spend a bit of last week transitioning out of my commissioner role and really only got going here last Thursday. I would have to take it on notice. Most clusters, I imagine including ours, have a process for how they track overpayments and how they recover them. I would have to take specifically on notice this particular matter.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I appreciate that. I would be more confident about the fact that this is under control but for the fact, as you can see, in 2019-20 to date, six pay runs in the financial year to date, and already the amount that has been overpaid just this financial year in six pay runs exceeds the total amount that was overpaid in financial year 2017-18. It is not like this problem is getting any better. It seems it is dramatically worse, with public servants being overpaid here. You understand that having to pay it back would cause hardship for people if they did not expect it?

Ms HOGAN: Yes, I would imagine it can.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: The critical incidents that have come back with GovConnect, which is the next page if it helps, also shows that there has been in the last 12 months 106 critical incidents, of which 19 are P1 critical, as in mission critical business functionality with an impact on more than one critical service. Then P2, 87 major impact critical applications. This contract is not working—is it incorrect to infer that on the basis of what we can see here?

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Ms HOGAN: It would not be appropriate for me to comment without having a full briefing from my team about what constitutes these P1 and P2 incidents and what has been done about them and what processes are in place. I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, we have asked you about GovConnect in previous estimates when you were the Minister for finance. When is the contract expiring on GovConnect—circa 2021?

Ms HOGAN: June 2021.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: We are about 18 months away. When will you begin the processes of effectively deciding the scope of the next contract?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: These are operational issues.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: To be fair, this is supplementary estimates to the whole hearing.

Ms HOGAN: I would have to take a briefing from the team and take it on notice.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is deadly supplementary is all I can say.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Is it being contemplated by the department to effectively insource this again and return it to the public sector at the completion of this contract round? Is that an option which is under consideration?

Ms HOGAN: I am not fully aware of the options that are under consideration at the moment but I am happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, have you sought or imposed any penalties on the providers in the last 12 months?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Are you asking me?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am asking the secretary actually. I think the person behind you might have some advice.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: She was not secretary for the last 12 months, but I am sure Ms Hogan—

Ms HOGAN: Do you mind if I consult?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes, you can consult.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Do you have many more questions, Daniel?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: This is serious. You might—

Ms HOGAN: It is just that we have been dealing with—

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: It is just like you are making it up as you go along.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: No, it is not. It is people getting overpaid. It is a serious issue. I am sorry that you do not think it is a serious issue but the secretary does.

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: No, the questions that you—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Ms Secretary, do you have any advice?

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: You have worked on them for months.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. CATHERINE CUSACK: Sorry.

Ms HOGAN: Just that we have been dealing with both of the providers on a regular basis and I will take the details of it on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In terms of the contract, you do have powers to inflict penalties if they are not meeting KPIs. We have established that in previous estimates hearings. That is correct?

Ms HOGAN: I am not across the detail of this particular contract or what powers I have. I would assume, as with any contract, you can instigate specific clauses but I would not like to make comment when I have not read it.

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The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: One thing that has not come back on notice, and I did ask, is we now know how much people have been overpaid; how many people were underpaid by GovConnect. Do you have that data?

Ms HOGAN: I do not, not to hand, no.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can I ask you to take on notice that net underpayment amount for financial year 2017-18, the number of occurrences, the average underpayment value and the amount that has been restored or at least repaid to the workers. Can we get the same figures for 2018-19, and the same figures for 2019-20 to date?

Ms HOGAN: I will take the question on notice, yes.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Minister, can I ask you about digital driver licences—one of our favourite topics?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I love talking about it as well.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Join me, because you were talking about it on 7 News on 18 October. You said that the rollout of digital driver licences had been delayed due to stability issues. Can you describe what those stability issues are please?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Again, I am not a technician so I was just trying to translate that into layman's terms. What I mean by "stability" is that we are expecting a high demand, so we want to make sure that the platform is stable to reflect the high demand. There has been time and time again where there are new digital products that come to market, for example Samsung when they had their foldable phone, as soon as it comes to market, even a global like Samsung, when they introduced it, their system crashed because they underestimated the demand. I just wanted to triple check that the department was comfortable in anticipation of high demand that it will be stable. That is what I meant by it. I truncated the answer to around stability.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Because previously in response to a supplementary question you stated that there are no existing stability issues with the digital driver licence.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is right.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: And yet it was delayed anyway, as you said on 18 October, due to stability issues.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No. Again, it was an error on my behalf in the sense that I should have provided a more fulsome response—that is, we are expecting stability is the issue that I want to make sure is okay, which it is okay. But I just want to stress test or pressure test the capacity, the load capacity, because I am expecting there to be high demand. Whenever I talk about the digital driver licence everybody that I speak to says, "I want one". As soon as we go live with it I am expecting there to be a rush onto the platform and I just want to make sure that we have the load bearings, to use another term, in place. That is all.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: I note that the Treasurer in his Budget Speech in June said that New South Wales drivers will be the first in the country to have the choice of a digital driver licence from August this year.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: When do you now expect that—

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Very soon.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: You said that to me last time. I guess, being supplementary estimates, by definition it will be sooner now.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: It will be sooner, and very soon.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: This year?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Oh yes, definitely.

The Hon. PETER PRIMROSE: Definitely this calendar year?

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: A Christmas present?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Oh, yes, definitely. I can put another "very"—very, very soon.

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The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: How does it go in clubs and hotels, Minister?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am sorry?

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: Digital licences for RSL clubs and so forth, how has that been resolved?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is a really good question. One of the complexities—

The Hon. SHAYNE MALLARD: They do not accept the digital ones.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, that is the real complexity of it all. The digital driver licence is in its pure basic form a permission to drive—a licensed driver has permission to drive. The police, if they see the digital driver licence, they will be saying, "Yes, we accept that." But a driver licence is used by a whole lot of other big players in the broader ecosystem: pubs, clubs, chemists, airports. They will ask for a driver licence or some form of ID. So if you turn up to an airport and say, "I have my digital driver licence", we are ready but a broader ecosystem may not be and they are out of our control.

We have got to gradually bring all the other players into the market. That is why we have done the trial so far in three sites. We have had about 23,000 people participate and it has been very, very successful. But we also understand that it is not just a simple transactional product. There are a whole lot of other players—local, State and Federal—that will use a driver licence and we need to bring them on the journey so that they can become aware of that and accept it. That will then improve the customer experience. It is a really good question because that would be one of the biggest challenges we have.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In the time remaining I just want to talk to you about the Critical Communications Enhancement Program [CCEP]. This arises again from the answers that have come back on notice. It is a specific policy question that we were asking about. Firstly, is this a program that will allow emergency services to rapidly respond to critical incidents including, for example, bushfires or flights?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes. We are harmonising all of that.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: We learned that the program is being stepped out in four stages, when we had the opportunity to speak in some detail with the public service in estimates.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes. That is part of Greg Wells' scene.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Indeed, but I will come to the policy question. I am just giving you background in case you have not had a chance in detail.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, I understand.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: He said that for the network to have full coverage there are 675 sites that have to be operational.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: He said that that has been delivered in stages. Stage one is complete, welcome. Stages two and three, he has come back on notice and said that stage two and three of the CCEP are being delivered concurrently and include the north coast, the greater metropolitan area and priority areas for the rest of the State.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: He also says that stage four construction will be subject to the development of a further business case. Do you know when that business case will be completed? Have you issued any instructions as to when you would like it to be completed so we can get a funding decision on this?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: No. I am happy to take that on notice though.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: This specifically arose out of investigations that took place in respect to the Tathra incident. Are you aware of that?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Sorry? What Tathra incident?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: The bushfires in Tathra.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I know of the bushfires in Tathra, yes.

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The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Specifically the point was being made that the critical infrastructure in terms of the radio—there were problems with radio networks at the time.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Oh, yes. This is massive. Seriously, it is a massive investment by our Government in critical communications. I cannot begin to tell you how important this is.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Which is why I am asking.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: That is why the police, the ambulance, everybody is on board with this.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thus, as the Minister responsible for building it, I am asking you when you expect the entire network to be operational, including stage four?

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: We also tried to find out whether or not the existing builds, stage one and stage two or three, cover Tathra, which is obviously of keen concern to that community.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: I have the map in my head but I do not know whether it is part of the south coast. I know we have done the north.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: On notice it did not come back as to whether Tathra is covered so I am just asking you if you can clarify that.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Let me check. I know we have done the north and the west but I just do not know whether the south coast is included.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I am not expecting you to know that detail. I am just asking you on notice because it is of critical interest to that community, of course.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Yes, of course.

The CHAIR: Thank you. That was the final question. Thank you so much, all of you, for giving up your time to attend the hearing. We are finished with questioning. The Committee secretariat will be in touch in the near future regarding any questions taken on notice or supplementary questions. As before, the responses will be returnable within 21 days. Good evening.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO: Thank you and thank you everyone.

(The witnesses withdrew.)

The Committee proceeded to deliberate.