

**PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 – REGIONAL TRANSPORT AND ROADS –
QUESTIONS ON NOTICE – 16 MARCH 2022**

QoN001 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, when were you first advised that your agency was intending to make an application to the first Fair Work Commission to seek interim orders to prevent the industrial action?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I was updated or briefed in the lead-up to the hearing on Saturday.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Do you know precisely when?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Regional and Outer Metropolitan updates during the week prior to the shutdown.

QoN002 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Were you asked to come to that meeting?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No.

QoN003 Flooding Northern Rivers

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Excellent. Minister, I just wanted to move things a little bit to what is happening in the northern rivers region as a result of the horrendous catastrophic floods. Could you tell the Committee how much additional resources—and what are they—have you provided to the northern rivers to clear and repair roads and bridges since the floods?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Certainly, Ms Faehrmann. Firstly, I have been on the ground on the North Coast and northern rivers region. Lismore is well-known as a flood town, and I would agree with the sentiment of the hardworking local mayor of Lismore that this was more than a flood. What has occurred in Lismore is a natural disaster. To answer your question, I have been on the ground for a few days last week meeting with the mayors of Tweed shire, Byron shire and Lismore City Council. I have met with the three local State members up on the North Coast, one of which is a colleague of yours, Ms Faehrmann—Tamara Smith. I have met with the Labor member for Lismore, Janelle Saffin, and The Nationals member for Tweed, Geoff Provest. I have included them in my meetings with local government. From that visit it was clear that the scale of damage in road infrastructure is significant. The landslips and just the sheer damage are quite significant. I think what is important, and the feedback I got from local councils, is that they need some assistance in the early response phase to be able to assess and scope what the damage is. There are regional and local roads owned and administered by councils that are still not accessible. The size and scale of the damage is probably,

in some ways, to the next level of what council has had to deal with in the past. Part of the learning from that trip was that we have been able to deploy, at Transport's cost, geotechnical advisers and also engineers to the North Coast. We were able to get a couple of geotechnical advisers into the region within—and I am happy to take this part on notice, but I think it was—maybe two or three days of my visit, being on the ground to work with council to assess some of that damage.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Approximately 230 people have been redeployed to expedite the recovery effort. Over 125 additional resources have been sent to the Northern Rivers, in addition to the 100 Transport for NSW staff and contractors regularly operating in the area.

Additional resources include engineers, surveillance officers, geotechnical experts, project managers, plant operators, construction crews, traffic controllers and sub-contractors.

QoN004 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Sure. But the union gave notice of industrial actions on 9 February. When were you told?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I was advised in the days following the unions giving notice on 9 February 2022, including a briefing from the Secretary of Transport for NSW on 14 February 2022.

QoN005 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: We established that thereabouts on the tenth of—it would have been the Wednesday, the day after, that you probably would have been advised. To be fair, the officials then convene a meeting with the unions on 15 February, which was the following Tuesday, which I understand Mr Merrick attended. Were you at all on that Tuesday prior advised of the outcome of that meeting?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will have to take that on notice, Mr Mookhey.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I was aware meetings were occurring between senior TfNSW executives and the union at that time, and I was advised as a courtesy as negotiations took place.

QoN006 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thursday 17 February. The department advises Minister Elliott to seek an application to suspend the industrial action. Were you

advised that day that an application was being made to suspend the industrial action as it applied to NSW Trains?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice, Mr Mookhey.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Yes.

QoN007 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: That night, your department sends the union a cease and desist notice ahead of a looming application. Were you advised and did you sanction the sending of a cease and desist notice, as it applies to NSW Trains?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Not to my recollection, but I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Transport. I was updated as matters progressed between the Fair Work Commission and Transport for NSW.

QoN008 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Throughout that week, any time from Monday 14 February to—let's go to the Sunday. Did you have any conversations with Minister Elliott about the dispute?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Directly that week?

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No.

QoN009 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I uphold your point of order, and I ask the Minister to be directly relevant to my question. The direct relevance to the question was: Did you have direct conversations with Minister Elliott in the week leading up to the shutdown about the strategy the Government was pursuing?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice, Mr Mookhey.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 8.

QoN010 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, is it the case that since the events of 21 February, your Transport officials are yet to meet with the unions?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I would have to take that on notice because I do not know.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I am aware that there has been regular contact between Transport for NSW Executives and union representatives.

QoN011 Flooding Northern Rivers

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: You absolutely have no disagreement with me on that. That is good to hear. You said resources have been deployed by Transport for NSW in recent days, perhaps. That is also good to hear. Can you be specific about exactly how many additional resources have been sent to the Northern Rivers in terms of people and skilled labourers to get cracking?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Firstly, we have identified key routes, such as the works we did to get the Pacific Highway and M1 opened with more resources there and the stuff we did in Yamba. We are partnering with councils. We have identified and prioritised the key routes, such as the Bruxner Highway. I am going to pass over to Mr Fuller, who might be able to give you a further update on what specifically has developed since I was last there a week ago.

MATT FULLER: Thank you, Minister. Firstly I would like to acknowledge the community in the north and our team. Many of them have actually been directly impacted. Ms Faehrmann, the issues that you speak of are very close to the heart of our people in Transport because a number of them are actually experiencing them firsthand and we are supporting them in dealing with that right across our network.

As the Minister has outlined, we have been actively involved in a range of tasks and have been working very closely with Commissioner Fitzsimmons at Resilience NSW to respond to the State effort, specifically in the north. As the Minister has pointed out, we have a number of teams up there on the ground. I would have to take on notice the exact number of bodies. It is substantial; it is significant. If I give you some specific examples, we have shut down a lot of the work that we were undertaking on the New England Highway, as an example, so we can redeploy resources over to the north of the State.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has partnered with local councils to provide direct support on Local and Regional Roads, including carrying out impact and geotechnical assessments, project management, vegetation removal, traffic control,

earthmoving, spoil removal in addition to emergency road, bridge and slope repairs. This support is ongoing.

Approximately 230 people have been diverted from other areas to expedite the recovery effort. Over 125 additional resources have been sent to the Northern Rivers in addition to the 100 Transport for NSW staff and contractors regularly operating in the area.

Additional resources include engineers, surveillance officers, geotechnical experts, project managers, plant operators, construction crews, traffic controllers and sub-contractors.

QoN012 South Coast road projects

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: Are you happy to do the same thing for the JB road to Sussex upgrade and for the Milton-Ulladulla bypass, both of which you could say the same thing in terms of when the consultations were conducted?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Specifically, I am happy to take it on notice and I am happy to have another look at it. I am not going to make direct commitments at budget estimates here today but, Mr Field, I am happy to review the correspondence I am receiving. I am happy to engage with our team in Transport in the south that look after this project. If more consultation is warranted, I am happy to have a look at it.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: If the circumstances were the same, though, you would be happy to offer the same outcomes for those communities. The preferred corridor for JB road to Sussex was determined in a values management committee meeting or workshop that was fully stacked with Transport for NSW and other government officials. There was not a single community rep on it from what I could see.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I was not in the meeting and I was not the Minister at the time that consultation was done. I am happy to take it on notice and talk to you post-estimates. I appreciate you are a resident from the South Coast; it is where you call home. I am happy to take that on board and happy to take it on notice and talk to the team at Transport about the consultation on that part of the Princes Highway today.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW is continuing to undertake investigations for upgrades to the Princes Highway between Jervis Bay Road and Sussex Inlet Road, and for the Milton Ulladulla bypass.

Transport for NSW remains committed to continuing engagement with the wider community, to achieve a positive outcome that balances the needs of all transport customers.

QoN013 South Coast road projects

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I will be here this afternoon and I will ask those questions.

There are a lot of people in the community who are very interested in the answer. I am asking you as a new Minister—you have come in, you have had

representations and have already acknowledged a failing in the need to go back and have a look at Moruya—can you set some expectations here for your officials about how consultation and transparency should be delivered on these projects? I have given you three examples of where really important information has not been disclosed until someone—myself in some instances and other members of the community—has had to go through a substantial amount of hoop jumping to get basic information about the planning and decision-making about these projects out into the public space. Is it your expectation that the department does better than that?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: If you have specific examples around this, I am happy to take them on notice and I am happy to get a briefing and have a look at it post estimates.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW is continuing to undertake planning for priority projects as part of the Princes Highway upgrade program.

I have instructed Transport for NSW to continue broad community engagement to achieve a positive outcome that balances the needs of all transport customers.

QoN14 – Roads Budget

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, I just wanted to follow a bit of this up. Is the cost of road repair recoverable from the Treasury Managed Fund?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will pass to the secretary about obviously some of—well, it gets complicated with the disaster declaration funding as well.

ROB SHARP: Yes, it does. I would have to take on notice specifically, Mr Mookhey, on that. I cannot tell you at the moment.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Road repairs are recoverable from the NSW Treasury Managed Fund where the road forms part of an insured asset such as a tunnel, bridge, culvert or retaining wall.

QoN015 Biodiversity Offsets Scheme

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: I hear what Mr Dunphy says but we are also currently undertaking the inquiry into the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme in New South Wales at the moment. I am sitting on that inquiry. We have heard evidence that biodiversity offsets for WestConnex for the golden bell frog were delivered in a private plot up around Coffs Harbour, I think it was. So surely you are well intentioned as you go into the project, but then there is the practical delivery against the current scheme and you are trying to get best value for money for the project as well. But clearly there are some questions about whether or not that was the best outcome there.

I am asking: Is there a way we can make sure that we are delivering the best strategic outcome locally? Who ultimately makes this decision within Transport for NSW about how that is delivered, and is there a way to have some more community engagement in that decision-making process? There might be trade-

offs that can be made here around this scheme, but we get better local outcomes. For instance, there is a discussion about those State forests just south of Burrill Lake and whether they are badly fire affected. It might be that there is a way to bring some of these other areas of government consideration around the future of our forests into these discussions. Everyone knows there will be an environmental impact. I am asking you to look more strategically than what you have done demonstrably in the past.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I take on notice that Transport would need to work with a criteria. That is set outside of my portfolio responsibility. But to your point about the delivery and holistically looking at that over a project, I think Mr Dunphy has taken that on board. I am certainly happy to look at that moving forward.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW delivers offsets in accordance with the rules and processes set out in our approvals and in accordance with the *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*.

Transport for NSW endeavours to locate offsets as close as possible to the impacted site. For example, where there is a significant forward demand for offsets, expressions of interests are sought from landholders that might be interested in providing offsets on their property.

The question if State Forest land can play a role in offset delivery is a matter for the Minister for the Planning, as the Department of Planning and Environment is the administrator of the Biodiversity Offset Scheme.

QoN016 Bypass - Nowra

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: There are a lot of people who think there needs to be a bypass at Nowra. It is not part of the current planning for the Princes Highway upgrades. I am asking if you have a view about whether or not there should be a bypass at Nowra, and where that should sit in future planning.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I have visited a lot of regional New South Wales already, but I have not visited Nowra. In fairness, I will take it on notice because I have not been completely briefed on that situation. But I accept that there are conversations at community level about wanting to either be bypassed or not be bypassed.

ANSWER

I am advised:

That a Nowra bypass has support locally. I am open to further investigations on this matter.

QoN017 Bypass - Nowra

ANTHONY HAYES: Purely from the briefing note I have here in front of me, which says that former Minister Constance had mentioned that he would be advocating for a Nowra bypass....

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: When was this project looked at? I think you mentioned that it was looked at and it was deemed not necessary. When did that occur?

ANTHONY HAYES: I would need to investigate. I am not too sure.

Mr JUSTIN FIELD: No worries. Can you take on notice whether or not there has been any formal communication from Andrew Constance when he was Minister for transport or after he left that role or since about this project?

ANTHONY HAYES: I can take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has no record of formal communication from the former Minister for Transport and Roads in relation to this project.

QoN018 Regional Bus

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: To the point of order: This bus has picked up passengers from the regions in New South Wales, as far as we know. It is appropriate to ask: Has taxpayers' money been allocated to this campaign bus?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I know nothing about the bus in question that you refer to with Andrew Constance. The bus is travelling in a metropolitan area, so I would only assume that it is not in my ministerial portfolio. I am happy to take it on notice, Mr Graham, but I know nothing about the bus that you refer to with Mr Constance.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response provided in the hearing.

QoN019 WHTBL hard fill disposal Port of Newcastle

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Right.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Now this letter has been sent from Transport to the council, and it says something totally different. It says: Transport for NSW intends to resume discussions with Port of Newcastle following planning approval and will continue to work closely with them, as well as with Council and the local community ahead of and during construction of Beaches Link.

This now raises the option of toxic sludge going back to Newcastle and being shipped into the surrounds, into areas that you have responsibility for. Are you aware of this? Are you concerned about it?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Firstly, I will broadly take it on notice. It is very much an operational matter, Mr Graham, so I am going to refer to Mr Sharp on this because the project is under a different ministerial portfolio. The ports are not under my portfolio.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I agree.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I accept that some of the regional roads or highways in between are my portfolio responsibility, but I will hand over to Mr Sharp to see if had he has any comment on the letter.

ROB SHARP: Not having read the letter, Mr Graham, the evidence that was given was around the removal of the sludge to do with the new western harbour tunnel. The evidence was that there would be a number of sites that would be used to process this. In respect to this letter, I would have to take it on notice and go back through the infrastructure in place—

ANSWER

I am advised:

I am aware of this issue. I am assured Transport for NSW will take reasonable steps to ensure an appropriate outcome is reached.

QoN020 Fast Rail

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Professor Andrew Norton did a study on this, did he not?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: He did, and he has more than 45 years' experience working on rail infrastructure.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: That is good. Have you read it?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I have not read all of the report. I know of the report but I have not read all of it.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Why is that report not public?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take that on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can we make it public? It was completed last year, was it not?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take that on notice, Mr Mookhey.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Professor McNaughton's expertise and work is being used to shape the NSW Government's Fast Rail Strategy.

Transport for NSW is currently finalising the Fast Rail Strategy which will be publicly released once complete.

Following the release of the Fast Rail Strategy, a consultation and engagement program will be implemented, targeting councils, the community, and industry, to inform ongoing planning and development.

QoN021 Fast Rail

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Have you met with Infrastructure NSW about the design of this fast rail network?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice. I do not think so, but I will take it on notice, Mr Mookhey.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No.

QoN022 Climate and Flood proofing infrastructure

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: I want to go back to whoever was responding to my previous question. It is very hard to tell who is speaking from where I am sitting, but you talked about council artefacts when you said what the department looks at to determine the type of infrastructure that is necessary. To me, that sounds like looking at historical flood records, but I was actually talking about climate forecasts. My new question is: What climate science is your department using to ensure the roads and bridges it is building now can withstand the type of floods Lismore has just seen or something much worse, potentially, in a decade's time? The climate science and climate forecasts.

MATT FULLER: Thank you for the question. It was myself, Matt Fuller, who was responding to your question earlier. I might actually ask Ms Geraghty to come in here because she is in our infrastructure area and is very across the processes that we go through and the information that we rely on. Some of the examples I used before—as I said, local government artefacts are just one and, as you say, they are historical artefacts that refer to flood modelling. But, obviously, as I mentioned, we also bring in other expertise to assist and complement that information. I might ask Ms Geraghty to add to that if that is okay.

GILLIAN GERAGHTY: Thank you, Mr Fuller. Yes, the designs of all of our infrastructure consider a number of different factors. I am happy to take it on notice in relation to what technical elements of climate change and forecasts are considered and come back to you in the afternoon session if that is okay.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW prepares project-specific climate change risk assessment and adaptation plans in accordance with their Climate Risk Assessment Guidelines. In addition, climate risk assessment and adaptation strategies are increasingly part of the environmental assessment process for projects.

Transport for NSW is in the early stages of developing an enterprise-wide, multi-modal climate change risk assessment and adaptation plan.

Transport for NSW contributes to the Department of Planning and Environment-led, multi-agency 'Cross-dependency initiative' which intends to understand interdependent climate change risks and adaptive solutions.

The Transport for NSW Asset Resilience Strategy identifies at a high level the principles and objective of asset resilience and the need to consider future climate change, as well as non-climate risks and adapt its transport assets to the changes.

QoN023 Traffic Lights - Bruxner Highway

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: That would be very valuable. I will move to another question, given the time. Minister, this is quite a specific one actually that I have heard from locals in Lismore. It is generating a lot of problems there. During your visit I wondered if you noticed the traffic lights on Bruxner Highway through Lismore were not operating. Obviously there is a lot of heavy freight movement

through that area now as clean-up continues. I hear that those traffic lights are still inoperable; they are not in operation. Clearly the risk of an accident is quite high. Can you take it upon yourself to try to find out why those lights are not functioning if you cannot answer it?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: Happy to take it on notice. I will be in Lismore on Saturday meeting with the local member and also the Mayor of Lismore, Steve Krieg. I would be happy to discuss it with them then when I am on the ground to see if there is anything—

Ms CATE FAEHRMANN: Can I suggest, Minister, maybe you make a call and see if you can get it happening before the weekend?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I am happy to take it on notice and we will make the call but, just to confirm, I will be on the ground on Saturday in the event that something needs to be done. But we will make the call between now and then as well.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The traffic lights in the lower parts of Lismore, including those on the Bruxner Highway, have been affected by the recent flooding events.

Transport for NSW prioritises the repair and reinstatement of damaged or inoperable traffic lights when it is safe to do so.

QoN024 Fixing Country Roads

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Minister, I am glad you mentioned Fixing Country Roads. It was a key election commitment of \$543 million. Last estimates Minister Toole admitted that \$80.3 million from that program had been transferred out to other Restart NSW projects. The discussion was quite embarrassing. The Minister could not tell us when pressed. He said it had been borrowed; he refused to say when it would go back. He could not tell us which projects it had gone to, where the money had gone or whether taxpayers got good value for it. Will you guarantee that that \$80 million comes back into the Fixing Country Roads program?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: That was evidence given by the former Minister at a former estimates, so I certainly will be taking it on notice, but Ms Hayden is also here and I think she oversees part of the Fixing Country Roads program. Maybe she has more to add, but I will take it on notice. It is evidence at a former estimates by a former Minister before I was the Minister.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The funding for programs under Restart NSW is a matter for the Minister for Infrastructure.

QoN025 Restart NSW

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Minister, I am not asking you about Fixing Country Roads. I am asking you about Restart NSW. It is a different thing.

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I was literally getting to that point and you have cut me off, Mr Chairman.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: The question is a direct question: What are you doing to get some of the \$800 million that your Government is on track to deny to communities it promised to?.....

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: You are familiar that your Government promised 30 per cent of its proceeds would go to regional New South Wales?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: It is currently—well, I will say for the record it is currently tracking at 28 per cent. If you want a further update, I am going to hand over to Mr Sharp.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: No, we can pick it up with Mr Sharp this afternoon, no problems, but the Auditor-General is warning that it will close out at 27 per cent and that 3 per cent gap will deny regional New South Wales \$800 million. What are you doing to get some of that \$800 million back?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Are you doing anything?

The Hon. WES FANG: The Minister took the question on notice, Chair.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Yes, and I asked him his final question. Are you doing anything about this at all?

The Hon. SAM FARRAWAY: I will take it on notice, Mr Mookhey.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This is a matter for the Treasurer and Minister for Infrastructure.

QoN026 Industrial Action

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Do you have the notification with you, by any chance—a copy of the notice you were given?

ROB SHARP: No, I have not got it with me, but I will—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Is it possible we could get it tabled because it is relatively standard, is it not?

ROB SHARP: It would be, yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the document tabled after the hearing.

QoN027 Fare-Free Friday

ROB SHARP: Correct.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: What is the cost of a fare-free Friday each day?

ROB SHARP: I would have to take that on notice. It depends on where the coverage of it is and if it is statewide. There are a number of parameters that would drive that type of cost.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Fare free Friday is not a current NSW Government policy.

QoN028 Road surface lifespan

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Can I ask you these specifics, though. Can you give us an update on the percentage of road pavements in regional and outer metropolitan New South Wales that now exceed their design life of 20 years?

ROB SHARP: I would have to take that on notice in terms of specifics. Are you after the percentage?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. You have given us, helpfully, the percentage at the end of 2020. I am asking for an update one year on.

ROB SHARP: We will take that on notice and come back to you on it.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: These were the figures that you have given us—and you might want to take all of these on notice—the percentage over the design life of 20 years for regional and outer metropolitan roads, the percentage over the 40-year time frame and then the percentage of State roads rated as poor or very poor, each of which you have provided publicly in other forums.

ROB SHARP: Happy to do so. I would add the comment that in terms of asset condition, that is a primary focus for me. So, poor, very poor. Very poor we absolutely focus in on and look at what the safety implications are. Asset life is an interesting one because an asset life is a design life. It depends on your maintenance and the conditions—the climate, the weather, all sorts of things that have impacted. One thing I am aware of on the South Coast in particular with the bushfires and the floods that have occurred is that the road conditions have deteriorated. So when we do the next condition report, I am expecting we will see the road infrastructure ratings come down. That will then drive more investment, and clearly that is going to be needed into that area.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW does not hold this information in this form.

QoN029 Roads Budget

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Precisely why I am asking. The other figure I will ask for is what was described as the \$805 million regional and outer metropolitan road funding shortfall. Could you update that figure as well?

ROB SHARP: That is the Restart?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: No. This is from the assets and services plan.

ROB SHARP: Yes, okay.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: So, simply an update of that figure.

ROB SHARP: Yes.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW does not have an updated figure at this time.

QoN030 Roads Budget

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I might just follow up with one very quick question on that. I understand you were making a claim from the Treasury Managed Fund as well. What powers does the insurer have in determining what gets rebuilt and when?

ROB SHARP: I would have to take on notice the actual insurance claim criteria.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Agencies are responsible for risk assessing the urgency of repairs as well as prioritising the order of repairs.

iCARE is responsible for the appointment of loss adjusters and/or other service providers to collect information on Transport for NSW's behalf to provide upfront approval of insured costs before commencement of repair or replacement works.

QoN031 Roads Budget

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In the insurance industry it is called subrogation. Basically, you are telling me that they are not subrogating and acting in your place; you will continue to act as a decision-maker when it comes to what standards these roads are repaired to.

MATT FULLER: I would certainly take on notice the conditions that our finance team are working with in terms of TMF, but our road teams are the ones making the decision. Our regional directors are the ones making the decisions about the prioritisation over the effort, where that is needed out there on the ground at the moment, and then getting on with that work, the hiring of contractors, all of those sorts of aspects in terms of delivering on the recovery.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW determines the standard to which roads are rebuilt. The Treasury Managed Fund Statement of Cover generally provides cover for replacement or reinstatement to what the asset was prior to the loss but can also consider external standards requiring improvement, for example, council requirements or Australian building standards.

Where Transport for NSW elects to rebuild and improve the asset notwithstanding a specific standard, the Treasury Managed Fund is not liable for the cost of improvements and may adjust the claim payout to reflect the costs assessed as the equivalent of the rebuild of the asset to the same specifications and design as it was prior to the loss.

QoN032 Regional Roads Transfer program

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Can you just remind us what is in the budget in the forward estimates for this program at the moment? What should we be comparing it to when we look at the budget when it lands at the end of June?

ROB SHARP: I would have to take on notice what is in there specifically for the road transfer. I know it is quite complex because clearly there is funding that goes

to councils at the moment, and the local councils would be concerned whether we are just going to take that funding away. There are clearly conversations and discussions around funding—council funding versus what we are funding.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Mr Sharp, could you give us any detail you can on notice about the current funding commitment—
ROB SHARP: Yes, I will take it on notice. I do not have it at the moment.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The NSW Government allocated \$250 million for projects in the priority round of the Regional Road Transfer and Road Reclassification Review.

QoN033 Regional Roads Transfer program

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Where is that reported in the budget papers?
MATT FULLER: I would have to take that question on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The \$250 million commitment is detailed in the Regional NSW Paper and included in the headline figures in Budget Paper 2 Outcomes Statement.

QoN034 Regional Roads Transfer program

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But I am looking at the capex side, and I cannot see it in Budget Paper No. 3. Can you perhaps take it on notice and tell me where it is reported?
CYNTHIA HEYDON: Yes, we can take that on notice and come back.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The capital component is included in the Minor Works line item within the Budget Paper 3 Infrastructure Statement.

QoN035 Regional Roads Transfer program

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Could you tell us what is on the opex side of things? That is one of the questions about the money that has been allocated: Will it pick up the full cost of that? So perhaps some detail on that as well.
ROB SHARP: I think the 250 was to address here-and-now issues that were marked as concerns whilst we work through this process.
The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes.
ROB SHARP: We will take on notice the recurring expenditure question.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The scope and nature of the funding for the priority round is still subject to completion of a business case.

QoN036 Flooding Northern Rivers

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Just a follow-up question. Does Transport have access to the critical telecommunications network that is customer service building or network control?

MATT FULLER: I will take that on notice but I believe we do.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Was it used?

MATT FULLER: I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has access to the Government Radio Network.

QoN037 Bushfire resilience

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: How many trees have been removed?

ROB SHARP: I would have to take it on notice, but it is quite a few thousand. But it is not 40 metres of knocking trees down; it is very targeted at the trees that are in the high-risk areas. It is actually part of a broader resilience program because often these smaller communities have one road coming in. We are looking at, for these settlements, how do you ensure you have got two roads and also the trees that are the likely ones to cause the issues? So a combination of roads, repairs, upgrades to those roads, and the tree removal.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: You think a couple of thousand trees have already been removed?

ROB SHARP: Yes, and I will come back to you with the exact details. There is the trial, we know how many trees and we know the cost as well, but I have not got it here.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So you know the cost of the removal so far?

ROB SHARP: Yes.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can we get that on notice? You describe this as a trial. As a precursor to what?

ROB SHARP: If the trial works we will roll this out more broadly as part of the corridor resilience program that we are running. It was really to see the approval processes, what was the cost, how feasible was it, did it really achieve the results? I am pleased to say it was very cost-effective and we believe as part of the resilience program it has a role to play. So we will factor that in now as part of our ongoing resilience program.

ANSWER

I am advised:

There have been approximately 70,000 trees removed to the cost of just over \$10 million.

QoN038 Bushfire resilience

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: If we can get the location of where the trees have been removed and the number of trees by location, that would be helpful as well—on notice.

ROB SHARP: Yes. Take that on notice. The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can we get that on notice? You describe this as a trial. As a precursor to what?

ROB SHARP: If the trial works we will roll this out more broadly as part of the corridor resilience program that we are running. It was really to see the approval processes, what was the cost, how feasible was it, did it really achieve the results? I am pleased to say it was very cost-effective and we believe as part of the resilience program it has a role to play. So we will factor that in now as part of our ongoing resilience program.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Princes Highway – between Batemans Bay to Termeil, approximately 4230 small trees/saplings

Princes Highway – between Eden to Hardakers, approximately 965 trees

Princes Highway – South Nowra to the Victorian border, approximately 1100 trees

Bruxner Highway - 885 mature trees

Pacific Highway (A1 & A43) – approximately 23,300 small trees/saplings

Pacific Highway (M1 Motorway) – approximately 36,000 small trees/saplings

Pacific Hwy (Link Road) – 2,900 small trees/saplings

Gwydir Highway – approximately 800 mature trees removed

Hunter Expressway – three mature trees removed

QoN039 Fixing Country Roads

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to return to the fate of that \$80 million that was redirected from unallocated funds in the Fixing Country Roads program. The former Minister indicated it had been borrowed, it would come back. Has it come back? Can you give us any sense of the fate of this?

ROB SHARP: I would have to take that on notice. We are in the middle of the budget process, so I should be able to find out exactly what the status is.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Questions in relation to funding of the Fixing Country Roads program fall under the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Infrastructure.

A decision on the number of tranches and timing for the next round of the program has not yet been made. Transport for NSW will contact councils when a future funding round will be announced

The decision on future timing for the next round will be based on maximising the program outcomes and supporting the delivery of projects by councils.

QoN040 TAHE access fees

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can you tell me, how much does NSW Trains pay for its access fees for this financial year?

DALE MERRICK: I would have to come back with you on notice for the exact amount.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: We had \$700 million, I think it has been described, or 680 between both you and Sydney Trains. Your annual report, I think, had a figure. I am only going from memory. It was 140-ish, I thought, but I could be wrong on that. Of the 680, do you know how much is coming from your organisation?

DALE MERRICK: I will take it on notice and provide that.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But you do not know? Is that the reason why you are taking it on notice?

DALE MERRICK: Not at hand, no.

ANSWER

I am advised:

In the 2021-22 financial year, NSW TrainLink is paying a combined \$242.3 million in access and licence fees to TAHE. Of this, \$66.7 million is in relation to access fees.

QoN041 TAHE access fees

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Your access fees are due, according to the advice that has been provided in the State accounts—when I say "your", I mean yours and Sydney Trains jointly—compounding growth by 14 per cent per annum between now and the end of the decade. Is that consistent with what you are assuming?

Does that sort of—

DALE MERRICK: It does.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: How much of that is coming from you?
DALE MERRICK: The funding for access fees is forthcoming from Treasury.
The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: But the additional access fees that you are paying, how much of that are coming from NSW Trains, of that 14 per cent annual growth? Do you know?
DALE MERRICK: I have to take that on notice and come back to you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Access fees in relation to the Heads of Agreement signed in December 2021, are subject to commercial negotiations between TAHE, Transport for NSW, Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink.

QoN042 TAHE access fees

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: When were you advised that you would be getting an additional \$1.1 billion to pay access fees in the half-yearly budget review?
DALE MERRICK: I would have to go back and seek the date.
The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Did you find out in the half-yearly budget review?
DALE MERRICK: I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW was advised on 14 December 2021 that additional provision was made by NSW Treasury for payment of access and licence fees by Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink to TAHE.

QoN043 TAHE access fees

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: If you signed it on the Saturday and we found out you got the money on the Thursday, did you find out you got the money on the Thursday?
DALE MERRICK: I am not sure of the exact date but the funding was confirmed.
The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Around that time?
DALE MERRICK: Like I said, I would have to take the date on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer you to the response to Question on Notice 42.

QoN044 Bus Contracts and Data Rooms

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: If you require to get advice, that is a different matter. But I have to say that commercial-in-confidence is not a recognised, accepted reason not to be able to answer a question.

BARBARA WISE: Certainly. In that case, I am happy to take it on notice around what I could provide. But at this point in time I am unable to provide any information.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Let me put it you the other way, if this makes it any easier. Can you give us any assurance, given that this document went up, that the confidentiality of these data rooms—the ordinary processes that we would expect the agency to be able to safely operate—has not been breached?

BARBARA WISE: I would have to come back to you on notice with any detail around that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW is confident in the integrity of the process and the security of the data room, with standard practices in place to deal with issues as they arise with the involvement of the probity adviser.

QoN045 Bus Contracts and Data Rooms

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Are there any existing options within the existing contracts to extend further?

BARBARA WISE: I would have to take it on notice. We have exercised an option already to get us to June 2024.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Both existing contracts have been extended by three years by way of mutual agreement. Services are continuing to be delivered under the same contractual funding arrangements, including indexation as required.

Outer Sydney Metropolitan Bus Contract 6 has one remaining provision for one further extension. All options have been exhausted in Outer Metropolitan Bus Service Contract 7.

QoN046 Bus Contracts and Data Rooms

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Ordinarily we have two options, do we not, on these contracts?

BARBARA WISE: In the past that has been the case, but I would need to take on notice if we have any further available to us.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: In exercising the option have we incurred any further cost?

BARBARA WISE: I would have to take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 45.

QoN047 Bus Contracts and Data Rooms

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I accept you have taken this on notice, so I look forward to the response. But, as of today, there is just no explanation from the agency about why this is postponed for a year. This was meant to be dealt with. Is that really the position as we sit here today? There is just no explanation at all?
BARBARA WISE: I will take that one on notice. I need to take some advice on that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

It is expected that the Outer Metropolitan procurement will commence in late 2022. Transport for NSW made this decision to better align with the timing of Greater Sydney bus tenders and to optimise market interest as well as effectively manage project risks.

QoN048 NIF

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: So how many are arriving from Korea every month?
DALE MERRICK: The planned cadence is two per month. I would have to check and take on notice the actual delivery schedule.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The planned cadence is two train shipments per month.

QoN049 NIF

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: The protected industrial action is about deploying them, isn't it? It is not about receiving them from Korea. What impact does the industrial action have on whether or not these are shipped from South Korea?

DALE MERRICK: The effect of protected industrial action is around testing and commissioning of those trains when they arrive in the country.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Fair enough. But I am talking specifically about arrival, not post-arrival, which I can understand. Can I just understand that, if there is a delay on the ones that are already here, you might then adjust the order for those that are shipping. Is that what has happened?

DALE MERRICK: That is potentially an outcome.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Mr Merrick, you are saying that is potentially an outcome. I am asking you specifically what is going on?

DALE MERRICK: I would have to take it on notice as to what the actual delivery schedule was as opposed to what it has been.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW negotiated a four-month shipment pause between January and April 2022. Trains manufactured during this period will be stored in Korea.

QoN050 NIF

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: What about the access fees? You are paying to maintain them, but are you paying to actually use them still?
DALE MERRICK: I would have to take that on notice and confirm.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No additional access fees are being paid by Transport for NSW to use these trains.

QoN051 NIF

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: There are supply chain issues across the supply chain. Worldwide there is a semiconductor shortage. It is not a surprise that there are issues when it comes to rail manufacturing. South Korea is affected.
ROB SHARP: I am not aware of any global supply chain issues, but I will take that on notice too.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No supply chain issues are currently impacting manufacturing in Korea.

QoN052 NIF

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: To be fair, the CEO of TAHE told us that at estimates—that there were issues to do with South Korea's ability to access the materials required to build the sets. What I am asking is have you been advised, firstly, as to what they are—which you have taken on notice. But, specifically, we are meant to be getting two a month. Are we still getting two a month?
ROB SHARP: I will take on notice the exact delivery schedules, as Mr Merrick has said.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The current delivery program has a forecast completion date of mid-2024.

QoN053 Martin Bridge, Taree

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can I ask you about the Martin Bridge, Taree project? Who is the best person there on this one?
ROB SHARP: Are you across this?
MATT FULLER: Martin Bridge, Taree? We may have to take it on notice, but—
The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay. Are you currently repainting the Martin Bridge in Taree?
MATT FULLER: We will have to take that on notice.
The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay. Well, I think you are. From your website, you apparently are repainting the Martin Bridge in Taree, and there has been a delay. I am just reading from your website. It says:

Work on the project started on 11 June. Due to weather delays and continuing COVID-19 impacts ... we are expecting delays to the completion of the ... project. So I am interested as to when this project is meant to complete. Do you mind taking that on notice?

MATT FULLER: Can do, no problem.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The repainting of Martin Bridge is expected to be completed in September 2022, weather permitting. The budget for the project is \$34.8 million.

QoN054 Martin Bridge, Taree

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can you also take on notice what the budget is for the project?

MATT FULLER: We can take that on notice, no problem.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Equally, I cannot see it reported anywhere in the budget papers, and I understand it to be a significant project, so I would be interested if you can tell me where precisely the money is coming from for that particular project?

MATT FULLER: We can take that on notice. But generally, for maintenance programs, they may not appear as separate items in the budget papers. Our original maintenance delivery area has a substantial budget. Mr Graham was referring to the asset management plan. It is detailed in there. There is about a \$1.3 billion budget.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: That is on the recurrent side, yes?

MATT FULLER: That is right. Repainting of the bridge would be of a recurrent nature. So that would fall in the maintenance delivery space, I assume. We will check, and we will come back on the detail of that.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 53.

QoN055 Electric Vehicles

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I turn to another set of questions on electric vehicles. This is really about the EV charging stations for vehicles and where we are up to on the rollout of that. The Government has made a number of commitments. Some of those have been working with NRMA, for example. But also, in February 2022 there was talk about co-funding 1,000 electric-vehicle charging stations across the State over four years at intervals of 50 kilometres. Where is that up to?

ROB SHARP: In terms of the actual status of delivery, I am not across the detail. I am, obviously, aware of the latest commitment in terms of the rollout in February. It is through a partnership with NRMA, so I would have to take that on notice and come back with the exact status.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Perhaps in doing that, could you give us some breakdown? I am open to what would be the most sensible way to break it down, but some regional breakdown of where these are, as we stand now. This

commitment has been made. Where are we at now? Perhaps by each State electorate or whatever regional boundary is sensible, Secretary, from your point of view.

ROB SHARP: Yes.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: And then how rapidly this is going to be rolled out. It is obviously a very short time frame, given the intervals we are talking about of just 50 kilometres.

ROB SHARP: Yes, agreed. We will come back with that detail and will break it out accordingly.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: In terms of the funding for those, what is the breakdown of the 1,000 vehicle charging stations between the private operators and the New South Wales Government?

ROB SHARP: I am not across that detail, so I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Just to make it clear, I think we are looking for an assessment not only of this commitment but also of how many charging stations are in place at the moment. What are we building from now and how much will this add?

ROB SHARP: So what is the baseline and what are the new additions?

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, precisely.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Together with NRMA, Transport for NSW has co-funded the roll out of over 20 fast charging stations across Regional NSW. Currently, nine of these locations are operational and the remainder will be operational within the next 12 months. These locations are publicly available on the NRMA website.

The coverage commitments for public electric vehicle charging stations under the NSW Electric Vehicles Strategy are a matter for the Treasurer and the Minister for Environment.

QoN056 Fixing Country Roads

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I will ask you a couple of quick questions, which I suspect, Mr Sharp, you might need to take on notice as well. This arises from the Restart NSW fund. Specifically, I am talking about Budget Paper No. 3. On page 4-6 the Restart NSW commitment at the 2021-22 budget for the Fixing Country Roads program is listed as \$458 million, which I interpret as being all the commitments in the years to date for that program from that fund, not just the ones granted in this particular budget. I am hoping that you could provide us, either now or more likely on notice, a list of all the projects that that \$458 million is committed to.

ROB SHARP: Yes, I will take that on notice. You did raise recently a question around the new-start regional road corridors, and there were some—

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: I got to the bottom of that myself.

ROB SHARP: I have the details here if you want it.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: It is okay. You have already said that you would provide it on notice.

ROB SHARP: Send it through? Excellent.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The Program has held five complete rounds.
The list of successful projects is available on Transport for NSW's website.
This does not include abandoned, declined or relinquished projects as at the time of the release of Budget Paper No. 3 from the 2021-22 State Budget.

QoN057 Level Crossings

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: How many level crossings might that improve? Just give us some sense.

ROB SHARP: Small numbers.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, sure.

ROB SHARP: I think seven or eight. It is not the 1,300 or so level crossings that are out there across the various farms.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes. I understand.

ROB SHARP: We are allocating some funds to those trials, the aim being to then roll out a program. With targeting these trials on level crossings—and there are probably about 900 of them—that, ultimately, if these trials are successful, we would look to put a business case up. We are now liaising with the Commonwealth Government as well. This is obviously a national issue so the secretaries across Australia are all aligned on this. We are sharing learnings and there are some new entrants that have come into the market as well with some technology. So technology looks like it is going to be part of the solution here but we are at a point where probably another 12 months would be my suspicion to get those trials done and then present a business case to government.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Right. It is definitely not heading towards this budget cycle but are you hopeful of getting into the next budget cycle? Is that an option here?

ROB SHARP: Yes, correct...

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Thank you for that. If you could take on notice whether there has been a response from the Australian Government to that specific correspondence?

ROB SHARP: Yes. I will take that on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW continues to engage across jurisdictions in relation to emerging technologies designed to support safety at level crossings.

QoN058 Contractors

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Can I ask you, Mr Merrick—I am just referring to a couple of issues in which I am interested in an explanation of what they are and what they mean—but apparently you, in your sales of goods and services from contracts with customers in the past financial year, earned \$25 million from what was described as labour cost recovery and that is \$5 million greater than the year

before, so congratulations on increasing your revenue by 25 per cent on that item. What is that?

DALE MERRICK: I will take that on notice and give you the detail.

ANSWER

I am advised:

The revenue advised in the 2020-21 NSW TrainLink Annual Report included recovery of labour costs related to a number of Transport for NSW managed projects including Mariyung, Regional Rail, and Sydney Metro as well as coach trial recovery and a server relocation.

QoN059 Contractors

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thank you. Equally, according to your other operating expenses, you used \$30 million in the past financial year for what was described as other contractors. Is that labour hire?

DALE MERRICK: Again, I will take that on notice and I will get you the detail.

ANSWER

I am advised:

No. The operating expenses in the 2020-21 NSW TrainLink Annual Report relating to other contractors related to the provision of services comprised of costs relating to cleaning, including COVID-19 cleaning, the Service NSW Contact Centre, Melbourne Booking Office as well as IT and Human Resources.

QoN060 TAHE access fees

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Thank you. If you do not mind, that would be good. Equally, it says here that your track access fee was \$19 million as well. That is not the TAHE fee. That is something else. What is that?

DALE MERRICK: We have access to five networks.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay.

DALE MERRICK: I can take on notice what the breakdown is for those five networks.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Okay. That would be helpful. The other ones are explained, so that is it from me. That will be helpful if you can take those on notice, thank you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This track access fee related to the networks accessed by NSW TrainLink including Australian Rail Track Corporation and John Holland Rail as well as Queensland Rail Ltd and Victrack.

QoN061 Jenolan Caves Road

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I just want to turn to the Jenolan Caves Road. Damage to the access road to the Jenolan Caves precinct occurred in 20 March 2021.

There was severe damage by flooding and landslides and it has really led to a

prolonged road closure. I mean, it is a very significant way around, given this key road. Where is this project up to, or where are these repairs up to?

ROB SHARP: I will pass this to Mr Fuller, but it is a very substantial land slip and engineering challenge.

MATT FULLER: Thank you, Mr Graham. You are quite right. The team continue to work on Jenolan Caves Road. The good news is that it was actually reopened again on Friday of last week after the current events and there is ongoing work on the road corridor, as you have suggested, but the slips this time around were minimised and the team were able to do that. I think it is fair to say that progressively as work continues that road is becoming more resilient, and we were able to reopen it sooner after these events. That work will continue. I will have to take on notice exactly when it is scheduled to complete.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Heavy rain over a number of days in March 2021 caused landslips and erosion along Jenolan Caves Road at Hampton, Two Mile and Five Mile.

Detailed design for the slope repair at Hampton is expected to be finalised in April 2022.

The final design for the Two Mile slope slippage, between Carpark Two and Caves House, has been approved following a heritage assessment by Heritage NSW. Tender documents are being prepared, with construction expected to start in August 2022.

Works to repair the embankment on the Five Mile section will start in May 2022.

QoN062 Five Mile Hill

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: What has been the cost of the work, particularly in the slope failure in the area at the top of Five Mile Hill?

MATT FULLER: I would have to take that on notice and come back with an exact figure.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Remediation of Jenolan Caves Road at Five Mile is being undertaken in two stages. The first stage will repair the smaller embankment failures, which will allow access to the major slope site.

The forecast natural disaster remediation costs of the smaller embankment failures is approximately \$550,000, of which \$75,000 has been invested in design and development activities for the minor slope repairs.

A further \$333,000 has been spent on investigations and evaluating options for the major slope site. Forecast costs for the major slope site are not yet available.

QoN063 Bus Driver Recruitment

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Will you provide on notice, if possible, an update of what strategies are in place to assist in the recruitment of bus drivers to regional New South Wales?

BARBARA WISE: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: If possible, can we get a response to the BusNSW suggestion around specific funding to allow new recruits to the bus and coach industry to upgrade to a heavy rigid or a medium licence?

BARBARA WISE: It is not something I can answer because I do not handle that kind of part, but some part of transport certainly does.

The Hon. DANIEL MOOKHEY: Maybe the secretary should to take that on notice.

ROB SHARP: I will take it on notice.

ANSWER

I am advised:

Transport for NSW has provided a range of support to bus operators during the COVID-19 pandemic, including paying for the installation of bus driver screens, additional cleaning, maintaining all timetabled services across Regional NSW, and supplying rapid antigen tests to bus operators to support them in exercising an essential worker exemption for school bus services.

Transport for NSW recruits for a diverse range of roles across Regional NSW on an ongoing basis for the Transport cluster. Since 2017, there has been an intake of around 2,200 drivers to meet the supply and demand for bus operations across NSW.

QoN064 Commuter Car Parks

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I want to turn to what I would describe as some of the best-known commuter car parks and the commitments that have been made recently about the \$30 million for the Gosford commuter car park project, and also the \$5 million for the Woy Woy commuter car park project. These commitments were made by the Commonwealth Government but obviously they are being implemented in New South Wales. What is the status of those two car park projects?

ROB SHARP: I will have to pass this to—

MATT FULLER: I am aware that we have a note on this one, but we may have to come back to it or take it on notice, just in terms of exactly where those projects are at.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the responses to Supplementary Questions 26 through 41.

QoN065 Settlers Road Remediation

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Feel free to keep looking for it. I will ask one other question and if you do not have any details, you can provide them. I might put to you a range of detailed questions on it. While you are checking that, I will ask you about another issue in the Central Coast area, and that is on the western side of

the Central Coast, with the road closure of Settlers Road at the intersection of the Old North Road near Wisemans Ferry crossing.

The Hon. WES FANG: This is very localised.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: The road requires rapid remediation due to the fact that Ausgrid trucks need to get around to the Macdonald River valley in the Hawkesbury to repair the electricity. That is why it is urgent. Is there any update about that situation?

MATT FULLER: I will have to take that on notice. That is a very specific issue.

ANSWER

I am advised:

This is a matter for Central Coast Council and Hawkesbury City Council.

QoN066 Commuter Car Parks

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: Yes, understood. Is there anything you can tell the Committee about the commuter car parks?

MATT FULLER: Not at this point, Mr Graham. We will come back to you.

The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM: I will put these details to you and I am happy for you to take them all on notice, if that is the case. Where are we up to in general, including, has the New South Wales Government surveyed potential sites for where they might go? What are the sites? When might this happen? What are the current time lines for this? Have we actually produced any of the documents that you might normally associate with these sorts of developments? Have we produced a strategic business case document? Is there a draft development project proposal? Finally, how much of the money that has been committed for each of those, that is, \$30 million for Gosford, \$5 million for Woy Woy has been spent?

MATT FULLER: We will see what information we have got and come back to you.

ANSWER

I am advised:

I refer to the response to Question on Notice 64.