

TUESDAY, 30 JULY 2019

ESTIMATES—TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—TRANSPORT AND MAIN ROADS

Estimate Committee Members

Mr SR King (Chair)

Mr TJ Sorensen

Mr CE Boyce

Mr RI Katter

Mr BJ Mellish

Mrs JR Miller

Members in Attendance

Mr SJ Minnikin

Ms SL Bolton

Mr MC Berkman

Mr MJ Hart

Mr J-P H Langbroek

In Attendance

Hon. MC Bailey, Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Ms T Van Alphen, Chief of Staff

Department of Transport and Main Roads

Mr N Scales, Director-General

Queensland Rail Limited

Mr N Easy, Chief Executive Officer

The committee met at 9.00 am.



CHAIR: Good morning. I declare this hearing of estimates for the Transport and Public Works Committee open. I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which our parliament stands. My name is Shane King, member for Kurwongbah and chair of the committee. The other committee members here today are Mr Ted Sorensen, member for Hervey Bay and deputy chair; Mr Colin Boyce, member for Callide; Mr Robbie Katter, member for Traeger; Mr Bart Mellish, member for Aspley; and Mrs Jo-Ann Miller, member for Bundamba. The committee has granted leave for non-committee members to ask questions at the hearing today and so other members may be present over the course of the proceedings.

Today the committee will consider the Appropriation Bill 2019 and the estimates for the committee's areas of responsibility. I remind everyone present that any person may be excluded from the proceedings at my discretion as chair or by order of the committee. The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's Conditions for Broadcasters of Proceedings are available from the secretariat. I ask that mobile phones or other electronic devices be switched off or turned to silent mode. Please be advised that photography and video recording of the proceedings by officials or members of the public is prohibited. Also I remind you that food and drink other than water are not permitted in the chamber.

The committee will examine the portfolio areas in the following order: Transport and Main Roads from 9 am to 11 am and from 11.30 am to 1.15 pm; Housing and Public Works, Digital Technology and Sport from 2.15 pm to 4.15 pm and from 4.45 pm to 6.30 pm. The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2019 for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. The committee will examine the minister's portfolio until 1.15 pm and will suspend proceedings during this time for a break from 11.00 am to 11.30 am.

I acknowledge the visiting members present Mr Steve Minnikin, member for Chatsworth, and Ms Sandy Bolton, member for Noosa. I remind those present today that the committee's proceedings are proceedings of the parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament also apply in this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. I intend to guide proceedings today so that relevant issues can be explored fully without imposing artificial time limits and to ensure there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members of the committee.

On behalf of the committee I welcome the minister, the director-general, departmental officers and members of the public to the hearing. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask departmental officers to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister or director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio area of Transport and Main Roads open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Mr BAILEY: Thank you, Chair. Good morning, Chair, committee members, other members and officials. Our latest Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program will deliver a fourth record roads transport program: \$23 billion will be invested over four years creating more than 21,500 jobs. \$14½ billion from this program focuses on regional Queensland, supporting 13½ thousand regional jobs. This record investment adds to the 207,000 jobs already created under the Palaszczuk Labor government.

Almost two years into our second term we have delivered 56 of the 67 road and transport election commitments already. From the Smithfield bypass and the Haughton River upgrade to the sealing of Cape York, thousands of people are turning up to work today because of this Palaszczuk Labor government. Compare that to the LNP's cuts during its term: \$600 million of roads funding, more than 14,000 workers sacked and plans to sell off our publicly owned assets like the ports of Townsville and Gladstone.

Last week I joined the member for Mount Ommaney at the first sod turn for the \$80 million Sumners Road interchange upgrade after the LNP cut that congestion busting project. Construction is underway on the M1, the Ipswich Motorway, the Mackay ring-road, the Peninsular Development Road, the Warrego Highway and, of course, the Bruce Highway upgrade program. We are building the \$812 million highway upgrade at the Sunshine Motorway to Caloundra Road on the Bruce Highway and in Rockhampton we have started the \$157 million northern access upgrade to be followed by the duplication of the Capricorn Highway to Gracemere. Cairns Port is undergoing a transformational \$127 million development to unlock new tourism opportunities and 2,700 new Far North Queensland jobs. In Townsville we are delivering the \$193 million port channel upgrade with the Townsville ring-road stage 5 to come and at Gladstone, Rockhampton and Bundaberg we have seen another record trade year with \$124 million tonnes through those ports.

The Palaszczuk government has unveiled a half-a-billion-dollar plan to boost mineral freight exports on the Mount Isa line. Freight charges will be discounted and a new container terminal built at the port of Townsville to support North Queensland's resource industry. This investment comes after the Queensland Rail task force of 400 staff restored the Mount Isa line in only 12 weeks and improved freight travel times after long sections were washed away during the North Queensland floods.

We are building a better M1 from Brisbane to the border with a \$2.3 billion investment for four upgrades. Major projects, Eight Mile Plains to Daisy Hill and Varsity Lakes to Tugun, are ready to roll as soon as the current two M1 upgrades finish next year. Road safety continues to be a key priority. Our last budget secured an extra \$205 million, boosting our road safety spend to \$900 million over the next four years.

Our government is investing in public transport following the years of botch-ups and cuts by the LNP. Yesterday Queensland Rail restored 430 weekly services and a consistent Monday to Friday timetable after the LNP failed to start training any train drivers in 2014 and cut 48 drivers over its term, directly impacting the events of October 2016. Since 4 October 2016, 177 drivers and 314 guards have been trained and are working on the network. A further 74 trainee drivers and 70 trainee guards are currently in the system. This is the largest driver recruitment campaign in Queensland Rail history.

A further 59 existing three-car sets have been upgraded to six-car sets, meaning in total 200,000 extra seats have been added from yesterday. For the second year in a row we have created record patronage on our public transport system in South-East Queensland with a record 189 million trips—one of which I enjoyed this morning on the way in—seven million extra trips on the previous financial year, a 3.7 per cent increase after a 3.1 per cent increase the year before. The Palaszczuk government is delivering the latest technology for commuters, a \$371 million smart ticketing project that will allow Queenslanders and visitors all over our state to use the same system, using their smart phone, smart watch, their credit or their debit card on board, just like they do in Chicago, Vancouver and in New York.

We are backing Queensland boating too thanks to a more than \$100 million allocation for boat infrastructure and dredging over the next four years, as well as our War on Wrecks task force, cleaning up our waterways with more than 250 sunken vessels dealt with. The Palaszczuk government is building on its achievements, creating jobs and delivering the transport, road and marine infrastructure that Queenslanders need.

CHAIR: We will now start questioning. I call the member for Chatsworth.

Mr MINNIKIN: My first few questions will be asked to the director-general of TMR. Good morning, Mr Scales. Reference is made to the departmental SDS portfolio overview, agencies and services, specifically the commercialised business unit, RoadTek, as well as pages 40, 41, 42, construction and maintenance services. Can the director-general advise if he is aware of any investigation into allegations of fraud within the TMR RoadTek Brisbane operations, including fraudulent charging of labour and plant to projects that were not taking place at the time specified?

Mr Scales: Good morning, Chairman and committee. I am not aware of any investigations that are taking place into RoadTek.

Mr MINNIKIN: For the purposes of clarity, Mr Scales, you are not aware of any CCC investigation within your department—any CCC investigation?

Mr Scales: The CCC investigations, when they do occur, I would not necessarily be aware of, because sometimes they are handled at the levels below me. Certainly I would not necessarily be aware of any individual ones that may be happening. We do refer items where we think there is an issue and where we think the CCC needs to be involved. We had an issue several years ago now with the fraudulent use of licences, Operation Danish. We referred that to the CCC. That was fully investigated and sorted out. In relation to RoadTek, no, I am not aware of anything that is handled by the CCC at this point in time.

Mr MINNIKIN: In reference to the SDS, the performance statement on page 12 and the delivering of products and services, Director-General, are you able to advise of any departmental investigation into allegations of fraudulent use of QFleet and plant vehicles in relation to home garaging privileges, the fabrication of trips to justify usage and related falsified start and finishing times?

Mr Scales: No, I am unaware of anything of that order or of that potential in RoadTek at all at this point in time.

Mr MINNIKIN: That was in relation to any departmental investigation, not just RoadTek.

Mr Scales: In any departmental investigation, as I said earlier, there may be CCC investigations happening now that I am not aware of that have been referred to by our Ethical Standards Unit. I would keep out of that. That would be done by the CCC and individual members of my department.

Mr MINNIKIN: Director-General, page 5 of the departmental SDS makes reference to major transport and infrastructure project evaluation and the Cross River Rail project. With more trains running more often across the whole of South-East Queensland, can you please advise of the results of the modelling of the network that Transport and Main Roads has undertaken in relation to the increased closure times at many of the level crossings as a result of that increased frequency, and particularly the relevant and resultant impact on traffic waiting times?

Mr Scales: On the modelling side, if you take what we are doing with level crossings, we have recently—in the past few years—taken out Telegraph Road and Robinson Road level crossings. That was \$82 million and \$199 million in total. We are now currently progressing planning to identify priority

level crossings for treatment in the South-East Queensland area. We are now looking, I can advise, at Beams Road at Carseldine and Boundary Road at Coopers Plains to identify key issues and treatment options for rail and road movements into the future.

The member is right: if you have increased frequency of trains, you will get increasing downtime of the boom gates. The government has committed to partner with the Brisbane City Council to deliver the Lindum level crossing planning study. That is \$400,000 towards the study, matching the Australian government's \$400,000 commitment. We are working very hard on level crossing treatments in the SEQ area. There is the National Level Crossing Safety Committee, of which I am chair. There is also the Queensland Level Crossing Safety Group. Bear in mind the timetable for this: Cross River Rail is planned to open in 2024, so we have five years to actually complete the planning and then take it out. The ones that we are looking at in some detail are locations at Beams Road at Carseldine and Boundary Road at Coopers Plains.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, is it true from your modelling that, particularly with reference to the level crossing at Boundary Road, Cooper Plains, within the past decade because of boom gate strikes the crossing can be down for up to 20 minutes out of every 60 minutes?

Mr Scales: That would be an abnormal case. Yesterday, for example, we had a boom gate strike. We also had a bridge strike. Unfortunately, they happen a lot, despite the fact that we put a lot of warnings and traffic lights in as well. I think the planning is underway, to answer your question. Cross River Rail is in 2024, so we have five years to get the planning bid for the money. A good example of that is Beams Road and Boundary Road, and also not to forget the Lindum level crossing.

Mr MINNIKIN: What budget amounts in QTRIP have been allocated over the forward estimates to the upgrades of these open level crossings that you have outlined?

Mr Scales: The one I have referred to is the \$400,000 planning study for Lindum. We are still doing the work for Beams Road at Carseldine. Probably, there is not a great deal in this current financial year. In the forwards, it will develop. As I said before, the recent projects are Telegraph Road at \$82 million and Robinson Road at \$199 million, which are quite expensive. We also have to talk to our colleagues in local authorities, because we do not necessarily own the land. We work in concert with our colleagues in Brisbane City Council, because you need a long lead-up to do road over rail.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, to what extent has internal financial modelling on the total Cross River Rail project costs been undertaken specifically by TMR? For example, can you advise the results and the extent to which it will exceed the \$5.4 billion touted capex price of stage 1? It is understood that it has already risen to about \$6.9 billion.

Mr Scales: BP3 outlines \$5.409 billion for Cross River Rail. I do not expect that, at this point, to be exceeded. There is also the costs of the PPP, which is included in BP3 as well. On the complementary works that we are doing, if you take, for example, the Inner Northern Busway, while we are demolishing the transit centre it makes sense to put the Inner Northern Busway underground at that point. At the moment we have 19,000 people a day using the Roma Street transit station. By 2026 we expect that to grow to 50,000. Of that 50,000, there will be 36,000 transferring to rail, so it makes sense to put the busway over the tunnel. That cost is \$250 million and that has been subject to a press release. It is also in QTRIP in the forwards.

Strachan recommendation No. 9 asked us to look at sectorisation of the network, which we are doing. The Clapham yards is an ideal opportunity for stabling. That makes it a really good location so that we do not have to send trains all the way back to Ipswich, to Wulkuraka, for maintenance. We are looking very closely at putting a stabling yard at Clapham. Other works that we are looking at are Salisbury to Beaudesert and six stations upgraded there. Again, it makes sense to upgrade infrastructure while you have such a big project of \$5.4 billion.

It does not exist in isolation. It makes sense to sink the Inner Northern Busway, because 50,000 people will use that busway station and the connection will be better. Clapham we are doing as it makes sense because of Strachan, but also it is a good city centre location to do light maintenance, stabling and train crew changes, rather than send them all the way back to Wulkuraka. There is also the upgrade of the six stations. Therefore, \$5.4 billion is there as stated. That is in another part of the state's portfolio. The bits that we are doing are complementary works to make sure that does not exist in isolation. On Clapham, we are already required to do that under Strachan, and with the Inner Northern Busway we are already knocking down a transit centre so it makes sense as well.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, what is the cost to upgrade the other stations on the network to accommodate nine-car sets, like the ones on Cross River Rail?

Mr Scales: The Cross River Rail sets are six-car sets. Our planning horizons are that, where we can, we put nine-car set provision in. It would be very difficult to take that all out. A good example is Moreton Bay rail link or the Redcliffe peninsula line. If you look at the stations there, you have 12½ kilometres of dual track and six new stations. They are largely in line, rather than on curves. There is provision there to extend them to nine-car sets at some point in the future.

Mr MINNIKIN: With 40 new trains required to operate the additional services for Cross River Rail, can you advise the projected cost and time line for acquiring this new rolling stock?

Mr Scales: We have not done the work yet as far as what will be required for the Cross River Rail operation. There is a rail network strategy that the department is working very hard on which we will put up to government when it is complete. We will go through the procurement process at that point in time.

I have to say by way of clarity that the 75 new generation rolling stock vehicles that we have gives a 30 per cent increase in train capacity because they are replacing one for one. Some of the trains are replacing three-car sets with six-car sets. We have a 10-year rail network strategy vision which is being put together now. Once that is ready to go we will give it to the government to consider and then we will look at what that requires in terms of new rolling stock. I do not know where the 40 comes from. We have not done the work yet so I am not sure whether 40 is the right number or not, and I do not really want to speculate at this point in time.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Chair, I have one further question to the director-general and then one to the CEO of Queensland Rail. Mr Scales, my question is in relation to page 4 of the SDS and the department's role in the development of Queensland's transport strategy. Was the department of transport consulted by the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority about the station locations for the Cross River Rail project, including a station at the PA Hospital as an alternative location to the Boggo Road station?

Mr Scales: TMR staff were involved in that. Those discussions were commercial-in-confidence. As far as the committee is concerned, I have signed a probity deed so I cannot help the committee any more with that. I am not able to reveal any of the discussions.

Mr MINNIKIN: You are not able to reveal the departmental advice in relation to the Cross River Rail station at the PA Hospital instead of Boggo Road?

Mr Scales: Those discussions were commercial-in-confidence because they involved the bidders. I have signed a probity deed. I am unable to help the committee further, unfortunately.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Chair, can I call the CEO of Queensland Rail to answer a question?

CHAIR: Sure.

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the CEO of Queensland Rail. Was Queensland Rail consulted by the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority about the station location for the Cross River Rail project, including the PA Hospital as an alternative station location to Boggo Road?

Mr Easy: Queensland Rail has been working closely with the delivery authority and the Department of Transport and Main Roads on this very important project. Obviously, from our point of view, we are the operator of the network and therefore the asset will ultimately transfer to Queensland Rail and be operated by Queensland Rail. With respect to those stations that you are inquiring about, we have been involved in the process with the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority and TMR. We are also subject to confidentiality arrangements and probity requirements. Those matters are to do with contractual matters which we are unable to comment on.

Mr MINNIKIN: You are not at liberty to provide for the committee the Queensland Rail advice in relation to the Cross River Rail station at the PA Hospital instead of Boggo Road station?

Mr Easy: They are contracting matters for the delivery authority.

CHAIR: I will move to the member for Noosa for a question.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, I refer to page 4 of the SDS. Given that Six Mile Bridge No. 7 was on QTRIP over a decade ago to be replaced and flood proofed and then subsequently taken off, when will the minister make it a priority to ensure the safety of residents and the many visitors to Noosa by undertaking urgent interim works until this dangerous one-lane bridge is replaced?

Mr BAILEY: I know that there is substantial population growth in that region that is putting some pressure on the road network. I know that the member is a very strong advocate for her local community. I believe this particular project at Six Mile Creek is one of the remnant single-lane bridges from the days when the area was quite rural. We are seeing increasing suburban growth and that is putting pressure on it.

I am happy to have a look at that in particular. I believe we are aware of that bridge. The volumes are still not high. I am happy to come back to the member on that. I think we are also doing some planning in terms of future needs of the road network there. I am happy to come back to the member with further details as soon as I can.

Ms BOLTON: Mr Chair, can I ask a second question?

CHAIR: Certainly.

Ms BOLTON: I refer to page 4 of the SDS. Can you advise the estimated start date for stage 1 of the Beckmans Road, Tewantin bypass project which is the construction of the Cooroy Noosa Road intersection roundabout?

Mr BAILEY: The Department of Transport and Main Roads has been working closely with the Noosa Shire Council and planning to deliver stage upgrades to Beckmans Road, Tewantin. These upgrades are proposed at key locations to relieve congestion and to improve safety and efficiency along the road. Planning has identified the Beckmans Road and the Cooroy Noosa Road intersection as the first location for an upgrade. The proposal to upgrade the intersection to a roundabout has been endorsed by the Noosa Shire Council. The department is currently investigating funding opportunities for the proposed Beckmans Road and Cooroy Noosa Road intersection upgrade.

Consultation with the Noosa Shire Council and you, as the state member, for further upgrades is continuing. As with all projects, any upgrades compete with funding for delivery against other priority infrastructure projects across the state. I know you have raised this with me a number of times, honourable member, and it is something that I am very conscious of as we proceed through that planning process and we look for opportunities in the future to allocate some capital there.

Ms BOLTON: Basically, we do not have any idea at all?

Mr BAILEY: I cannot confirm that at this stage. We are working our way up to that, but I do not have a start date and I do not have a capital allocation for you.

CHAIR: Just to clarify, Minister. Did you take the member's first question on notice or will you endeavour to get back to us during this estimates hearing?

Mr BAILEY: I am happy to come back during this session.

CHAIR: We will now go to the member for Aspley for a question.

Mr MELLISH: With reference to the Service Delivery Statements, can you outline how the return to a full service timetable this week was achieved and the benefits for South-East Queensland?

Mr BAILEY: What we have seen yesterday was the return to a full timetable. The performance on the day was very strong—above the 95 per cent on-time running metric, which, particularly for the first day of a new timetable, is very good. We have been able to do that because of the reforms we have instituted in terms of Queensland Rail in response to the Strachan commission of inquiry reports.

Some 430 additional services have been added per week with 200,000 extra seats. We have replaced three-car sets with six-car sets on 59 services. Just to clarify for the committee, there are no nine-car sets on the suburban network in South-East Queensland. I think the honourable member for Chatsworth was quite wrong there. He should check his basic facts when it comes to our train network.

We are providing 708 more services to Queenslanders than under the previous Newman LNP government. It is pleasing to see us come back to a full timetable, particularly when there were those in the parliament last month predicting—the opposition leader and the member for Chatsworth—that it would take 36 years to return to a full timetable. Quite an embarrassing prediction. They were only 13,500 days.

This return to a full timetable has been made possible because we have been reforming Queensland Rail. We have 177 new drivers and growing on the network who are being trained or fully qualified, including ex-Queensland Rail drivers. We have external recruits in training school now. We have seen 314 guards trained as well. The net increase has been 106 drivers and 110 guards. We have 74 drivers in training. As of 21 July, there are 58 guards in training, although I think that has increased over the last week or so.

These reforms have been very important. We have seen the training times come down for drivers from 18 months under the previous government to 12.7 months. We have seen partial network training introduced. That means we have been getting drivers trained quicker and onto the network quicker. That is assisting the process as well.

I think it is important to note that the forecasting, the modelling and the assurance processes are the most robust and rigorous they have ever been within Queensland Rail. Queensland Rail as an organisation has improved immensely on that front. The independent Citytrain Response Unit also plays a very important role in terms of assuring forecasting and modelling in a way that is much better than it has ever been in Queensland Rail.

We are seeing a commitment to public transport. This government has seen record patronage not just in the last 12 months but in the last two years in a row. In the last financial year we saw a 3.7 per cent increase in patronage across the network. People are coming back to public transport with confidence after a 3.1 per cent increase in the financial year before that. Why is that happening? We have an increased customer focus. We are out on platforms—we have done over 120 of those. We are listening to commuters. We are engaging with them. We have a very strong on-time running record with the most stringent criteria right across the country, much more stringent than in Sydney in New South Wales and in Melbourne. Their on-time running metrics are much inferior to Queensland Rail's.

Honourable member, I know that you are passionate and committed to rail in your area and public transport. I know that you have had a long-held commitment to public transport policy. I know that you have a genuine interest in this area. Let us be frank. The botch-ups of the previous Newman LNP government, where for the entire last year they were in power, knowing full well they had the Redcliffe line opening up in 2016 with six new stations—a whole new line—and the Commonwealth Games, there was not a single new driver who started training. That was on the member for Chatsworth's front, as Campbell Newman's assistant public transport minister. He had his fingerprints all over that. We saw a cut of 48 train drivers at that time. With a whole new line opening up and the Commonwealth Games coming, there were no infrastructure commitments by the previous Newman government.

This government has duplicated the heavy line from Coomera to Helensvale. We have done light rail stage 2 in 18 months flat—an incredible achievement which was fundamental to the Commonwealth Games success in terms of the transport plan. There were no plans by the previous government to do light rail stage 2. I dread to think what the transport plan would have been like if the LNP had been re-elected without light rail stage 2 connecting the heavy rail to light rail stage 1. It was essential in moving large numbers of people out of venues. It was absolutely incredible to be at the transport operations centre during the games to see how effective that was.

We are investing in public transport infrastructure: Cross River Rail to come; Sunshine Coast rail duplication to come on top of light rail stage 2; and the duplication from Coomera to Helensvale. This government is committed to public transport and a balanced transport network. We are committed to implementing the Strachan recommendations.

Mrs MILLER: Director-General, as you know, I am a corruption fighter and I come from Ipswich, so these issues are very close to my heart. In your previous answer you mentioned that some officers of your department had been involved in discussions in relation to Cross River Rail and also other areas of your department. What checks and balances are in place in the department to perhaps stop public servants who might be privy to information where they could make a profit on the purchase of properties? What checks and balances are there? I know that you have an ethical standards unit. Do you get or have you sought pecuniary interest statements from those officers who are privy to such important commercial-in-confidence information?

Mr Scales: I and my executive leadership team are all bound by probity. As far as sensitive commercial information is concerned, and as I said in my response to the member for Chatsworth's question earlier, everything that is bound by commercial and confidential requirements is bound by our ethical standards unit and our probity requirements, and it is tied up as tight as we can get it. As far as the question on Cross River Rail is concerned, there were a small number of people involved and they were bound by the probity deeds that were signed.

Mrs MILLER: What other probity details are required? For example, do you require those officers to provide information on their real estate holdings or any other interests in relation to those companies? That is what I want to know.

Mr Scales: Certainly my executive team and the senior leadership team have to provide that sort of information. I know that I update that once a year and it is published. My executive leadership team do the same. I am trying really to think of a situation, apart from the matter in question, where it would come up as a serious issue. If you take, as the minister has just been talking about, the example of the Gold Coast Light Rail, on line 3A we have already done extensive consultation and everybody knows whereabouts the six additional stations will be on line 3A. That is common knowledge.

We have kept the ethical standards unit. That operates directly to me. If we have an issue we report it as soon as we can, and the CCC will either tell us to investigate ourselves or they will investigate it for us. We have a pretty high standard in the department, member for Bundamba. In relation to the line of questioning on locations of stations, as I say, the only example I can think of is line 3A and that is in the public domain anyway.

Mrs MILLER: No, it is not in relation to that. It is in relation to public trust and it is in relation to considering having those officers who are privy to this information providing you with this information so that you can always be assured that there is no funny business going on.

Mr Scales: We have an appropriate and ethical use of public resources policy in place. All public resources are used ethically, effectively and efficiently, and staff are accountable for that. Our staff are required to adhere to that policy. On top of that, the Queensland Public Service code of conduct and the department's standard practice require all staff to abide by four principles. The four principles are: integrity and impartiality, promoting the public good, commitment to the system of government, and accountability and transparency. The code of conduct points to that. The appropriate and ethical use of public resources is something that all 9,100 of us are signed up to. In terms of the actual number of staff that would be involved in a situation where there would be an ethical use of information, I think that is mostly my executive leadership, and they have to declare every year what they have in terms of assets et cetera.

Mr MELLISH: My question is to the minister. I refer to the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program, or QTRIP as everyone knows it. Will the minister advise the committee how QTRIP will deliver jobs and other economic opportunities, particularly in regional Queensland?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. The Palaszczuk government is delivering a \$23 billion transport and road infrastructure program over the next four years. That is our fourth record QTRIP budget out of five budgets which is quite a contrast to the previous government's cuts. The new QTRIP has seen an overall increase of more than \$1.3 billion across the four-year period when compared to the previous QTRIP.

Our investment in roads and transport infrastructure will sustain 21,500 jobs across Queensland during the life of the program. Of this, approximately \$14.5 billion, or more than 63 per cent, is for regional Queensland. It is a jobs-first, regional focused program which will sustain 13,750 regional jobs across our state. Under our government's procurement policies, we ensure that more of the benefits flow to local communities in the regions where this money is most needed. In Mackay, for example, the \$497 million invested in stage 1 of the Mackay Ring Road has seen over 1,200 workers inducted on that site, with over 80 per cent of them being local to the Mackay region. I note the very low relative unemployment rate in Mackay. I think this project is certainly a major contributor to that.

This new QTRIP will deliver other key projects in regional Queensland including the \$1 billion upgrade to the Cooroy to Curra section D of the Bruce Highway delivering a bypass for Gympie; \$514 million to deliver flood immunity on the Haughton River flood plain on the Bruce Highway—something particularly welcomed by North Queenslanders given the terrible flooding events that happened earlier this year; \$481 million to construct the Cairns Southern Access Corridor stage 3 from Edmonton to Gordonvale; \$189 million to upgrade the Peak Downs Highway at Eton Range; and \$180 million to construct stage 5 of the Townsville Ring Road—something that I know the member for Thuringowa has been advocating very strongly for. It is great to see the funding locked and loaded and for him to hopefully talk about something other than Riverway Drive. We all love Riverway Drive. It is his favourite project. He might have a new favourite project now.

There is \$152 million to construct the Smithfield bypass project in Cairns—a significant election commitment being delivered by our government. We have also invested in key projects in the Brisbane metropolitan region: \$634 million going to the European Train Control System and \$400 million for the Ipswich Motorway upgrade stage 1 from Rocklea to Darra, making it four to six lanes and increasing flood immunity there. It is a huge project if you have driven through there recently. We have recently turned sod for the \$80 million construction of the Sumners Road interchange over the Centenary Motorway; provided \$53 million for construction of the Northern Transitway project to deliver bus priority measures along the Gympie Arterial Road; and \$42 million for construction of the veloway cycleway at Holland Park West and Tarragindi. Of course, this new QTRIP also included important projects like stage 2 of the Mackay Ring Road, otherwise known as the Mackay Port Access Road.

But you would not know that from listening to some members of the LNP opposition. At least three of them, including the Leader of the Opposition and two of her front benchers, including the member for Chatsworth, stood in parliament and claimed that this project was not funded at all. They

are certainly wrong about that, and I have written to the Speaker of the House about the matter. In my letter I suggested that perhaps it was the member for Nanango and the member for Glass House who may have been misled themselves by the member for Chatsworth as the responsible shadow minister in the area. After all, he certainly purports to be the shadow minister for transport and main roads, so presumably it was his responsibility to check what is funded in QTRIP or not. The member for Bonney is aware that QTRIP is part of the budget papers, as noted in some of his social media posts, but the shadow minister does not appear to be aware of that, despite the fact there are numerous references by the Newman government to QTRIP in their budget releases during their term in government, of which he was a member. I have asked the Speaker to refer the matter to the Ethics Committee, which I am sure will also look at what role the bungling member for Chatsworth may have played in misleading his leader in relation to this basic issue.

The fact is that the Palaszczuk government provided funding of \$70 million towards stage 2 of the Mackay Ring Road, announced as part of the 2019-20 state budget. This funding is displayed quite clearly on pages 171 and 173 of QTRIP, which was released as part of the state budget on 11 June 2019. There was even media prior to that alerting people with regional newspaper cuttings. I would be happy to arrange a copy of QTRIP to be provided to the member for Chatsworth with highlighted sections if that would assist him. Our funding commitment for the Mackay Port Access Road was publicly announced, and the department's website also makes it clear that the Mackay Port Access Road is stage 2 of the Mackay Ring Road. The role of QTRIP and where it can be accessed is described in detail in the state budget 2019-20 capital statement. What is clear is that leading members of the opposition, and the member for Chatsworth in particular, have great difficulty when it comes to reading these budget documents.

We are not just investing in the Mackay and Whitsunday region. Compared to the four-year total in the previous QTRIP, the new QTRIP provides an increase of \$279 million for the far north; an increase of \$227 million for the Fitzroy; an increase of \$158 million for the northern region; an increase of \$215 million for the Sunshine Coast north coast region; an increase of over \$611 million for the Gold Coast and south coast region; and an increase of \$920 million for the Wide Bay-Burnett region—something that I am sure the member for Hervey Bay is very pleased about. Our government's record investment in roads and transport does not just deliver the infrastructure our growing state needs but it creates jobs in regional Queensland and local communities. It delivers benefits to businesses through the supply chain and supercharges the economic growth and development of our state.

Compare that to the record of the former Newman LNP government, which cut \$600 million from road and transport funding during their term. They also cut the fifty-fifty Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme—or TIDS—by 37 per cent, gutting \$23 million in funding during their term. When I was first made the member I had a long list of local government mayors complaining about the cuts by the Newman government in terms of the TIDS program, particularly to rural and regional Queensland, and the fact that it cost jobs in a lot of little towns all over Queensland. Under the Newman government \$30 million was also diverted from the roads and transport budget to bankroll the Newman government's bid to sell Queensland assets and outsource services. That was revealed in budget estimates 2015. Under the LNP thousands of jobs were cut in TMR. There was a shocking 22.4 per cent reduction in overall staff—

Mr MINNIKIN: Point of order, Mr Chair. I know that the minister struggles to get on top of his brief, but this relates to the current financial year, not a history lesson of the LNP government.

CHAIR: I would ask the minister to remain relevant to the question.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly. Mr Chair, it does not surprise me that the member for Chatsworth does not want to go over history because it is certainly not one he is proud of.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Chair, before I ask my next question to the CEO of Queensland Rail I seek your guidance. You may recall that I wrote to you yesterday in relation to the estimates hearing today in relation to Cross River Rail. It has also been stated by two of the speakers today that any probing questions in relation to the placement and design of train stations within that particular project are now subject to confidentiality agreements as well. My quandary is—and I need your direction, please, Mr Chair—that we have the minister, who has been described as 'foolish' by the CCC, and we have the Deputy Premier, who is away at the moment, who has been described as—

Mr BAILEY: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Is there a question here?

Mr MINNIKIN: In the interests of the people of Queensland and in the absence of the minister, the Deputy Premier physically being here, and two senior bureaucrats, who do we ask questions of in relation to the probity of Cross River Rail?

CHAIR: The advice we have received is that the session the Deputy Premier attended was the time allocated for those questions. Do you have a question about this portfolio?

Mr MINNIKIN: Yes, I do, Mr Chair. My question is to the CEO of Queensland Rail. Mr Easy, I am told that right now there are display boards at Central Station advertising that Queensland Rail has added 430 extra services to Queensland Rail's timetable. But, as we all know, these are not extra services but merely replacements for those that were cut under this minister's watch due to the rail fail—

Mr BAILEY: I have a point of order, Mr Chair. The member is misleading the committee. 'Under this minister's watch' is not factual. I urge the member to get back to the facts and not political hyperbole.

CHAIR: I will ask the member to resume his question. If the member could get to the question?

Mr MINNIKIN: Certainly. On 15 February 2019 you signed a brand, communications and media policy stating that Queensland Rail would provide accurate information to stakeholders. How is providing a misleading statement implying that extra services are new and original not a breach of Queensland Rail policy?

Mr BAILEY: I have a point of order.

Mr MINNIKIN: With the permission of the chair I seek leave to table—

CHAIR: We have a point of order that I will deal with first.

Mr BAILEY: The question has a clear imputation involved and I request that the member construct his question consistent with the standing orders.

CHAIR: The member asked a question of the CEO. I will ask you to ask it again without the imputation.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, I again make reference to the fact there are display boards at Central Station outlining extra services as new and not just a restoration. Is this a breach of Queensland Rail's advertising policy?

Mr Easy: You are quite correct: there are a number of advertising materials and display boards at Central Station. They are complementing the 430 additional services that have been provided for Monday of this week, so I do not think they refer to original services. We have been very clear in terms of the campaign to support the restoration of this timetable. We had 7,850 services that had been provided. As a result of this restored timetable we are now providing 8,290 services.

These are new services that have been provided to our customers. The customers have not had these services for nearly three years now. In terms of the timetable that was provided, it was in the order of 7,800 services. We provided an additional 32 infill services in May this year and now an additional 430 services on top of that. In terms of the material that supports the campaign—the advertising that sits at Central station—I think that is quite accurate and quite clear to our customers that we have increased the scheduled services on our timetable.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, you would believe that they are extra new services, not restoring part of the 430 of the overall 470 services that were cut as a result of the chronic timetable congestion as a result of rail fail 1.0 back in October 2016?

Mr Easy: I thank the honourable member for the question. This is clearly a restoration of the timetable that was in place in 2016, where there were 8,290 services, but the facts are that the customers of Queensland who use our trains on the South-East Queensland network have had less services so these are new services that have not been in place for three years that restores the previous timetable from 2016.

Mr MINNIKIN: Thank you, Mr Easy, but would you be inclined to agree that they are restored, not new?

Mr BAILEY: Point of order.

CHAIR: Member, we are debating semantics—

Mr BAILEY: My point of order is that the question is seeking an opinion and that is clearly outside the standing orders.

CHAIR: And that is where I was going, Minister—that we are debating semantics and opinion.

Mr MINNIKIN: Thank you. Mr Chair, I seek leave to table a document. It is actually a picture.

CHAIR: Do you have copies?

Mr MINNIKIN: I do. I have 10 copies.

CHAIR: Can we have a copy for the members of the committee and the minister?

Mr MINNIKIN: Certainly. I seek leave to table that.

CHAIR: Leave is granted.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, with reference to these 430 restored services, what has been the total cost of producing advertising materials for the ad as outlined in the picture in front of you?

Mr Easy: I thank the honourable member for the question. I might need to take some advice on that and come back to you before the end of the session.

Mr MINNIKIN: Certainly. That is more than acceptable. I would appreciate it if you could do that. My next question is to the director-general. Mr Scales, I refer to page 14 of the SDS. TransLink has advertised that Queensland Rail has a new timetable with extra services. As we all know, these are simply restored services from a previously cut-down timetable. How does this advertising not breach the government's advertising code of conduct, given it is simply wrong and misleading?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. I think it has just been explored with Mr Easy. I would probably give the same response—that it is restoring services that were cut three years ago. I do not think the travelling public, the customers, are bothered about the semantics. I think the travelling public are more bothered about the restoration of the train services. In particular, the ones that were cut out have been put back but, more importantly, the timetable on Friday is the same as the timetable on Monday to Thursday so it is a level timetable rather than going down on a Friday again. If we look at the effect on the customer, the customer is seeing extra trains and extra seats, I would think.

CHAIR: Can I interrupt for a moment and go back to the previous question. The minister needs to take that question. It will not be taken on notice because Mr Easy has committed to get back this session, but the minister is the only one who can take a question on notice. I just clarify that for the future.

Mr MINNIKIN: Certainly. I appreciate the minister getting back to us, thank you. Mr Chair, I seek leave to table another document.

CHAIR: If you distribute it, we will see if it is acceptable.

Mr MINNIKIN: I have a further follow-up question to the director-general of TMR.

Mr Scales: Through the chair, is that relevant to what the member for Chatsworth is asking?

CHAIR: We will wait until the document is distributed, and then the committee has to see if it is appropriate to be tabled. I see it is a public document.

Mr MINNIKIN: I seek leave to table this document.

CHAIR: Leave is granted.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, when did TransLink submit this advertising to the GACC for approval and when was this approval given?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. I think this is an operational matter. I do not think we would go to the GACC committee. That tends to be for matters of campaign. If you take antdrinking campaigns—where we actually spend a lot of money to stop people drink-driving and sort of attack the fatal five, which cause so much grief on the roads with fatalities—we go to GACC for that because that tends to be more the campaign that is on broadcast media. Once the campaign has been done, we actually measure how effective it has been. In the past, it has been things like 'Mates Motel', 'Plan B' and those sorts of ones. This would just be a normal operational matter that would not go to GACC.

Another example, if it helps the committee, is when we are advertising for jobs on Seek—or if it is a senior job we advertise in the *Financial Review* sometimes. We do not go to GACC for that either. There is a policy that on operational matters we would not be troubling GACC. If you use the channels that we have—including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube—we would not go to GACC for that. You have helpfully tabled this document so I can answer the question for the committee. It is factually correct, I think, because it says—

The countdown is on to Queensland Rail's new timetable. From Monday 29 July, an extra 430 weekly train services will be introduced across South East Queensland.

I think that is factually correct. Back to your point, it is really the big campaigns that go to the government advertising campaign committee for endorsement and we make sure that does happen.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, I make reference to page 15 of the SDS relating to the Fare Evasion Project and the behaviour which costs taxpayers an estimated \$25 million annually. How long has TMR been grappling with this issue? How much more are law-abiding passengers paying in fares as a result of the fare revenue loss?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. I have been in this business for over four decades now and I have never seen a system anywhere in the world that does not have some level of fare evasion. We estimate at the moment it is about \$25 million. Bear in mind that the revenue that we get in South-East Queensland only is about \$1 million a week, so it is quite low. Where fare evasion does prevail, it tends to be where the network is not closed. If you take the bus network, that network is a closed network where passengers, our customers, have to go past the driver first and touch on with a go card or pay for a paper ticket. Where we do not have a closed network is in areas like the rail network. When you have unstaffed stations, people could get on at an unstaffed station and get off at another unstaffed station. We try to close that out in our most busy stations, which are the central ones which have gates on.

If you take the tram, the tram itself is an open system but we have people on the tram who go around and check tickets. The way the contract is constructed is that, on the data that we do on surveys, if they are not actually meeting the fare targets we can abate the contract and fine them for allowing people to travel without a ticket or without a permit to travel. If you take the last one, which is the ferries, the ferries tend to be a closed system. Again, you have to go past the people on board and tap on with your card.

Fare evasion itself, in my experience, has been prevalent in every network you will see anywhere in the world. There is a way to get down to, in my estimation, about four to six per cent, but anything below that tends to be diminishing returns, where you have to put more people on to do it. Most people do the right thing, but there are a few people who do the wrong thing and it is part of the education process to do that. We have 50 SNOs, senior network officers. They patrol the whole network. We are adding to that with a further 17 SNOs in the future. That is in the budget papers.

We encourage people to do the right thing. We try to design the system to be closed rather than open. We do have network enforcement with our senior network officers. With the police and the rail squad we have a police presence as well on the rail network. We have a similar situation on the tram system and on the ferry system—and that is closed as well. We take the four modes of transport and we try to do what we can to actually minimise that. You are correct; it is people doing the wrong thing. It is like going into a supermarket and taking a bottle of milk and not paying for it; transport is a good. Most of the people most of the time do the right thing.

Mr MINNIKIN: I have a further question to the director-general, if I may. Along with fare evasion, other forms of antisocial behaviour are problematic. Can you inform the committee what is being done to make travel on public transport safer for passengers and also, importantly, drivers?

Mr Scales: On safety itself if you take all of the 152 stations on the network, we have CCTV to evidential standards, and we have an extensive network of more than 14,000 CCTVs on the network itself. On a lot of our buses we have forward-facing cameras as well as cameras actually in the saloons and over the driver's compartment. On trams we have CCTV and on New Generation Rollingstock we have CCTV. We are helping to target hard the network. There are also all the stations and the bus stations, and where we can, we staff those stations because having the presence is good.

On the Queensland Rail network we do have a guard, so there is the presence of a guard on the train as well. You always have a uniformed presence on the network as well. I mentioned the senior network officers. We have 29 Queensland Rail authorised officers, 78 Queensland Police Service rail squad officers and the number for the tram, which I omitted from my previous response, was 29 G:link customer service officers.

As far as the safety of the bus drivers is concerned, we had that tragic event where the driver was killed by a perpetrator. We have got grants now for driver safety barriers fifty-fifty with the operator, and we provided \$3.93 million for that. We also provided \$1.54 million for antishatter film for buses under South-East Queensland's urban contracts and qconnect contracts as well.

We have a strong staff presence. We have a public awareness campaign that is also progressing through development and will go to government shortly. We also had our first youth fare evasion round table in April of this year, which was an initiative of the minister. That was attended by representatives

from the education department, police, academics, transport and the justice sector. What I am getting to is that there is no silver bullet to this. We have taken a whole spectrum of activities to try to address it. We have also kicked off a project regarding engaging youth, trying to get the youth on board.

Most of the time most of the people do the right thing. What we are trying to do is make sure the network as well as being safe, because it is very safe—we have well-lit stations, we have a presence on trains and we have a roaming presence on trams. If you take the CityCats, they have a crew of three. We do all these things. Where possible, we rely on our colleagues in the QPS to use the CCTV we have, which is to evidential standards, to prosecute any perpetrators as far as we can.

Mr MINNIKIN: I have a further question to the director-general. I refer to the SDS page 10 and the performance statement under 'transport safety and regulation', and I refer to personalised transport services. Can you advise how many Friday and Saturday night inspections of ranks' pick-up and set-down zones have occurred over the past two financial years to ensure compliance with the regulations, particularly in relation to touting by booked hire vehicles?

Mr Scales: As part of the personalised transport reforms, we monitor what is happening on the network. As to the exact number of interceptions we have done, and looking at not just personalised transport but also limousines just to make sure we are looking at compliance, we do have a series of people who will go out and do checks and balances. As to the actual numbers over the last two years, I probably do not have that to hand. With the minister's leave, I shall get the exact number. Just for the benefit of the committee, over 25,000 personalised transport vehicles have been intercepted since it became mandatory on 15 January 2018, so that is not quite two years. We have intercepted 25,700 personalised transport vehicles, which includes 12,300 taxis and limousines and 13,300 ride-booking vehicles. I do not have to take the question on notice. With the minister's leave, I think they are the numbers.

CHAIR: Is it okay for the director-general to get back this session or on notice?

Mr BAILEY: I am happy with that.

Mr Scales: I think that might be the answer to that one.

CHAIR: Are you satisfied with that?

Mr MINNIKIN: I am satisfied with that. Thank you.

CHAIR: We do not need to worry, then.

Mr MINNIKIN: What was the number of PINs issued for such offences over the same period?

Mr Scales: During the period January 2018 to now, our transport inspectors issued over 350 defect notices—that is on the vehicles themselves—and 400 penalty infringement notices to ride-booking vehicles and also 700 defect notices and 250 penalty points to taxis.

CHAIR: We will go to the member for Traeger for a question.

Mr KATTER: I refer to SDS page 14. Minister, the average airline price in the north-west, particularly on the market route from Mount Isa to Brisbane, has consistently risen as price gouging is occurring. In response, low-income earners have been repeatedly told by your government that the market is a solution. Local fares have no meaningful impact and the federal inquiry was a waste of time. Will your government continue to sit back and let the big corporates gouge, or is it willing to act to protect the battler?

Mr BAILEY: The Palaszczuk government subsidise over \$250 million in regional transport services every year across coaches, ferries, rail services and, of course, flights through Qantas and through the Regional Express Airlines. The Department of Transport and Main Roads currently provide services on seven regulated air service routes to regional Queensland communities. More than 160,000 passengers travelled on the regulated aviation services in the 2017-18 financial year.

The current air service contracts were for five years and were due to expire on 31 December 2019. All seven contracts have now been extended to December 2020 to provide surety for regional Queensland while allowing the department to undertake planning activities for the upcoming procurement of the future regional air service contracts.

Transport and main roads is currently planning for the upcoming procurement process for the long distance passenger transport services across regional Queensland. I certainly acknowledge the role that stakeholders such as yourself and groups such as RAPAD play in advocating for the needs of Central and Western Queensland communities and supporting the sustainable growth and development of the region. As part of the planning process, TransLink engages with interested

stakeholders with regard to the future of long distance passenger transport services across the state. These services are critical to ensuring that rural and remote communities in regional Queensland continue to be connected to essential services such as health, education and employment.

That said, we would like to see more competition from the airlines, and I know you have advocated for that. On this particular route there is significant demand, and airlines need to respond to that by being more competitive. The federal Senate has also conducted an inquiry into the operation, regulation and funding of air route service delivery to rural, regional and remote communities. The Palaszczuk government provided a submission to the Senate committee inquiry about the work we do regulating regional air services and also the Local Fare Scheme.

Originally, the committee was going to release the recommendations on 4 December last year. However, this was delayed by the federal government with the report being tabled after the federal election on Friday, 7 June this year. We are reviewing that report; we are considering the findings and recommendations contained within, and we will certainly be responding to them. I know that will be of interest to you.

Mr KATTER: Most of that response was related to the subsidies on regulated routes. These are the market routes where I would argue there is market failure. The first step in reining in gouging or market failure is to get some visibility on pricing. Can the minister confirm that the department owns the readily available software for price tracking in that market to at least track these rising average prices?

Mr BAILEY: I might ask the director-general to cover the specifics in terms of department software. That is probably something about which he has a better working knowledge than me.

Mr Scales: We do monitor a number of KPIs on the route to ensure the carriers are having on-time departures and on-time arrivals. Earlier in the week I spoke to Qantas. They have an 80 per cent on-time arrival and departure metric. As far as prices are concerned, as the minister said, because this is a market route, we cannot do a great deal to influence the direct prices they charge. Because Mount Isa to Brisbane is about 1,000 kilometres, you do not always have the type of aircraft that is able to do that end-to-end journey. You are relying on jets rather than turboprops.

Mr KATTER: On a point of order, the question was around the readily available software that tracks pricing. I understand and appreciate that you have KPIs, but there is software that tracks the pricing. I am quite confident that you do not, but I wanted to ask if you have any of that software.

Mr Scales: No, we do not. Vicariously, all of our travel is done by a central agency. We can track prices on that, but, as far as I am aware, we do not have any software that does that. Certainly, we can get that just by using people who book all our flights on a central basis. We can get that on a regular basis. As the member says, what tends to happen is a result of it being such a long distance with jets and being in the commercial sector.

Mr KATTER: I refer to page 7 of the SDS. Minister, there have been multiple references in the media from different levels of government to the proposed Tennant Creek to Mount Isa rail line. Can the minister confirm whether any discussions have occurred between his government and the proponent? Is the proponent Landbridge, the owners of the Darwin Port?

Mr BAILEY: I am not aware of any. I do not know whether the director-general might be able to add something, but I am not aware of any.

Mr Scales: There were some discussions about Tennant Creek rail line and taking it up to Darwin, but I do not think they progressed anywhere. Why would we support something that took mineral products away from our port at Townsville?

Mr KATTER: I agree. That is why I was asking.

Mr Scales: There were discussions. I am just guessing here; these are just my recollections. The Chief Minister of the Northern Territory was involved. It would have been, from recollection, maybe three or four years ago. It was, 'Can we get together and do a study to take a line from Mount Isa to Tennant Creek and then up to Darwin Port?' It did not grow any legs because of the point we have just made.

Mr KATTER: Could you take on notice if there was any reference to Landbridge in those discussions?

Mr Scales: I doubt it, because it did not progress. I can remember that there was an enormous amount of money for consultants and we just could not support it. Why would you support something going out of the state of Queensland? I do not think there is anything there, member.

CHAIR: I think the director-general has answered the question. He says that he does not believe it was the case.

Mr BAILEY: I am happy to add something more broadly. I think our commitment to the rail line to the Townsville Port has been really clear in terms of the budget decision about access charges there. There was an \$80 million commitment to make it more competitive. Of course, when we recovered it after the flooding we did not just put it back together; we put it back together a lot better. The travel times are reduced by about an hour because we did a whole lot of culvert work that allowed the speed to go up. That makes it more competitive as well.

We kept the Townsville port in public hands—a fundamental issue we were elected upon and which we are maintaining. We also are investing in the railway line—about \$380 million over the next five years as well as the \$80 million for the rail access charge commitment over four years as well as huge investments at Townsville port, with channel widening, port expansion, the intermodal and berth 4. There is a lot of jobs and a lot of commitment to that whole supply chain. I know that the question was about this proponent, but the government is resolute in its commitment to bolstering our supply chain from the minerals province via Townsville port to the world.

Mr Scales: If that particular proponent had been involved, I would remember. It is just not in my memory.

Mr KATTER: That is good enough, thank you.

Mr BAILEY: If it is okay, I have an update for the member for Noosa in relation to Six Mile Creek Bridge?

CHAIR: Okay.

Mr BAILEY: In 2015 there was preliminary planning. A business case was completed for the replacement of Six Mile Creek Bridge on Kin Kin Road at Pomona. Currently there is no funding allocated to replace the bridge, based on statewide priorities. In recent years the department has undertaken minor works to enhance road safety at the bridge, as interim measures while replacement of the bridge has not yet been funded. In mid-2018 minor improvements to line marking and delineation on Six Mile Creek Bridge and vegetation clearing to improve visibility on approach to the bridge occurred as part of a million dollar project on Kin Kin Road. The department will undertake minor vegetation trimming to address regrowth from the clearing completed in the middle of last year. That work program is to occur later this year.

The department is currently undertaking a speed limit review on the 90-kilometre-per-hour and 100-kilometre-per-hour posted speed limit sections of Kin Kin Road between Pomona and Kin Kin. The speed limit review includes the Six Mile Creek Bridge section, which is within a 90-kilometre-per-hour speed zone. The bridge is regularly inspected and maintained to ensure it remains safe and serviceable for road users. I am also informed that it was in fact in QTRIP previously but was cut as part of the \$600 million in cuts from 2012 under the Newman government. It was there but it was cut. I am very conscious of it. I am happy to come back to the member in future and continue a conversation about it.

CHAIR: I acknowledge the member for Maiwar, who has joined us. We will go to government questions.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, I refer to the impact of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing project on the financial statements as mentioned in the Service Delivery Statements. What is the government's plan for the opening of the second range crossing, and are there any alternative approaches?

Mr BAILEY: The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing is a \$1.6 billion joint state-federal funded project. It is a brand-new 41-kilometre highway connecting the Warrego in the east to the interstate Gore Highway in the west, bypassing the town of Withcott at the foot of the range and the Toowoomba central business district. In December 2012 the then Newman LNP government approved the project's Queensland business case for the second range crossing and the underlying assumptions about toll levels, including a heavy vehicle mandate for vehicles above 4½ tonnes and a new superheavy vehicle toll class. The business case proposed that the second range crossing be a toll road and determined that toll risk for the project should sit with the state government and not with the private sector. The Newman LNP government decided that the state would retain responsibility for the tolling arrangements for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing and retain revenue risk associated with the toll road.

The underlying assumptions in the business case included a new and never before seen class of vehicles called the superheavy and Australia's highest toll level of \$34.25 for those vehicles—something that was never shared with the public over the last seven years by the LNP. The inclusion of a new superheavy vehicle category was a key assumption in the LNP's 2012 business case, as was gouging truckies and the freight industry with Australia's highest ever road toll.

The business case also relied on a mandate—a requirement that heavy vehicles must use the second range crossing unless they have a destination in Toowoomba. This business case was used by the Newman LNP government as the basis to negotiate funding arrangements with the Abbott LNP federal government of the time and commenced the procurement process for project delivery. In 2014 the federal government committed \$1.285 billion to deliver their portion of the project based on the business case assumptions, including those relating to tolling.

As funding for the project has been committed based on the 2012 business case, the task which fell to our government when we were elected in 2015 was to consider and approve the preferred proponent to deliver the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. All of the key factors such as the toll levels, the mandate and the superheavy vehicle class were built into the project by the Newman government. It was certainly locked and loaded. An update of the 2012 business case traffic modelling shows that the actual vehicle numbers will be significantly lower by over 50 per cent than that which informed the LNP business case. That was not 15 per cent; that was more than 50 per cent out.

Using the updated traffic forecasts, I am advised that there will be a significant reduction in toll revenue of approximately \$20 million per annum over the first five years compared to the business case estimates and as such there will be an ongoing shortfall between toll revenue and the ongoing costs of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing operations and maintenance. Based on index business case tolls, the size of the projected average shortfall to fund operations and maintenance may be up to \$171.3 million which taxpayers will have to pay for. Put simply, this is yet another legacy of the disastrous Newman government years which we inherited.

Mr MINNIKIN: I raise a point of order under standing order 118 relating to relevance. I have no idea what this has to do with the current probity of the current financial year budget, so I would ask that you rule on relevance please.

CHAIR: Thanks, member. I am interested in the answer from the minister about the second range crossing and I ask the minister to keep to that.

Mr BAILEY: Sure, and I am specifically answering the question.

CHAIR: It is mentioned on page 21 of the Service Delivery Statements.

Mr BAILEY: Indeed, specifically. The truth is that the Newman government relied on an overly optimistic business case and stitched up a deal so that Queensland taxpayers would be left holding the risk of the LNP's rosy business case if it did not work out. That is exactly what has now happened. Not only did the business case set out what the toll levels would be, but it put in place the new superheavy vehicle class—seen nowhere else in Australia—to make the highest toll road in the whole country. This deal was a Campbell Newman-Deb Frecklington special—big benefits for the private sector, little or no benefits in terms of Queensland taxpayers. The 2012 business case should be released publicly so that members of the public can see for themselves what the Newman government stitched up and what they have never shared with people over seven years, but we cannot release that report without the permission of the opposition.

Mr SORENSEN: I raise a point of order. I do not see how the Newman government held it over for seven years because we were not in government that long, and I think he is misleading.

CHAIR: There is no point of order. Minister, if you could just stick to the facts, that would be good.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly, Mr Chair, but I certainly did not say what the member for Hervey Bay was suggesting there. However, we cannot release the 2012 business case without the permission of the LNP opposition and I call on them to do so in the interests of transparency and to reveal what they have hidden from the public for seven years. Despite the disastrous LNP economics—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

CHAIR: Order.

Mr BAILEY: Those opposite may laugh—

Mr MINNIKIN: At you.

CHAIR: Member, order.

Mr BAILEY: Thank you, Mr Chair. Members of the committee from the opposition may laugh, but they were more than 50 per cent out with their estimates on vehicle numbers and they were proposing the highest toll in the whole country for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing and they are laughing at that.

Mr MINNIKIN: 'Rail fail'.

Mr BAILEY: That is astonishing complacency and arrogance, I have to say.

CHAIR: Thanks, Minister.

Mr BAILEY: Despite the disastrous LNP economics, the second range crossing is an important piece of infrastructure for South-West Queensland. As well as enhancing liveability for residents, the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing enables the safer, faster, more efficient transport of freight to major ports and to east coast centres. Heavy vehicles using the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing will avoid up to 18 sets of traffic lights, significantly reducing travel time around the Toowoomba area. The second range crossing will increase freight efficiency along this key regional freight route, providing truck operators more options to configure their freight movements to achieve increased efficiency, significant cost savings and create more jobs. In Toowoomba James Street will see thousands fewer heavy vehicles every day going through the city area.

Today I am pleased to announce that the Palaszczuk Labor government will not be implementing the LNP's disastrous plan and gouging the trucking and agricultural sectors with Australia's highest toll ever. We have heard the feedback from industry loud and clear and we value their contribution. The Palaszczuk government has therefore decided that there will be no new superheavy vehicle class imposed on trucking companies and all trucks will pay a maximum toll of \$22.85, more than \$10 cheaper than the LNP were proposing, which is generally consistent with the rest of the toll network in Queensland. I am also pleased to advise that cars will pay the cheapest toll of any toll road in Queensland at \$2.50, less than a cup of coffee. Motorbikes will only have to pay \$1.15 and light commercial vehicles will pay \$5.70.

As previously announced, heavy vehicles without a destination in Toowoomba will be required to use the second range crossing. This will make sure that we maximise the benefits of the road for the local community in Toowoomba by removing the maximum number of trucks from local streets as possible, and I know Toowoomba residents will be very pleased to see that happen. On top of the planned scope of the project, our government will fund the construction of a breakdown pad or decoupling facility at Gatton to enable road trains to get closer to Brisbane before breaking down. A temporary facility will be provided for this purpose from the toll opening at Gatton while a permanent facility is built nearby. This Palaszczuk Labor government initiative will add significant value for the trucking, agricultural and mining sectors over and above what was originally planned. As part of our government's ongoing commitment to the heavy vehicle industry, which included reforming oversize overmass permits in a move set to save industry more than \$1 million in fees and 3,300 hours in paperwork, we are committed to working with the heavy vehicle industry and will continue to do so in respect of the operation of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing.

I can also update the committee that the proponent has now advised us that they expect all works on the project to be completed in August and, on that basis, I am pleased to announce that the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing will be officially opened on the weekend of 7 and 8 September with a series of community events planned locally. Importantly, this will ensure the crossing is open in time for the annual Carnival of Flowers. As previously mentioned, the first three months of operation of the crossing will be toll free for all vehicles. This will provide locals and truck operators a chance to become familiar with the road and see the benefits for themselves prior to having to start paying tolls. Let me be clear about this: I am proud of the work that our government has done to deliver the crossing and the benefits the road will provide to the whole Toowoomba and Darling Downs region now and into the future.

The project's proponent contributed \$717 million directly to the Queensland economy and the Australian economy during construction, including \$37.6 million in wages and salaries paid to an aggregated 536 full-time employees and \$677.2 million in purchases of goods and services from 1,001 Australian and New Zealand based small to medium sized enterprises, with an average spend per supplier of \$676,000. I am pleased to say companies from the greater Toowoomba and Lockyer Valley regions shared 80.5 per cent of direct expenditure over three full years between January 2016 and December last year, exceeding the target of 76.25 per cent for local participation contained in the proponent's statement of intent to government.

Despite these great benefits, the true benefit can only be realised if people actually use the toll road and it is the Palaszczuk Labor government which will make sure that tolls are kept at a reasonable level and the road is accessible to everyone. I think we have covered this matter very clearly. Sorry, but I have just had a correction: the car toll is \$2.30. I think there was a typo in my brief, so that is even better news for people.

Mrs MILLER: Just staying on the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing for a minute, a constituent has asked me to ask how many unmade gazetted roads have been closed due to the construction of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing and whether all legislative procedures have been followed in relation to advertising et cetera.

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member from the question. I will probably take that on notice and come back to you on the specifics there. The director-general might have a little bit more to offer, but I would imagine that we have adhered to all the provisions and procedures that we would on any other major project.

Mr Scales: As far as the taking of land is concerned, we would have complied with all of our requirements in this regard. It is 41 kilometres long, as the minister said—

Mrs MILLER: I am just referring to unmade gazetted roads.

Mr Scales: Unmade?

Mrs MILLER: These are roads that have blocked off properties on either side. My understanding is that TMR has not complied with the legislation. I am just asking whether that is the case. If you can get back to me by the end of this session, that would be good.

CHAIR: If the DG can answer the question?

Mr Scales: I do not believe we have. I think Postmans Ridge is a good example. We have remade a connection for the locals there. We have gone a bit further, I think, than we might have done just sticking entirely to the letter of the law. I will take guide from the minister. I think we will get back to you.

Mrs MILLER: Yes, that is fine. That is okay.

Mr BAILEY: When you say 'unmade gazetted roads', you are referring to roads that are on planning documents but not constructed yet?

Mrs MILLER: No, they are being used. They are gazetted roads. They are local roads. I just want some information on that.

Mr BAILEY: Yes, we will certainly come back to you.

Mrs MILLER: Director-General, I am asking this question from Ian, Cameron and Kyle in my electorate. They live in Redbank Plains, Bellbird Park et cetera. I want to know how many officers you have working with the Ipswich City Council or other councils around Queensland in relation to development approvals. We now have a ridiculous situation where greedy developers are having development blocks that are around 200 square metres—really narrow gutted roads—to the point where we cannot get buses into these development areas. In fact, TransLink responded to one of my constituents saying—

The road network ... contains roads that are not suitable for standard buses and do not allow for efficient service routings. This makes it challenging to operate services or realign routes within the suburb.

Kyle, whom I was speaking to this morning, has to walk 1½ kilometres to access a bus because these roads are so narrow. Surely TMR can do something about these greedy developers who cut up the area, make their money and then go away. Meanwhile our people cannot access public transport.

CHAIR: Member, your question was—

Mrs MILLER: My question is: how many officers within TMR are working with Ipswich council and other councils throughout the state to stop this sheer lunacy?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. We are a concurrency agency under SARA.

Mrs MILLER: Yes, I know.

Mr Scales: SARA are the people who do all the development. I cannot give you an exact number but, with the minister's leave, I will take that on notice and give you that. We work with all 77 councils in the state and we give advice where we are asked to give advice. As far as developers are concerned, their primary contact would be through SARA. We would try to influence adequate and sufficient public transport and so on.

Mrs MILLER: It is, not working, Director-General.

Mr Scales: It depends on whether we have the power to do it. I have seen examples while I have been here where we have influenced that. A standard single-deck bus is about 12 metres. It needs the right sort of road width and length to get in and out. In areas where we have planned things—not

necessarily in Ipswich but we have certainly worked with other areas like Yarrabilba, where we have worked with EDQ as well as SARA—we have put in bus services as the development has come up. With the minister's leave, I will get back to you on the number of people we have involved.

Mrs MILLER: Yes, that would be—

CHAIR: Do you have another question?

Mrs MILLER: Yes, I have another question in relation to the FlexiLink service that operates within my area. It is supposed to operate, but it does not. TransLink got rid of our bus route 523 and replaced it with FlexiLink. That simply is not working. TransLink is saying to my people that they have surveyed people in Bellbird Park and Goodna but they have not. I know that is wrong. I want this bus route 523 to be restored. I want TransLink to tell the truth and I want an explanation as to why TransLink is saying that they have surveyed my area when it is clear that they have not. Can you do something about that, please?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. On that particular route, I do not have the exact details of the survey details. It is a matter for the minister to give me leave, but why don't I come out to your constituency and have a look on the ground?

Mrs MILLER: You do that every year, Director-General.

Mr Scales: Yes, and usually we sort things out.

Mrs MILLER: However, this is a very big issue in relation to my people. With a FlexiLink service, at the moment they cannot even get down from Goodna Special School to the train station. It is taking them 30 minutes to get about a kilometre down the road in peak hour. It is not good enough. If we want people on public transport, we have to provide the town planning and we have to provide the services.

Mr Scales: I agree, and where possible we do that within the constraints of the budget that we have. If TransLink said they have surveyed it, I would guess that they have done their best to do surveys. I am not over the details so, with the minister's leave, I can do either of two things: I can come and talk to your constituency or I can get the information and get it back to you before the day is out.

CHAIR: Minister, are you happy with that?

Mr BAILEY: Yes, indeed.

Mrs MILLER: I have one final question in relation to the Springfield car park. Many people in my area—Redbank Plains—go over to that Springfield Railway Station. I went over there yesterday, because I had a number of complaints about it. It is dangerous that they are parking on that arterial road and they are very angry that the car park has not been built yet. They are not concerned about the flashiness of the design of the car park. What have been the delays in the car park and when will it be operational? In other words, when can people use it? I do not care—

Mr BAILEY: Is that for me or the director-general?

Mrs MILLER: It does not matter to me, as long as I get an answer.

Mr BAILEY: That is fine. I will take that. The upgrade of the car park was a commitment made in the lead-up to the last state election by the Palaszczuk government with the then candidate for Jordan and now member for Jordan. We are very committed to park-and-ride spaces. This project that we are developing is \$44.5 million to deliver a park-and-ride there.

The detailed design activities for the new park-and-ride began in March of this year and are currently scheduled for completion early next year. I have been out onsite with the member for Jordan to meet with staff and to look at it. It is a very big site. There are a lot of car parks there. Construction is currently expected to commence in the middle of next year and will be completed in late 2021. At \$44 million, it is certainly one of our biggest commitments on the park-and-ride front as part of our \$114 million commitment to our 2,300 park-and-ride spaces across the network in South-East Queensland. This will add substantially to the number of car parks that are there. It will increase the total number to 1,100 parks. I think that will be a major boost for the public transport network there and for the usability of it for people in the electorate of Jordan and also neighbouring electorates like yours, member for Bundamba.

The rail service coming in from Springfield is a very good one. It was built by Labor governments of which you were a member—governments that supported public transport infrastructure. That is the benefit out of it and we are continuing to do that to.

Mrs MILLER: The question is about the delay. They have no problem with it coming, but they do not want to wait until 2021. Can it be sped up?

Mr BAILEY: There is no delay. The design work is underway. It is a big piece of infrastructure. It is not one of our smaller ones where it is a matter of putting a bit of bitumen down and it is of a fairly low scale, this is a substantial piece of engineering. Obviously we wanted to consult the local community there, which the member for Jordan has been facilitating. It is important to get such a substantial investment right in the way it integrates into the local community at \$44½ million so we have been making sure that we do all that consultation to make sure people have input into it. It is certainly going to happen and it will be welcomed by commuters.

CHAIR: Member for Chatsworth?

Mr MINNIKIN: I have a few questions to Mr Easy, please.

CHAIR: Mr Easy might have the answer from earlier?

Mr Easy: Not just at the moment, Mr Chair.

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is with reference to page 88 of Budget Paper No. 4. In light of the public acknowledgement of the unacceptable work practices occurring at the Bowen Hills depot, including illegal drug usage, fake work trips and falsification of payroll time sheets, can the CEO advise this committee if similar practices have been occurring in the Townsville and Cairns depots?

Mr Easy: Queensland Rail does have a comprehensive fraud and corruption plan that is in place and that does remind all employees of their responsibilities under Queensland Rail's code of conduct. This does include annual code of conduct and values and ethics training and that happens across all of our workforce. We also have a zero tolerance approach to alcohol and other drugs. We undertake regular random testing across our workplace.

With respect to the matter at Bowen Hills, that was a matter that was identified through our own assurance processes. We were able to take very prompt action when we identified matters to do with time sheets and reporting and at the end of that process the employee and the supervisor involved were terminated from Queensland Rail's employment. We identified it through our own assurance processes and we took swift action. In addition to that we continue to have training across our workforce regarding their responsibilities and the code of conduct.

Mr MINNIKIN: Just to be sure then, you are confident that there are no similar practices occurring in the Townsville and Cairns depots?

Mr Easy: If you have got something specific you are referring to I am happy to address that. We have investigations that do occur from time to time across all of our workplaces and when those issues are identified we undertake appropriate investigations and then take action.

Mr MINNIKIN: Specifically, what specific measures have been undertaken to investigate the extent to which any such practices have been occurring, particularly the drug usage—specific measures taking place?

Mr Easy: At Queensland Rail we have a very significant and specific alcohol and drug testing program in place. We undertake over 12,000 tests per year. That is a very significant program that is in place. It has been in place for many, many years. We have a very low detection rate in relation to any positive tests that do occur. Over 2018-19 there were 32 positive results that occurred out of 12,462 tests. That is less than 0.3 per cent in terms of a detection rate across our workforce. We have very specific programs to make sure we identify any inappropriate use of drugs or alcohol.

Mr MINNIKIN: Has the introduction of random urine testing been considered as a deterrent to ensure that drivers are fit for duty?

Mr Easy: That is a matter that ONRSR, the national safety regulator, is considering and exploring. That has been discussed with the various jurisdictions across Australia. It is not something that is in place that Queensland Rail has adopted, but it is a matter that the regulator is working on with every operator across Australia in terms of what form more and improved testing practices might be put in place.

Mr MINNIKIN: Can you advise if the practice whereby Queensland Rail tradespeople start work at 7 am yet are not allowed on site to perform their duties until 9 am is occurring?

CHAIR: Do you have any specific locations, member?

Mr MINNIKIN: I do, sir.

Mr Easy: I am not aware of any specific circumstances myself but happy to answer any cases or discuss any matters that you have in mind.

Mr MINNIKIN: In reference to page 88 of Budget Paper No. 4, in terms of the 18-monthly mandatory competency testing for qualified trained drivers, can you update this committee on Queensland Rail's review of the driver testing regime, including the limitations identified and the action taken to improve the integrity of the process for the ongoing assessment of driver competency?

Mr Easy: Queensland Rail acknowledged the theory component of our maintenance of competency process required improvement and that was prior to being advised by the Australian Transport and Safety Bureau's initial findings. Queensland had already commenced reviewing and identifying improvements to the theory component to ensure that it was sufficient and also that it is in line with industry best practice.

From April 2019 Queensland Rail implemented the revised theory component as part of the mock process, with updated questions and content delivered in a classroom based group setting rather than on an individual basis wherever practicable. This is in line with contemporary adult learning practices and processes that are adopted by other rail operators around Australia. The mock process is only one component of Queensland Rail's comprehensive assurance process for existing drivers. We also conduct analysis of train event recorders to identify and manage driver behaviours in addition to on-track assessments by supervisors. New qualified drivers also have monitoring intervals at three, six, 12 and 24 months after commencing driving and we continue to work with the ATSB as more detailed safety investigations occur.

What is important here is that this investigation and the improvement of the learning aspects to do with our maintenance of competency was as a result of a signal passed at danger. What we have seen is our SPAD rate reduce significantly. In fact, we had the lowest recorded SPAD rate at 1.44 for any given month and if you look at the results for the financial year, the number of SPADs per million train kilometres travelled is 1.61. That is the lowest SPAD rate in the organisation's history, as far as the data goes back, which is around two decades. What we see here is the best level of safety performance with respect to SPADs on our network. The training improvements, the measures that we put in place to improve our learning and training programs, are having real impacts on the ground in terms of our safety performance and the incidents of SPADs on our network.

Mr MINNIKIN: Does the large amount of overtime being performed by train drivers represent a fatigue management and safety issue?

Mr Easy: Fatigue management is a very important consideration for the organisation. There were new measures that were put in place only last year, again implemented by the safety regulator. The organisation implemented all of those requirements. We have a very strict regime with respect to the number of hours a driver can be driving on the network, the rests that they have as a result of the shifts that they incur and the number of concurrent shifts that they perform on the network. Those regulatory requirements have been put in place, they have been implemented, they have been audited by the safety regulator and found to have no noncompliance matters for the organisation to take action with.

We certainly take our responsibilities regarding fatigue management very seriously. We have implemented all of the requirements of the safety regulator in terms of its requirements and with the work that we have done in terms of improvement of SPADs we have not seen any correlation between levels of overtime and SPAD incident rates. In fact, if you look at our incident rates for SPADs today, it is the lowest ever recorded in the last 20 years. Our SPAD rates are the best that they have ever been. I will, in fact, go as far as to say they are bordering on best practice in terms of other operators across Australia and the world.

Mr MINNIKIN: What is the average footplate time for Queensland Rail drivers and when overtime is worked?

Mr Easy: I will deal with the question on footplate time first. Footplate time is one metric used to measure driver productivity. It is calculated on the time drivers spend driving a revenue train relative to tabled working hours. Last financial year, Queensland Rail's traffic crew recorded an average of 31.86 per cent footplate time.

Mr MINNIKIN: Could you repeat that, please, Mr Easy?

Mr Easy: In the last financial year, Queensland Rail traffic crew recorded an average of 31.86 per cent footplate time. In 2017-18, the average footplate time was 33.83 per cent. Based on those figures, there has been a slight reduction in footplate time. I would not call that material. We certainly need to take into account that in the last year, in February, we introduced two meal breaks. Meal breaks were a requirement of the enterprise agreement. That means that in any given shift our train crew are able to have two meal breaks. That was introduced and we still have footplate time that is consistent and not materially different from previous years.

It is also important to take into account that a driver undertakes a number of duties, not just driving the trains. There are many other activities that they have to do. In addition to driving, duties include preparing the trains, positioning the units for revenue services, undertaking safety checks, mandatory training and competencies, and yard duties including train shunting and stabling. They are also required to travel the network to join a revenue service at times and relieve a fellow driver or to return to their home depot at the completion of a shift. There are a number of factors that can influence footplate time, including train crew available to perform scheduled services and service alterations, such as school holidays and timetables. We actively monitor footplate time. We think this is consistent with other operators.

Mr MINNIKIN: The second part of the question was about the footplate time percentage as it pertained to overtime.

Mr Easy: With the minister's permission, that is something we might need to take some advice on and come back to you.

Mr BAILEY: That is fine.

Mr MINNIKIN: With reference to page 88 of Budget Paper No. 4, with the recent restoration of commuter train services to the pre-existing late-2016 levels, I note that we have seen delays with some rolling stock issues on the northern lines as well as a continued reliance on overtime. Do question marks over reliability still exist?

Mr Easy: The reliability target that Queensland Rail has in place by contract arrangements with the TMR is 99.5 per cent for all our services. We have exceeded that target for the full financial year. Based on that metric alone and our performance, I think our reliability levels are more than reasonable.

Mr MINNIKIN: To be sure, that was the interval based on the reduced timetable? That was on-time running based on a reduced timetable?

Mr Easy: That is based on the timetable that we provided over the year. There have been some changes to the timetable. We have moved from 7,850 services. We then produced the additional 32 infill services in May and then, as we have spoken about, on 29 July we have increased that to 8,290 services. The metric is based on the level of services provided under the timetable.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, how much money was expended on the use of consultants over 2018-19 to help progress the Strachan report recommendations?

Mr Easy: In line with the recommendations of the Strachan commission of inquiry, Queensland Rail was required to strengthen a number of its reporting, modelling and assurance activities, which required outside expertise to develop and implement the required additional tools. These tools have been used countless times now. They inform our decision-making; they have been the basis of the provision of the timetable since 2016; they have informed assessments of stress periods, particularly holiday periods; and they have proved to be very valuable in terms of the decisions we make to ensure a reliable and sustainable timetable. With respect to the Strachan commission of inquiry recommendations and any consultants' fees that have been required to support that, in 2018-19 the number is \$418,563.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, I note with reference to the Strachan report itself, in relation to a report dated 6 February 2017, that as at April this year there should have been 200 drivers. I believe I read a figure yesterday of 106 drivers, as at yesterday's date. To get just shy of 94 extra drivers required as per the Strachan recommendation, what is the time frame to hit that 200 figure?

Mr Easy: The first thing I would like to say is that the Strachan commission of inquiry does not suggest 200 drivers were required to support the return of the full-service timetable. The 200 drivers was actually announced as part of a five-point plan by the government in 2016. We are recruiting the number of drivers. We have 177 drivers in supply. We will have 200 drivers by the end of 2019. Through our extensive recruitment program, through the largest program that we have ever undertaken in our history, we continue to see new drivers and new guards into supply. We continue to see a very solid ongoing program, not an intermittent program, of training. We have 177 in supply. We will see 200 being hit by the end of this calendar year. That will continue to support and strengthen services for our customers.

Mr MINNIKIN: Are you familiar specifically with page 12 of the annexure to the Strachan report, dated 6 February 2017, in relation to campaign target number of drivers?

Mr Easy: I am happy to look at a copy of page 12, if you have one there for me, honourable member.

Mr MINNIKIN: I would be happy to table a copy. I have only one copy.

CHAIR: We will wait while we have copies made. Noting that we are breaking at 11 am, do you have a question to go on with?

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, with reference to page 14 of the SDS, passenger transport services, in August 2017 Queensland Rail reported that 10,000 external applicants responded to a major driver recruitment campaign. How many external applicants have made their way through to Queensland Rail qualified driver status from that external 10,000 applicant list?

Mr Easy: A total of 48 external candidates from the August 2017 campaign for drivers have been or will be offered a driver position and either have been or will be allocated to driver schools in June, July and August 2019. Nineteen ex-Queensland Rail drivers have graduated from the program and are now driving passengers on the network. We always said it was a two-stage program. The first stage was for ex-QR drivers. We now have 19 of those who are driving, having been through the process, and are on the network.

The second stage was for the external program. I am pleased to advise that the first 14 external candidates from the August 2017 recruitment campaign commenced driver school in June 2019, with a further cohort to start training in July and August this year. We plan to allocate further external candidates from the August 2017 campaign to driver schools in 2020. From the August 2017 campaign, 140 external applicants have been offered positions as Queensland Rail guards. We will continue to work through further recruitment activities for trainee driver positions as required, in line with our enterprise agreement conditions and following opportunities for guards to progress to driver school.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Easy, since October 2016, how many qualified train drivers have left Queensland Rail and what were the reasons for their leaving—for example, resignation, retirement, dismissal? What were the reasons for those departures since October 2016?

Mr Easy: I will see if we can find the numbers, because you are talking about natural attrition. Obviously, one example is where drivers reach retirement age and they make the decision to finish their employment with Queensland Rail. Between October 2016 and 30 June 2019, 93 drivers were lost to supply. A number of those were to do with age retirement, some of those were medically unfit—medical separation—and some were in relation to transfers. There are quite a number of different reasons, but the answer to your question is that there were 93 who were lost.

Mr MINNIKIN: Would it be possible to get the breakdown of the 93 and the different reasons for leaving?

Mr Easy: Absolutely. I am more than happy to do that.

CHAIR: Member, I just want to be sure in relation to this document that it was part of the Strachan inquiry and that it is a document that is easily accessible that you have passed on?

Mr MINNIKIN: Yes.

CHAIR: Not typed up by you or anything?

Mr MINNIKIN: No, sir.

CHAIR: Leave is granted for its tabling. The committee will now adjourn for a break. The hearing will resume at 11.30 am and continue with the examination of the estimates for the transport and main roads portfolio.

Proceedings suspended from 11.00 am to 11.30 am.

 **CHAIR:** The hearing is resumed. Welcome back minister and officials. The committee will now continue its examination of the proposed expenditure for the transport and main roads portfolio. I call the member for Aspley.

Mr MELLISH: I refer to page 14 of the SDS and ask the minister if he can provide an update on the design and implementation of an upgraded public transport ticketing system to be implemented across the TransLink network and urban buses in regional centres?

Mr BAILEY: This government is very committed to public transport, whether it is infrastructure or using the latest technology. I know the member himself is very interested and supportive of our moves in this regard.

The Palaszczuk is modernising transport across the Sunshine State. We will roll out a new system where commuters will be able to use their contactless debit or credit cards, their smart phones, their smart watches—whichever they choose or prefer—to pay for trips in addition to the go card and paper ticket system. Importantly, regional Queensland will be included in these measures with the

current go card operator Cubic due to deliver the new system in 18 regional areas as well as metropolitan South-East Queensland after being selected as the successful tenderer following a competitive global procurement process.

The new ticketing system is an exciting chance to expand our ticketing options and give public transport customers more flexibility. This is about embracing technologies that benefit commuters that have become available since the go card launch in 2008. I note that we were the first state with a go card and we will be the first state with this technology. It took a Labor government to modernise and integrate ticketing across South-East Queensland. The Palaszczuk Labor government will again transform the system by delivering this new ticketing solution.

Go card has served South-East Queensland commuters very well over the last decade and more, but we are now delivering a payment evolution offering more flexibility, increasing accessibility and security and taking advantage of the adoption of smart phones and new technology that are now ubiquitous by ordinary, everyday people. Having a more and convenient payment system will also encourage more people to use public transport. Boarding is a lot faster so you get a lot more out of your assets with this form of ticketing. Importantly, this new smart ticketing system gives us the flexibility to add other transport modes and payment options in the future.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads finalised the procurement of a new ticketing solution in June last year, with the Palaszczuk government allocating \$371 million to design, build, transition and manage the new solution which will include new readers, quicker fare gates and system equipment, an updated app platform, real-time monitoring and new ticketing equipment on urban buses right across the state. The new solution will be the first account based system in the nation, allowing Queensland's public transport customers to choose a payment method that suits their lifestyle.

For the first time in Queensland, customers and commuters will be able to set up an account via a new app or web platform and have the choice of several payment options, including the current modes of go card and paper tickets. They will also be able to use major contactless credit and bank cards, smart phones and wearable smart devices without the need to set up an account. I want to assure Queenslanders that they will still be able to continue to buy paper tickets and use their go cards in South-East Queensland under this new system. We want to give customers the choice to use the payment method that is most convenient and comfortable for them.

Modern, intuitive and accessible customer-facing devices will also be introduced, including new readers and improved fare gates. Customers will also be able to manage and personalise their transit account options more effectively through an improved app and website that integrates payment, ticketing and journey planning options, underpinned by real-time information. Bank grade security features will be in place for those choosing to use their credit cards and smart devices for payments, as well as privacy protections for commuters.

The new system will be delivered by Cubic, which was successful following a competitive, multiyear tender process. They will draw on their global expertise and proven technology and experience with other jurisdictions and installations in London, Chicago and Vancouver. The new system will be rolled out in 18 regional urban public transport centres covering one of the largest geographical areas of any ticketing system in the world. This means that, for the first time, commuters and tourists from Cairns to Coolangatta will have integrated ticketing, making public transport easier right across the state when they are going to multiple locations, helping to boost regional tourism.

I am happy to update the committee that the first smart ticketing trials will happen in regional Queensland later this year. Regional Queensland commuters will get their first taste of real-time information when the trials occur in Minjerribah, otherwise known as North Stradbroke Island, on the Fraser Coast at the Maryborough and Hervey Bay and in Bowen and Innisfail. The regional trials provide smart ticketing with a great opportunity to provide early customer benefits, while also testing our new hardware in varying humidity and temperatures.

The trials are being supported by three TransLink delivery partner operators across the five regional locations. More than 70 buses throughout regional Queensland will have new hardware installed that will allow customer to access accurate predictions for the next service departing from a bus stop. While customers in trial sites will continue to purchase the paper tickets, the new hardware and real-time information will remain in place until the complete solution is implemented later in the project.

Customers in each of these trial sites will still receive the same great service from their local bus drivers across the existing routes and services. Trialling individual elements of the overall solution ensures the progressive rollout of the system is streamline, providing a smooth transition for our

customers who choose to use the new payment option. When completed, smart ticketing will deliver a new, integrated journey planning and payment app as well as adding debit and credit cards. What we will see is the system progressively rolled out across the state by 2022. This is good news for commuters on top of all the infrastructure commitments that we have already committed to.

Mrs MILLER: My question is to the director-general. The waste to energy plant proposal by Remondis is currently being examined by the department of state development. It has been universally condemned by Ipswich people. How many officers do you have working on this project with state development? Can you advise us of the impact on the road system?

Mr Scales: I have a follow-up answer on FlexiLink and also a follow-up answer on the development assessment for Ipswich, which might lead into the question you have asked. Chair, can I go through the answer on FlexiLink Bellbird Park?

CHAIR: Please do.

Mr Scales: As highlighted by the honourable member earlier, bus route 523 was removed from service in 2010 due to low patronage. It was replaced with FlexiLink, an on-demand service that picks up passengers from their home and provides access to local activity centres and the larger TransLink public transport network. FlexiLink operates at the same hourly frequency as route 523, but has increased hours of operation for early morning and evening services. The service also provides a Saturday transport option whereas route 523 originally only operated on weekdays. We have a Saturday service in there as well.

In relation to community and customer feedback, I am advised that TransLink do receive direct feedback from public transport customers as part of the TransLink customer experience survey each month. In addition, the network planning team monitor customer feedback received through correspondence, in addition to working closely with our delivery partners—that is, the bus operators—to identify opportunities to make future service improvements as the population and the service demand increases.

Regarding the advice provided to your local constituent, I think we have dug it out and it says—

TransLink uses a combination of methods to monitor demand on the network including Bellbird Park and regularly gathers feedback from customers and stakeholders through network-wide surveys, project specific consultation, feedback via frontline staff, including our delivery partner staff and customer liaison officers, as well as correspondence.

You are absolutely right. We have not done a community consultation survey in Bellbird Park, and I am happy to do so if that would help.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you. That is what we want.

Mr Scales: Right. We will do that. Again, referring to the question that we took on notice about developments and the bus going down a particular road, the Department of Transport and Main Roads provides technical advice to the State Assessment and Referral Agency, SARA, which is part of my original response within the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning to effectively assess development applications. The department provides SARA technical advice to existing and future transport infrastructure through the planning and development assessment system. It ensures that it can be effectively planned, protected, constructed and operated. To the member's point, standards related to local government road design, subdivision layout and lot size are primarily a local government responsibility—so it is primarily Ipswich City Council.

In relation to the specific question on numbers of staff, we have approximately 10 staff in the metropolitan region who give general technical advice that will cover Ipswich, Brisbane and Redlands and approximately six staff from our head office locations to provide specialist public transport advice to the entire state, so the answer is 16 staff. Questions about the Planning Act and how we interact with the development assessment are really a matter for DSDMIP rather than for the department, but we are always happy to help.

Turning to the member for Bundamba's question about the waste disposal dump, we will be using the same people to advise SARA. As to the specifics on what will come out, I cannot really speculate at this point in time. We do have people sitting along SARA to help them with the public transport side. As to how the facility will actually affect—

Mrs MILLER: We do not want the facility—I want to make that very clear—and we will argue against it continuously. The people are very concerned about more rubbish trucks in our area.

Mr Scales: Through the chair, as the member pointed out to me some months ago, there were rubbish trucks standing in a local government road.

Mrs MILLER: Yes.

Mr Scales: I engaged our vehicle inspectorate. They went out and inspected the vehicles and made sure that the drivers were compliant, the vehicles were compliant and everything else. Unfortunately, there had been some heavy rain, I think, the night before and there was some debris on the road. We will react where we can, member for Bundamba. As far as this particular one is concerned, I think it is a matter for SARA. I am sure you will make your views known.

Mrs MILLER: Absolutely.

CHAIR: I remember that there was almost a road train disassembly area on the local government road.

Mrs MILLER: It was absolutely shocking. Thank you, Director-General, for your very fast action in relation to that.

CHAIR: I just want to acknowledge that the member for Maiwar is back.

Mrs MILLER: I have a further question to the minister or the director-general in relation to the Centenary Highway. Most of my people who have to use this highway every day are complaining about the hold-ups on the highway. In other words, we now have a situation where it is very difficult to get off the Ipswich Motorway to get onto the Centenary Highway. The specific question that they want answered is: when will the Centenary Highway be widened and when will there be more lanes?

Mr BAILEY: One of the key things is dealing with the Centenary Bridge, which has been a longstanding piece of infrastructure—something ignored by the previous government. In fact, they cut the Sumners Road interchange upgrade out of QTRIP despite it being a promise. Let me report to you on the Centenary Bridge. The Centenary Bridge upgrade project at Jindalee was announced in late 2017. The Queensland government has committed \$20 million to complete a business case and design for a new three-lane northbound bridge including provisions for active transport facilities.

Current investigations include providing an additional southbound lane to help increase capacity to three lanes. The proposed new bridge will improve connectivity and travel choice between Brisbane's western suburbs, local destinations and the central business district. It is expected that a new northbound Centenary Bridge will reduce the frequency and severity of crashes while increasing the efficiency and reliability of this part of the network. Broader road network benefits will also be investigated through improved active transport facilities. We normally do that with large road upgrades. TMR has awarded the tender for the design of the new three-lane northbound Centenary Bridge at Jindalee and design is underway.

In relation to the Centenary Motorway itself, I can inform the member that the planning study for the Centenary Motorway upgrade was completed in March 2019. The planning study allowed for a staged delivery of upgrades from Sumners Road in Darra to Frederick Street in Toowong. It also investigates active transport options. The Centenary Motorway has developed from a two-lane connector to a multilane urban motorway with population growth, as the member would be aware, and provides the primary link between Brisbane's western suburbs and the CBD. The short answer to this is that we had three wasted years of the Newman government where they cut \$600 million out of road—

Mr MINNIKIN: I raise a point of order under section 118 on relevance. I have no idea what this has to do with the proceedings this morning.

CHAIR: If we can come back to the Centenary Motorway.

Mr BAILEY: Sure. Specifically referring to the Centenary Motorway is the Sumners Road interchange. I was very glad to be at the sod turn for that with the member for Mount Ommaney, who has been a fierce advocate for that project. That project, which is on the Centenary Motorway, was cut from QTRIP by the previous government. That is a fact. The member for Chatsworth might not like that, but the cuts of the previous government meant that we got less done on infrastructure, the traffic built up with population growth and there were three wasted years when it came to infrastructure. That is not something that this government is going to do, as you can see from the \$80 million commitment to the Sumners Road interchange and the \$20 million commitment to get the design going for an extra bridge. If you want to look at widening the motorway, you have to do the bridge; otherwise there is no point. That is the first thing you have to do, and we are doing that.

Mrs MILLER: I have a question, Director-General, in relation to the bus-rail connections. The issue within my electorate is that those people who are able to get to a bus often complain that they arrive at the train station too late because of delays on the Ipswich Motorway or on the local network. What they are asking is that you review those timetables for the peak-hour times so that they can arrive

at the station in time. They do not mind that they are there 10 or 15 minutes before the train goes, but it is no good if they turn up two minutes after the train has gone. They have asked whether TransLink could conduct a review which would then give them a better opportunity to use efficient public transport.

Mr Scales: I can give you the specific example of route 522, which has specific journey time reliability issues. We do recognise the importance of continued investment in the public transport network so Queenslanders can get easier connections to health services, education and jobs and with each other. In the last financial year we spent over a million dollars in improvements to the urban and school bus network. As you point out, member, the 522 bus gets stuck in traffic. It operates between Springfield and Goodna offering a half-hour frequency between 5.30 in the morning and 8.30 pm on weekdays and an hourly service at weekends.

Because the route performs a number of functions along its journey including linking to rail stations at Goodna and Springfield Central, as well as providing coverage to residential estates, we acknowledge that the connections are not as good as they could be because of peak traffic congestion at the morning commuter peak and afternoon school bell time. We are working with our bus delivery partner Bus Queensland to do service improvements to improve the on-time running which might, as you say, inject more time to get to the end point.

By way of example, route 522 is one that we are working on now. If you have any other examples, I would be very happy to take them because it is very important that we maintain connections. Buses are unlike the train, tram and ferry, which all own the route on which they operate so you can guarantee frequency and reliability. Buses are subject to congestion, traffic accidents and all sorts of other issues. We have route 522 on our list, member for Bundamba, but if you have any more I am happy to have them.

Mrs MILLER: I will ask my electorate. Over the years people in my electorate have very much admired the Brisbane CityCat service. Bearing in mind they find buses very difficult and trains even more difficult sometimes, they have asked if there is a possibility of Ipswich having its own Ipswich CityCat service so they could bypass trains and buses and come all the way through on the river.

Mr Scales: That is a good thing to have a look at, but bear in mind that the river will have speed restrictions at that point whereas the Brisbane River is quite wide and has fewer speed restrictions, although this year we have had a lot of speed restrictions because of works around Queen's Wharf which has caused patronage reductions in the service there. What you tend to find—and I have done this elsewhere—is that if you put a river service in, they are very expensive to put in because the vessels are expensive and the on-shore equipment is very expensive, but they tend to be subject to a speed limit of about six knots. So although it is a good idea and the river is usually unencumbered from congestion, they tend to be very difficult to do because you cannot keep up the speeds that you can normally with a bus. A bus would probably do an average of 11 to 15 kilometres per hour, whereas on the river it will be half that.

We have no plans to do it at the moment. I know that our colleagues on the Gold Coast, through Mayor Tom Tate, are experimenting with something that I think is a bit more than a ferry. That will be subject to a successful trial and subject to the speeds that exist on the waterways down at the Gold Coast, the same as for here. That would be a policy matter. I am not avoiding the question, but we have no policies to do that in the future. The explanation I have given is it not just vessel costs or on-shore costs, but also I think the speed of the commute would be quite low in the reaches of the river at that point.

Mrs MILLER: Minister, we would particularly like an officer of your department to be taken offline, if that is okay with you, to at least look at this issue because, even though you say it might be six knots an hour, it is better than the walking speed that a lot of our commuters have at the moment.

Mr BAILEY: Member, I am happy to have one of our TMR people come out to meet and discuss the proposal with you. I was a councillor on the Brisbane City Council under Lord Mayor Jim Soorley when we brought the CityCats into Brisbane. We started off with six and I think we are up to 24 now. A lot of them are twice the size of the original boats. Whether it would be viable in the Ipswich context would be something that would need to be looked at. It was driven by local government originally and integrated into the TransLink network, so I imagine that any proposal would need some Ipswich City Council buy-in and drive behind it. Obviously, that would probably need to occur after March 2020, I expect. I am happy for a TMR person who is familiar with the CityCat service here in Brisbane to come out and meet with you and have a discussion about it.

CHAIR: The member for Maiwar has a question.

Mr BERKMAN: I have a very quick question for the director-general. I note that in the minister's previous statements, including in estimates last year and in subsequent correspondence, that a number of Queensland's train stations will not be compliant with the federal Disability Discrimination Act accessibility standards by the 2022 deadline. My question is: has the department made any allocation for damages that may be payable to residents who make a claim against it for compensation as a result of this noncompliance?

Mr Scales: We have 152 stations in our network and we are trying to make them all as accessible as we can, but a lot of them were delivered decades ago. I have to say that if you take the DSAPT requirements it is not just Queensland that has a problem: it is the whole of the—

Mr BERKMAN: Understood.

Mr Scales: I have to say that in my previous role in Merseytravel and also in the UK there are something like 12,000 stations in the UK, and great deal of those will not be accessible either. As to making provision, I think as long as you can make reasonable adjustments—and that usually has to be tested—we would probably be on the right path.

For the benefit of the committee, we have employed Kevin Cocks, who used to be Queensland's anti-discrimination commissioner. He is our access officer now. He is located in 1 William Street right outside my door. The reason I have done that is to ensure that it has DG importance attached to this, because our strapline is to create a single integrated transport network that is accessible to everyone. Access means a lot of different things to different people because it is not just access for people in wheelchairs: it is access for people who cannot see or hear. We have done quite a lot at the moment to move it forward.

To address your point, we have not made any provision for any claims that might come, but it is our intent to make a single integrated transport network accessible to everyone, so we are trying our very best to do that. If you look at making all stations—

Mr BERKMAN: I think the question has been answered, Mr Scales, if you are happy with that. I would like to ask a question of the minister as well. Commuters in Brisbane routinely see dramatic improvements to traffic during holidays. Making public transport free for kids would encourage more kids out of cars, take considerable pressure off families and improve traffic all year-round, I would suggest. You responded to a question on notice in June this year around free public transport for kids in SEQ, stating it would cost just \$31.5 million a year, which compares with \$26 million that the government is gifting to racing or the \$2.3 billion that the department is spending on roads overall. My question, Minister, is: why won't the government make public transport in the south-east corner free for kids?

Mr BAILEY: Wouldn't it be nice for everything in life to be free? Somebody has to pay for it. The fact is that we subsidise public transport to the tune of 75 per cent. By urban standards we have a large population spread out over a huge region in South-East Queensland, but we still invest in public transport. I think that anybody who looks at this government cannot escape the fact that we are investing in infrastructure: Gold Coast Light Rail stage 2; the Coomera to Helensvale rail duplication, which was fundamentally needed to get eight trains per hour into the Gold Coast for the Commonwealth Games, and we did that; Cross River Rail, a \$5.4 billion transformational project; the Sunshine Coast rail duplication; and technology like smart ticketing, as I outlined in a previous answer. We are seeing record patronage as a result of that. Last financial year there was a 3.7 per cent increase and the year before that it was 3.1 per cent. The public transport system is improving very strongly under this government, so I do not think there can be any question about any lack of commitment.

I think that, if you are getting a service, generally you should have to pay for it. We have been increasing the affordability of our public transport system since we were elected in 2015. We had a number of fare freezes and then we had Fairer Fares, where we saw a reduction for commuters, so affordability has improved. We have had CPI since then, so we have been improving the affordability and attractiveness of it. Quite frankly, I think that when it comes to offering free things as a populist thing, we are running a government and we have to make everything add up. It is nice of the Greens political party to promise free things to everybody, but the reality is there is a real world out there.

Mr BERKMAN: I want to ask a question about plans to widen the Centenary Motorway. First of all, the minister has said that traffic modelling forecasts growth from 85,000 cars a day to 150,000 cars a day in 2036, but there is no clarity around whether that includes consideration of changed public transport mode share and usage. Director-General, now that the first stage business case is finished, will it be released? Can you confirm that the design underway for the new bridge will include bus lanes?

Mr Scales: We will not be doing bus lanes as a matter of course in that location because it is tied up with a wider Centenary Motorway widening itself. To justify a bus lane, you would have to have really high frequency buses down that road itself. If we can widen and increase the capacity to three lanes across the new bridge, I think that would be adequate and sufficient. I do not think you would need a bus lane specifically at that point. With the numbers you have just quoted on volumes, you would not be able to justify a bus lane in that location. Secondly, if you did that, how would you enforce it? In peak periods you would have cars adjacent to basically an empty bus lane and you would get a lot of problems with that.

If you look at where we have been really successful, which is the 29 kilometres of busways we have, which are world class, which actually take the bus out of the general network altogether, that has been really effective. If you look at the M1-M3 merge, we have the bus lane going down the side of the motorway. In this particular case, I do not think it would be justified because you would not have the volume of buses to do it. Secondly, just having a specific bus lane in that area would be incredibly difficult to police. I think you would end up with lots of issues there that you probably do not want.

Mr BERKMAN: Isn't that a departure from the commitment in the Western Brisbane Transport Network Strategy that there would be bus lanes across the Centenary Bridge? Should we expect that other active and public transport initiatives proposed in WBTNI, which has mysteriously disappeared from the department's website, will now be abandoned in this transition to the new plan?

Mr Scales: I thank the member for the supplementary on active travel. We have been very strong on that. The government has committed over \$200 million to bike lanes. Last year we built 40.27 kilometres of bike lanes. On active travel, we have put a walking strategy to the government.

No, we are not doing that at all. My definition of a bus lane—having been in the business for a long time—is a dedicated bus lane. You might get something that would be a peak bus lane, as traffic depended on it, but you would have to look at the other end of the telescope and say, 'How many public transport vehicles would be on that road?' and it would be very small, in my view.

Mr BERKMAN: Will the first stage business case be released? That is the other part of the question.

Mr Scales: I think that is a matter of policy. I am not ducking the question.

CHAIR: That is what I was going to say. Member for Maiwar, you are touching on some policy questions that might be better to ask the minister.

Mr BERKMAN: Minister, will that first stage business case around the Centenary Motorway widening be released?

Mr BAILEY: The business case will be released when it is completed, I expect. It is in the process of being done. I am happy to take that on notice, but the work is being done at the moment. At an appropriate time, I would imagine it would be released.

Mr BERKMAN: Sorry. Perhaps specifically, I mean the planning study that was completed in March 2019. Has that one been released or will it be released?

Mr BAILEY: I would have to take that on notice. Off the top of my head I am not sure, unless the director-general is aware of it. I will take that on notice and come back to you.

Mr BERKMAN: Thank you.

Mr MINNIKIN: My question is to the director-general of Transport and Main Roads. Mr Scales, on what date was the contract for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing signed?

Mr Scales: Do you mean the deed and when it was signed?

Mr MINNIKIN: Yes.

Mr Scales: I would have to get the exact date for you, which is being pulled out as we speak.

Mr MINNIKIN: Were the toll rates locked in as part of that contract at the time of signing?

Mr Scales: The toll rates would have been a matter for government and not linked to the actual construction. I think you have asked me the question on when was the deed signed for constructing the 41-kilometre road, which we will dig out for you.

Mr MINNIKIN: Yes.

Mr Scales: That was the bit I was involved with—actually building the thing—whereas the tolling is a matter for policy for government. Does that help?

Mr MINNIKIN: Thank you, Director-General, I refer to page 5 of the SDS and Auditor-General's report No. 4 for 2017-18, *Integrated transport planning*. I will quote it for your benefit. It states—

DTMR has calculated that it has a \$4 billion renewal backlog for its road network as at 30 June 2017. It estimates the renewal gap will increase to more than \$9 billion over the next 10 years. This will affect DTMR's ability to meet minimum performance targets; it will compromise service standards; and it will require DTMR to reprioritise works to address safety-related defects on its network at the expense of works to renew its assets.

The latest assessment of the shortfall is in excess of \$5 billion, which falls well short of TMR's own guidelines on maintaining existing assets. What implications does this funding shortfall have for road safety across the network?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. I do acknowledge the QAO report. I want to stress that safety is our No. 1 priority, and routine maintenance activities ensure that all state controlled roads—that is, all 33,367 kilometres—are as safe as possible for the travelling public. We have the longest state controlled road of any Australian state or territory. Since the QAO report was finalised, the total length of the state controlled road that requires rehabilitation or resurfacing has been reduced by 695 kilometres. This comprises 723 kilometres being eliminated from the backlog of road-surfacing treatments, offset by an additional 28 kilometres requiring rehabilitation.

The number that the honourable member is quoting is right, but it includes things like a 30 per cent increase in bitumen. There has also been an increase in the index for construction materials, like gravel et cetera. The number itself has gone up but it has gone up for different reasons in the QAO report. The cost of asphalt or the sealing treatment has gone up. Also, as part of that number where it has gone up, we have an improved provision for road worker, road safety and change in work patterns. That has increased the cost by seven per cent. We have made sure that on some roads we have an increased use of an intermediate layer to prevent cracks from propagating through the surface.

What we are doing is: recognising that, we have set the standard we require. We have a run, maintain and build philosophy, so we test out the road on a regular basis. We also have the benefit of a \$23 billion QTRIP. We have an increase in our maintenance program, which is detailed in QTRIP as well. We are checking it on a regular basis. If you take our bridges, which is part of that backlog, we have 3,113 bridges, of which 10 per cent roughly are timber bridges, and we check them on a regular basis as well.

What are we doing about it? We have targeted maintenance. We are making sure the roads are safe to operate, and there are SDS measures on that. We are gradually chipping away. We have been helped by government in that we have more in the maintenance budget. The number that you are quoting is quite right, but it has gone up for other reasons as well—that is, a 30 per cent increase in bitumen, increased road safety costs and also increased gravel costs.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, on what date was the toll for the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing set? Was it set by the Palaszczuk Labor government, to be specific?

Mr Scales: Thank you very much for the question. I am not avoiding it, but it is a policy matter. The setting of toll levels is a matter for government, not a matter for the director-general.

Mr BOYCE: Mr Scales, in relation to page 4 of the SDS on service requirements and specifically QTRIP, can you advise on the damage to the road surface occurring along the Warrego Highway between Dalby and Miles, where bitumen approaches to bridges and passing lanes are failing less than 12 months after construction works? I would like to table some photographs in relation to this question.

CHAIR: Do you have copies of those?

Mr BOYCE: Yes, I do.

CHAIR: Consider it tabled.

Mr Scales: I thank the member for the question and also the photographs. What you are showing me there is entirely right. That is part of the wide centreline treatment we have put on the Warrego Highway. We are looking at it really closely, because it has been less than a year since it has gone down so we are looking at the contractor really closely on that. It is an issue that has already been brought to my attention and we are taking remedial action.

It is probably worthwhile noting that it is in the centre of the road. That wide centreline improvement is something we have done for the benefit of Queenslanders. We have put over 1,000 kilometres down. It is one of our mass actions, because we were getting lots of head-on collisions—not necessarily on this highway but certainly on the Bruce since we have modified it. The Warrego obviously has its own issues as well. I am aware of it. We are taking it up with the contractor and we will fix it.

Mr BOYCE: Why has this happened? Who was overseeing this project when it was undertaken?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the supplementary question. It would have been done by one of our district directors and his or her staff who look after that. What you have pointed out is a piece of highway, but bear in mind we have 33,367 kilometres of road, which is enough road to go all around Australia and a third again. Most of the time we get it right. Sometimes—very rare times—we have contractors that let us down and then we have it fixed up.

Mr BOYCE: There has been in the vicinity of \$800 million spent on this road and the taxpayer should have a reasonable explanation as to who is going to carry out this work. Who is going to pay for it?

CHAIR: I think the director-general has been answering that. Is there anything you wish to add to that? The member is very concerned because he has trucks. I understand his concerns.

Mr Scales: I think most of that money has been very wisely spent and has fixed up the Warrego in a lot of areas, so much so that I think it is a lot safer road than it ever has been.

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, with reference to page 7 under 'transport infrastructure management and delivery' and the Coomera Connector, it is noted that residents have been claiming that the gazetted stage 3 of the Coomera Connector, which some refer to as the second M1, appeared to be accelerated. Specifically, when did the community consultation in the Eagleby area occur?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. This is a 45 kilometre proposed road. We have gazetted it in three parts. We gazetted the first bit between Loganholme and Nerang—I am just getting to the exact point. Currently, we are working through a whole series of consultations on that road. I do not know exactly when the consultation regarding Eagleby would have happened. The process is we have gazetted it in three lumps, the last one on 15 March this year. The second bit is we will begin community consultation and then we will take it to the next stage, which is detailed design. Following the detailed design, which will involve community consultation in detail, we will take it to government. You are specifically after Eagleby?

Mr MINNIKIN: Mr Scales, I have a follow-up question again in that same sort of area. What research has been undertaken on the impact that a six-lane highway could have on the ecologically important Eagleby Wetlands?

Mr Scales: We take our environmental responsibilities very seriously. If you are asking me to speculate at this point, I am not able to answer you. We take not just the wetlands but flora and fauna very seriously. If you take the Moreton Bay Rail Link or Peninsula line as an example, we tagged all the koalas on that. Then we provided an underpass for koalas and we also did some research into the reduction of chlamydia in koalas at the same time. We take it very seriously. We have environmental officers embedded in the organisation. I cannot give you an answer because I would be speculating, but we take anything on that subject very sensitively.

Mr MINNIKIN: To the best of your knowledge there has been no research undertaken in that particular locale in relation to ecological importance?

Mr Scales: We would be doing that work as part of a community consultation.

CHAIR: Do you have a follow-up question?

Mr MINNIKIN: I do to Mr Scales as well. With reference to the SDS page 10 and 'transport safety and regulation' in relation to the national Road Safety Strategy, could you please advise the committee how Queensland is tracking to meet the road safety target of a reduction in fatalities of 30 per cent by 2020?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. I think every single fatality is absolutely tragic. Today we are at 118 fatalities. That is minus 26 compared to the same day last year. Comparing that to our best ever year, which was 2014, on the same day it was 122. We are at four fewer than we were at that point.

With our driver distraction program and with our advertising we are trying to knock out the fatal five, which is drug driving, drink-driving, speed, fatigue and not wearing a seatbelt. We are making great attacks on that. As to the target of a 30 per cent reduction, I do not think—although I will be corrected by the minister because it is a policy issue—any state or territory in Australia has actually met those targets. I am very hopeful that the work we are doing on the 3Es will make a difference. There is engineering where we will engineer out problems such as the wide centre-line treatment on the Warrego Highway, one of our mass treatments for engineering. There is education, and we have done a lot on education. The minister led the driver distraction two-day workshop, which was the first of its kind in

Australia. There is also enforcement: with our colleagues in the police, we are enforcing with regard to a lot of abhorrent behaviours by individuals. I have to say that drug driving really does concern us. While all of our drink-driving paraphernalia is at the roadside, for drug driving it is very difficult; sometimes you have to test people's blood or saliva offsite.

In answer to your point on the national targets, I think everybody will be struggling to achieve them. The very fact I mentioned we are minus 26 always troubles me because as soon as I mention something, we seem to end up with an issue, and that is not the full story. The fatalities are at 118 today. The number of fatalities per 100,000 of population is on the way down, so the trajectory is heading in the right direction, but that is the not full story. As I say, 6½ thousand people are injured on the roads every year, which is too many.

We are tracking probably—this is 2020. Nationally, we have a 19 per cent increase in the number of people who have lost their lives, and our target is to reduce that from 303, which was the average in 2008 and 2010, to 200 or fewer by 2020. We might get there. We are working very hard. I think driver distraction due to mobile phones is the new drink-driving. The minister has been quite strong on this and as the first road transport safety minister for Queensland, he is driving the department quite hard, and rightly so. A lot of the things we have done will drive us towards 2020, but will we get to that percentage—the 2008 and 2010 baseline? I am not really sure. Bear in mind we have a population in Australia of something like 25 million. When that target was set, the population would have been a lot fewer. The population in this state is now at five million plus. I do not know if the minister wants to add anything.

Mr BAILEY: I would be happy to. The road toll this year is better relatively and as the director-general outlines, it is the best financial year result we have had in a long, long time. I would say that the task of road safety absolutely has to press forward. I put my proposal of a \$1,000 fine on the first offence and then loss of licence out there because distracted driving really is the next big thing we need to sort out; the lack of compliance out there is dangerous. All the research shows that it is the equivalent of driving with a blood alcohol level of 0.07 to 0.1 in your system. If we want to save lives, we have to have genuine, authentic political leadership to ensure that we keep driving that road toll down.

We were at a road toll of 100 on 30 June this year, at exactly the halfway point. I hope there are no further fatalities this year but, unfortunately, I think it is fair to say there is a very high chance there will be. We cannot go backwards on road safety. The proposal by the opposition to abolish covert speed cameras in this state is the most irresponsible thing I have heard in my entire time in parliament because it will mean an increase in fatalities in Queensland. The opposition leader and the deputy opposition leader have been very strident in saying they are going to abolish covert speed cameras. To be quite frank, it makes my stomach churn.

We need to make sure that we keep the measures we have in terms of road safety that are saving lives. People know they can get a fine if they speed anywhere any time in Queensland. That is a very strong measure; it is a fair measure. Speeding still accounts for about 20 per cent of our road fatalities and a measurable level of trauma for people who are permanently injured. I sincerely urge the member for Chatsworth to go to his party room and reverse that policy because it will cause more trauma and more deaths on our roads.

Mr MINNIKIN: Director-General, how does Transport and Main Roads propose to ensure that road safety initiatives will be implemented in a uniform and consistent manner with the newly established federal Office of Road Safety?

Mr Scales: We are working in close cooperation with our federal colleagues, although the secretary recently moved. This office has only recently been established. They do not have any roads or bridges, so they have to work in partnership with the states. This body was established on 1 July 2019 in direct response to recommendation 2 of the National Road Safety Strategy inquiry. We will be working really closely with our colleagues on the federal side, because they are between a rock and a hard place. If they do not get involved they can be accused of not taking it seriously, but if they do get involved they will need a state or a territory. We put our hands up to work quite closely.

My colleague Steven Kennedy has now moved to Treasury. As soon as we get a new secretary of the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, we will be in touch. We are working really closely with the feds on a number of issues. One is something the member for Maiwar asked about—that is, disabled persons' access to the transport network. There are a couple of examples where this state has reached out to and is working in concert with the feds to get the best possible outcome for the people of Queensland.

CHAIR: Minister, can you provide an update on public transport patronage across South-East Queensland—something that is close to our hearts?

Mr BAILEY: Thank you for your support of public transport. I know that you have been a huge supporter of park-and-ride at Dakabin station for constituents in your area and in neighbouring electorates. The great news is that, when it comes to patronage on our South-East Queensland public transport network, people are voting with their feet. In 2017-18 we saw 182 million trips across all modes. That is a record and it has been fantastic to see. Of course, the figures are just in on financial year 2018-19. There were 6.9 million extra trips in only one year—almost a 3.8 per cent increase. That shows that people's faith in public transport is coming back. They are taking advantage of the new infrastructure the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered—namely, light rail stage 2, the duplication from Helensvale to Coomera and the improvement in affordability we have implemented since being in power.

We are not content with that. We will continue to invest in public transport right across the state. Particularly in terms of park-and-rides, we have a big \$114 million commitment to increase park-and-rides by 2,300 spaces. We also encourage affordability. Last financial year \$320 million went out on the concession scheme, so people who might be on low incomes can afford to use the system. Our Fairer Fares policy, brought in by previous minister Hinchliffe in late 2016, has already seen savings for commuters of \$178 million. Of course, that grows over time.

Affordability is something that we have been very happy to see. There has been record patronage two years in a row. We expect that with the extra 430 services that started yesterday—not in 36 or 37 years but yesterday; it did happen—that patronage is locked in and will continue. I can assure the committee of that. These two record years contrast starkly to the three worst years of patronage in the last decade which were, of course, the three years of the previous Newman LNP government, in which the member for Chatsworth was the assistant minister to Campbell Newman for public transport. His fingerprints were all over the botch-ups that occurred, be it low patronage, the trains ordered from overseas that were not disability compliant, Cross River Rail being cut, no new infrastructure in the public transport network and, as we could see last month, predictions of 36 years to full timetable when in fact it started yesterday.

We are investing in the infrastructure and in customer service. I cannot emphasise that more. Queensland Rail is becoming a much more customer focused organisation, talking to commuters regularly. Often there are three catch-ups at different stations every week, a number of which I have been at. Commuters get to give their input via iPads for a couple of minutes before they get on their train. We use that data. It is different for every station. It drives change and drives what we are doing. We are also investing in the technology. I look forward to the patronage figures in 12 months. I suspect they will be very strong as well.

Mr MELLISH: I refer to Budget Paper No. 4. In relation to the Mount Isa rail line, can the minister outline the work undertaken by Queensland Rail to recover the line following the monsoonal event earlier this year?

Mr BAILEY: Absolutely. This year's unprecedented flooding event in North Queensland caused widespread impacts on the Queensland Rail network, particularly on the Mount Isa line. More than 200 individual sites across 300 kilometres of track required repair before the line could reopen. That included 38 bridge abutments, the repair of 47 kilometres of rail and 120,000 tonnes of ballast. There were at least 20 kilometres of complete washouts and another 20 kilometres, from recollection, of very bad scouring. We had bridges that had nothing on either side of them—rail lines stranded in mid-air. It really was astonishing to see the damage. That said, the reopening of that was a very high priority for Queensland Rail, Transport and Main Roads and that whole community. As soon as we were able to get in there, it was an extraordinary effort by Queensland Rail, all the supporting contractors, TMR, local councils—I pay tribute to the mayors out there—and also obviously the private sector. We repaired it in 12 weeks—an incredible achievement.

More than 400 employees on that task force and contractors from across the state worked 160,000 hours over 12 weeks to repair track infrastructure between Richmond and Cloncurry. The cost of this expensive recovery program was in the order of \$53 million. Approximately \$33 million of these costs went straight back into regional Queensland economies, with materials and contractors sourced from a number of locations to support the accelerated program including Rockhampton, Townsville, Ingham, Cloncurry, Richmond and Mount Isa.

The line's closure also presented a unique opportunity for Queensland Rail maintenance staff to gain unrestricted track access to the remainder of the line and undertake large-scale maintenance activities such as rerailing and track reconditioning. As a result, end-to-end run times between

Townsville and Mount Isa were able to be reduced by up to 50 minutes, with the overall delays due to temporary speed restrictions reduced from 128 minutes to 78 minutes across the 1,000-kilometre journey. I sure the member for Traeger is very pleased to see that. Between Hughenden and Cloncurry, which was significantly impacted by the floods, restrictions have reduced by almost half—down from 58 minutes to just under 24 minutes. Queensland Rail estimates that this could deliver approximately 29 hours per week in productivity savings for the freight network between Townsville and Mount Isa.

We also are focused on improving the resilience of the line in the event of future major weather events. Undoubtedly, they will happen at some point. We are in the process of commissioning an expert to work with Queensland Rail staff to undertake a new hydrological model of the Mount Isa line to identify areas that could benefit from additional flood mitigation solutions. The outcome of this model will inform our strategy, scheduling and budgeting of future flood resilience works including design and construction over the next several years, with the most susceptible areas prioritised.

This year's monsoonal floods were a one-in-500-year event and significantly exceeded our previous flood experience in the region, with rapid metres-high floodwaters causing significant washouts. Work already undertaken includes the creation of additional culverts and corrugated metal pipes along high-risk areas to aid water flow and drainage in the event of another flooding event.

Queensland Rail is also committed to working with the community to resolve their concerns as the Nelia area is remediated. I want to thank all of those who led and did this work. Having been on site, the work was extraordinarily arduous with above 40 degree temperatures. I also want to thank the Transport and Main Roads staff who repaired the Flinders Highway in, I think, just over a week. The damage there was extensive as well. The temperatures were so hot that the bitumen that had been moved looked like chopped lettuce. The bitumen itself was like putty in that you could bend it in your hands. I have a chunk of it in my office—it does solidify when it cools down—but they are the sorts of things I was talking about. The conditions were extreme. To be working in full PPE gear day in, day out doing those repairs, I just cannot say how magnificent the workers are who did that job.

Mrs MILLER: I have a question in relation to the interchange of the Centenary Highway with the Logan Motorway coming through from Springfield. Director-General, has any design work been started on a new interchange?

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. Would it be okay, Chair and member, if I gave you the answer to the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing and Main Roads first?

CHAIR: Certainly.

Mrs MILLER: Yes.

Mr Scales: I have that, and I also have the date for the member for Chatsworth. The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing crosses a number of traffic roads but also paper roads, which are roads which are shown on registered plans but do not have any infrastructure on them—that is, they are on the map, but there is nothing on them. With regard to the traffic roads, the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing either went over them or under them. Anything that had traffic on them we actually either went over or under or we cul-de-sacked the road and provided alternative access.

With regard to the paper roads, none have been officially closed as yet and the contractor, Nexus, is tasked with dealing with the matter under their contract. They are currently formally surveying the boundaries of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing and, as part of the process and working with the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, they will close the paper roads where that department's process has been followed. I think if you have any specific examples, if we could take it offline through the chair, I would be happy to take the matter up with the honourable member.

Mrs MILLER: So basically what I pointed out on behalf of my constituent was correct?

Mr Scales: Yes, because we have not done the work yet and it is done in conjunction with Natural Resources, Mines and Energy. They will do a bit. The contractor has the responsibility to do it, so that is probably why we have not been so overt.

CHAIR: I am happy for you to quickly answer that other question.

Mr Scales: The Toowoomba Second Range Crossing contract was awarded on 16 August 2015.

CHAIR: Thank you, and now the member for Bundamba's—

Mr Scales: To the member's question on the Logan Motorway side, the planning for that intersection would be Transurban Queensland's responsibility. Having said that, personally I am not aware of any planning that has been done or undertaken in that location.

Mrs MILLER: Can I ask that that be taken on board please, Minister, because the Centenary Highway there basically is a crawl of a morning? More and more young mothers, in particular, are complaining to me about having to leave home at half past five or six o'clock in the morning to try to get to work on time because of the Centenary Highway basically crawling through there because the kilometre-per-hour speed limits are so low.

Mr BAILEY: I would certainly take your feedback, member. There will be a need, as population growth continues out there, for the road network to expand, but I certainly hear your feedback.

Mrs MILLER: Okay. I have a question for either the director-general or Nick Easy from QR. I was just wondering when the upgrade of Ebbw Vale train station car park will be completed and the date please.

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. I have a cheat sheet here. The status at the moment is that it is under design. It is 100 per cent funded by the Queensland government with an estimated total cost of just over \$3 million and it is in QTRIP. I do not have a date yet because it is in design first and I cannot really speculate because it would just be wrong to speculate I think, but the ball is in play.

Mrs MILLER: Okay. It is just that the people of Ebbw Vale would like to know whether it will be within the next 12 months or two years roughly. Do you have a rough idea? How long does design take for a little expansion of a car park?

Mr Scales: I have been caught out with these things before and—

Mrs MILLER: I will not hold you to it.

Mr Scales: No, but the design might involve PUPs and utility companies and the utilities are never in the place where they say they are on the map and then you get inclement weather when you have to do something.

Mrs MILLER: My issue then is why are we announcing it if we do not know when we are going to finish it? Ebbw Vale is a really tiny little suburb and it is very close to my heart. A lot of elderly people are there and it is probably going to be the most excitement in Ebbw Vale for a long time. Everyone loves the train station and the car park and of course the little hamburger shop across the road, so we are just wondering approximately when.

Mr Scales: All I can say, honourable member, is that it is in play now. The design is done and the money has been allocated, so we will—

Mrs MILLER: As soon as you can, would you be able to let us know please?

Mr Scales: I am sure the minister will be doing that for you.

Mr BAILEY: Absolutely.

CHAIR: Bringing exciting times to Ebbw Vale.

Mrs MILLER: It is a lovely little village. I have a further question in relation to train car parks. With the Springfield car park looking like being completed in 2021, which is a long way off—and I can tell you our people are not happy about that because they have already texted me about it—is there any possibility of expanding the Goodna Railway Station car park in the meantime or even going across the road into parts of Evan Marginson Park?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. We do have a fully committed park-and-ride program of \$114 million, and some of that work is underway now. I know the Eight Mile Plains park-and-ride construction is underway for instance. We would need to look at it in terms of a future allocation. It will be more likely that the earliest opportunity would probably be the budget next year to look at that. We certainly get a lot of requests for park-and-rides, as you can appreciate, with 152 rail stations, other busway stations et cetera, but I am happy to look at the Goodna situation. I hear your support and advocacy of it. I am happy to have a look at Goodna and ask Transport and Main Roads to have a look at what the issues are there to see if there are some possibilities of something there in the future.

Mrs MILLER: Okay. I have another question in relation to the flashing lights outside schools. Goodna Special School is located on Queen Street, which is an extremely busy road in Goodna. The school is being expanded, so there are more buildings being put in there. The parents and also the teachers have asked for flashing lights because it really is quite dangerous. What they are being told from the council is that it is a departmental responsibility. The department, I have been advised, say

that the council can do it if they want to do it, so the parents and the teachers are sick of it being batted backwards and forwards. I want to know once and for all on behalf of the parents of these most beautiful children who go to Goodna Special School, what is the go?

Mr Scales: It is not on my radar at the moment. We take advice from government on which schools to put flashing lights in, but it is done on a number of bases. It is done on crash history. It is done on whether it is a local road or our road or whether it is a split school site. There is a whole series of objective criteria that we put in there and then it goes onto a list and we look at that in due course. I am not aware of anything in that area. There is nothing on my radar there.

Mrs MILLER: Queen Street is the main street that runs into the Goodna shopping centre and down to the train station. This is a special school on that road. I know it is a council road, but something needs to be done there to get drivers to slow down.

Mr BAILEY: Member, I am very happy for a Transport and Main Roads person to talk to you about that school in particular. We are putting in 100 flashing lights a year. They are done on a very objective safety criteria. Engineers go out, look at every school and rate them and then do it in order of priority. Off the top of my head, I do not know where on that list you will be. We can check that and come back to you. I am also happy for a Transport and Main Roads person to meet with you and discuss their particular and specific needs. The special school may have different needs from our ordinary schools.

Mrs MILLER: It does.

Mr BAILEY: I am happy to have that discussion.

Mrs MILLER: It is not a state primary school; it is a special school. We regard that as upping the priority, so to speak. I have a question in relation to elderly drivers, particularly those who have suffered strokes. I have people in my electorate who have suffered strokes who are trying to get their licences back. At the moment they are doctor shopping and they are being scammed by all sorts of people who are asking them to go through special driver training to try to get their licences back. It is costing them, in some circumstances, many hundreds of dollars. Who is the final arbiter on whether they get their licence back? Is it the department? Is it the doctor? There is incredible confusion in the electorate.

Mr Scales: I thank the honourable member for the question. We require a medical certificate and that has to be done by a registered practitioner. That is done under Queensland Health. Once we have that, the licence is good to go. We cannot do one without the other.

Mrs MILLER: You are talking about a GP?

Mr Scales: It is a licensed medical practitioner. Whether that is a GP, a surgeon or whatever, Queensland Health would have all of that detail. We get that piece of information from Queensland Health and then we can issue the licence. Without that, we cannot do it. The determining step is the medic and then we will take action from that point.

Mrs MILLER: Director-General, can I ask you please to have a look at this, because some of the elderly drivers who want their licences back are doctor shopping in relation to those matters, which is very concerning to me? I know they are, because they are telling me they are. They will go to any lengths to get their licences back. I think someone somewhere should have the responsibility of saying, 'You are not going to get your licence back at all.'

Mr Scales: I will talk to my colleague the director-general of Queensland Health to see what is happening at that level and then we will take it from there.

Mrs MILLER: Please.

Mr Scales: For the benefit of the committee I have two responses. I am not trying to cut off the member for Bundamba.

CHAIR: No, that is fine.

Mr Scales: The member for Maiwar asked about the business case for the Centenary Bridge update. The reason we did not give an immediate answer is that Building Queensland is currently leading the development of that business case. Therefore, the summary of the cost-benefit analysis will be publicly released by Building Queensland as legislated. They will issue a summary on their website.

For the benefit of the member for Chatsworth, we have undertaken a 12-month environmental assessment of the entire Coomera Connector corridor, including Eagleby. As I said earlier, the department is up to speed on the environmental flora and fauna side of it. Following the gazettal of the Staplyton to Loganholme section on 15 March, we have done that but further consultation will be subject

to government consideration. It will be a matter for the government how we proceed. On the environmental side, we have done a 12-month assessment. Sorry, Chair, I just thought that it was useful for the member for Maiwar.

CHAIR: That is okay. We will now go to the member for Traeger for a question and then to the member for Hervey Bay.

Mr KATTER: Page 7 of the SDS relates to the rail line. I make the comment that you and your department deserve a pat on the back for that remediation work. It was excellent. Despite that, the Deputy Premier made the announcement subsequent to that event about the rail line. At the moment, the major users of the Townsville-Mount Isa rail line cite the price as the biggest constraint, mainly imposed by the QCA guidelines that the track operates under. Given that all capital expenditure and maintenance on the line is fully built back into the price, does this mean that the recent announcement of the Deputy Premier of the \$380 million of expenditure on the line outweighs any benefit of the \$18 million per annum discount, therefore exacerbating the original issue of price constraining use?

Mr BAILEY: It will be a rebate, so there be a benefit there. We are engaging at the moment with stakeholders in terms of the users of the line about the form of it. It will date from 1 July, so there will be a backdating that I think people are comfortable with. We are engaging with industry at the moment. There certainly will be a benefit in terms of the line. The final form of that will be subject to us closing negotiations with our stakeholders throughout the area. We expect that the line will be a lot more competitive as a result.

Mr KATTER: I am still trying to get my ahead around it, though. I understand the discount but, as I said, the maintenance and the capital expenditure are all cost recovered. If there is an announcement of \$380 million concurrent with that discount, that is a larger number annualised to offset that discount. Mathematically, it certainly seems like it to me, but I am honestly asking: does that work out at a higher price, because that \$380 million gets fully cost recovered?

Mr BAILEY: I am advised that it does not affect cost recovery. It is an investment into making industry more competitive and the outcome will be exactly that. We will certainly have more information for you as we work through the issues. There are a whole lot of different ways that you can structure it. That is what we are working through with industry. We want them to have input into how we do that. We want it to be as effective as possible. The line will be a lot more competitive for the North West Minerals Province, that is for sure.

Mr KATTER: That sounds good. I think you said that the \$380 million will not be cost recovered. There was wording to that effect. I just want to clarify that.

Mr BAILEY: Sorry, can you say that again?

Mr KATTER: From what I gathered just then, the answer was that the \$380 million would not be fully cost recovered from the users.

Mr BAILEY: I do not expect so, no. If you would like the Queensland Rail CEO to come up and respond to it more fully, that would probably be better.

Mr KATTER: Thank you.

Mr Easy: I thank the honourable member for the question. You are right: the Mount Isa line is regulated by the QCA, which sets the prices per annum. That takes into account the costs for maintenance and investment in the line. The maintenance costs and the forward schedule of costs next year are consistent with the costs that we spent this year. Those forward rates are factored into our pricing regime. The investment in the line and the QCA regulated regime does mean that that investment is recovered by charges.

Mr KATTER: You are saying that will be recovered by those charges?

Mr Easy: There are no changes to how the recovery of those costs occurs across the line. That line is not subsidised via transport services across contract revenue. The investment in the line for maintenance and the investment for capital is recouped via the charges. If you look at the charges, though, over the last few years there have been no price increases in the charges on the Mount Isa line, with the exception of CPI increases. We have been quite consistent. It takes into account a forward program for investment, and any cost increases have only reflected CPI.

Mr KATTER: That must mean that, if the price has not changed and it is fully cost recovered, there must have been an expectation that there would be expenditure to the tune of \$380 million, if you are able to control that without increasing it?

Mr Easy: It is a consistent level of investment across the forward program. The charges would reflect that and it would be consistent with what they have been in previous years.

Mr KATTER: The QCA consistently raises the biggest constraint on business. I understand there is review taking place. Given we have had a number of deaths on the road involving heavy vehicles and there is clearly more use of the road as there are more products, will the government commit to fast tracking that QCA review so that we can nail this issue and get more users on the rail line?

Mr BAILEY: Obviously the QCA does not come under my portfolio so I am not really in a position to give you any commitment on that, but I am certainly happy to pass that on.

Mr KATTER: You partly answered this question previously. There was reference to locations such as Yabulu and Bluewater in Townsville, but Nelia in particular in Julia Creek where we went to have a look. There are often comments made about the culverts—I think it was 40 years ago when they raised the line—and the impact it has had. There have been assertions from people on the ground that the line and the road has impacted on the flooding that went through to the small community of Nelia. Can the minister give assurances that these transport links have not increased the flood risks in these parts and did not contribute to the localised impacts and other disasters experienced in those areas? You sort of answered before that you are looking at that. The question is: what can assure these people that that does not impact on them?

Mr BAILEY: I will get my DG to respond to it more fully but obviously when we do upgrades, whether it is road, rail, whatever infrastructure, there is always a lot of careful work done in terms of hydrology and the issue of flooding. That is very important particularly in some areas. We are very conscious of that in relation to the Bruce Highway. That is why we are doing the Haughton River upgrade.

Queensland Rail staff attended the Bluewater area earlier in the year to assess flood damage and the impacts of floodwaters on the rail line. In late March Queensland Rail's North Coast line team also inspected and measured the culverts and the bridges in the Bluewater area. During the visit the team met with a number of residents regarding the impact of the one-in-500-year flood event on the area. Obviously it was a huge event. I think everyone is aware of the scale of it being way beyond what we all are used to. Queensland Rail plans to install culverts as a local solution in an upcoming track closure there in August. QR is also considering further mitigation measures along the corridor.

There was a meeting with the member for Hinchinbrook in June to discuss the residents' concerns and their requests for additional mitigation measures at the site. Queensland Rail will continue to engage with the member for Hinchinbrook and the local community there as further flood mitigation improvements to the rail line are considered. DG did you want to add to that?

Mr Scales: We generally build a one-in-100-year event flood immunity. As the minister said, this was a one-in-500-year event. The train was parked in Nelia because that was actually high ground. The waters were so swift and so quick it was like a high pressure water hose under the train and it washed all the ballast away and the train tipped over. We went and had a look at that. What QR have done is put a bypass in that area. The train line is fixed so that that is a stabilising point for the future. That will be an advantage for the future. But generally we build for a one-in-100-year event. The copper mine in the Isa was built for a one-in-500-year event and it was very close to closing. It was not just the height, the one metre of rain in seven days, it was the fact that it came down so quickly. The train itself was on high ground. That is why it was parked in Nelia. The ballast was washed away and it tipped over.

Mr SORENSEN: For the purpose of clarity around the maintenance program at the boat ramp at Gatakers Bay, on 11 June 2019 a question on notice indicated that TMR does not have any current plans to dredge this location, yet in a media article two weeks after the question was answered it indicates that the facility will be dredged on 3 December with the ramp to be closed for four days. Is this just minor maintenance as well?

Mr BAILEY: We are putting \$100 million into marine infrastructure all over the state. We have a very substantial commitment. We know how popular owning a boat and getting out on the water is to people so boat ramps are something I take quite seriously. In terms of this specific boat ramp, I will take that on notice and come back to you specifically. I have just had a note from my chief of staff. Apparently the journalist involved ran an old story and it was dredged last December, I am informed. I hope that is of assistance to you.

Mr MINNIKIN: My question also is to the minister. Minister, referencing page 4 of the SDS service performance, could the minister advise the status of the investigation into the circumstances whereby a contractor working at the state owned port of Gladstone was suspended for simply asking a question of the then federal Labor leader at an election campaign stop?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the question. That is actually the first question you have asked me since November of last year so it is fantastic to hear from you.

Mr MINNIKIN: There are plenty more.

Mr BAILEY: Hopefully we will get more of them. As I have said before, and I am very happy to reiterate this, anyone should be able to approach any political representative and raise issues that are important to them. That is the nature of our democracy and one I will always defend. I understand that the incident the member referred to involved a consultant who was contracted to Welcon Technologies. The consultant in question was doing work at the port on behalf of Welcon Technologies and was not directly employed or contracted by the port of Gladstone. I am advised the port raised some contractual issues with Welcon which led to one of the contracts between them being suspended but those matters have now been resolved.

I have previously raised with the ports chairs concerns about the manner in which this situation was handled. My understanding is that the matter has been referred for investigation to Queensland Treasury and separately, I understand, a report has been made to the CCC by the opposition. Given that an independent assessment is now being conducted, I think it is incumbent that we do not interfere in that assessment and that the proper authorities be given the ability to follow their own process.

Mr MINNIKIN: I have a follow-up question in relation to ports. Could the minister provide an update on the independent assessment of fees charged by Ports North to reef operators who are using the Cairns Marlin Marina?

Mr BAILEY: I thank the honourable member for the second question since November. Ports North completed the construction of the City Port North project in 2003 which included construction of dedicated reef fleet berths and associated land based infrastructure. The development of these facilities was undertaken in consultation with the marine tourism industry and the development provided the best quality facilities in Queensland to meet the needs of tourism operators and their passengers. These facilities were constructed with a significant investment by Ports North. Ports North is seeking now an appropriate, and has always sought an appropriate, return on that investment.

The charges applied in 2003 were less than 50 per cent of the business case proposed charges. This remains the issue and Ports North proposes a steady real increase in charges over and above CPI rather than significant increases in charges. Fundamentally the issue here is there is a whole lot of original operators paying a much lower rate than the more recent operators and obviously there is an issue of fair treatment there that all the operators who use the marina should be subject to a similar charge. This is an extraordinary market. You are on the edge the Great Barrier Reef. There is a very strong flood of tourists coming and moving through the area and that is why there are a lot of operators there. Ports North has in excess of 50 commercial berth agreements with the majority of those agreements having a passenger charge and a berthing charge based on Ports North's annually reviewed schedule of charges. Fifteen of the original agreements with the larger operators became due for renewal from May last year.

An independent review of Ports North's pricing showed that the existing reef fleet revenues represented only 51.3 per cent of the maximum allowable revenues under a regulated pricing model. If the prices were regulated, the charges imposed by Ports North could be doubled. Ports North's approach with pricing for the schedule of charges at the marina and throughout the balance of the port has been based on a five per cent per year increase. This price increase is justified by the outcomes of the port pricing model.

Ports North consulted with key port operators and industry representatives, who sought a long tenure period and certainty in future charges to avoid significant increases in the future. To address these matters, Ports North proposed a 15-year agreement and a capping on future pricing increases. These agreements included a five-year phase-in of five per cent per year increases, followed by capped annual increases of CPI, plus two per cent or five per cent over the remaining life of the agreements. The phase-in period will bring these agreements into alignment with other schedule of charges contracts. Term sheets have been provided to operators, but no new agreements have been executed.

The reef operators' industry representative has written to the Queensland government on the proposed future port charges and a meeting was held on 6 February 2019. Following that meeting, Ports North prepared a revised offer, which was formally provided to the operators, with a reduction in future price escalations. The operators have not accepted the revised offer and have since embarked on a media campaign to call for an independent review of the prices. To progress with negotiations, Ports North is proposing to include an independent review process as a condition of the commercial agreements, based on a user-pays principle. Ports North is in the process of writing to the operators about this offer.

In short, I think what has happened here has been a responsible approach by Ports North. They have two sets of operators who have been charged different fees due to some history and they have proposed a phase-in over time. There has been some concern about it and some resistance to that. They are looking at an independent review of their pricing model. I think that is a fair and reasonable way of progressing.

Mr MINNIKIN: Minister, in terms of the significance of the Cross River Rail project as it relates to the overall rail network, given that the Labor appointed chair of this body was the former health minister who oversaw the payroll system, can you assure the people of Queensland that the management of the project is indeed in safe hands?

Mr BAILEY: Of course, the Cross River Rail project is a responsibility of the Deputy Premier. There was a four-hour session last Tuesday to ask questions about that project in particular. I think the member is cheekily having a little double dip here, in terms of having another go on a session that has already been completed.

I have absolute confidence in this project. The project has been opposed by the opposition regularly. The opposition often talk about the rhetoric of busting congestion, but they have consistently opposed the biggest congestion-busting project in South-East Queensland. Consistently they cut it when they were in government and they have opposed it every step of the way. They are not really serious about busting congestion. They are not really serious about our public transport system. They botched it up when they were in government. The member for Chatsworth was the assistant minister for public transport. His record is appalling when it comes to public transport. We will get on with the job, with record patronages over two years and we are looking pretty good for the third year.

Mr MINNIKIN: But I did not have a '#railfail' after my stewardship—

CHAIR: Do you have a question?

Mr MINNIKIN: Yes, Mr Chair. Minister, I refer to the Deputy Premier's undisclosed purchase of an investment property, which will see a significant value uplift—

CHAIR: I am sorry, member. We have been through this at the start and you have had advice. Do you have a question related to this portfolio?

Mr MINNIKIN: Yes, I do, Mr Chair. Minister, with reference to page 4 of the Service Delivery Statements, service performance and the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program, there appears to be a growing list of projects that were announced prior to the last state election but have been either deferred or, in some cases, disappeared. Can you provide an update as to the expected delivery date of the following projects: the Loganlea station upgrade, which was an \$18 million project promised before the 2017 election, but now even the location has changed and the funding has disappeared; the Eastern Transitway, which Labor promised but stalled or pushed back past the 2020 election; the Northern Transitway, which Labor promised but stalled or pushed back; and the Sumners Road Interchange upgrade? If you could provide an update on each of those projects, that would be of extreme benefit to the committee.

CHAIR: Minister, if you can answer, but Sumners Road has been fleshed out.

Mr BAILEY: I am very happy to answer that question, Mr Chair. On the last one, the member obviously has not been listening to proceedings at the committee, as I have reported on one more than one occasion at this very session that the Sumners Road Interchange sod turn has happened and heavy construction is underway for an \$80 million project that was cut from QTRIP when the honourable member for Chatsworth was a member of the Newman government.

Mr MINNIKIN: It had an indicative cost of \$65 million, so a 23 per cent increase.

CHAIR: Member, please allow the minister to answer the question. I am very conscious of the time as well, Minister.

Mr BAILEY: Indeed. The Sumners Road Interchange upgrade has massively improved on the inferior design of the previous government—

Mr MINNIKIN: A 23 per cent increase.

Mr BAILEY:—which never took active transport seriously. We have separated the major cycleway from the interchange upgrade, which has huge safety benefits for both drivers and cyclists. We take the view that when we do a massive road upgrade it is logical and common sense to get the active transport done properly and thoroughly. Your costs are considerably less when you integrate it

into a major upgrade. That is what we do with the Ipswich Motorway Upgrade. You are seeing an active transport route created there. You do that as part of the massive road upgrade. The cost is very low compared to retrofitting it individually. That is just common sense with transport infrastructure.

Mr MINNIKIN: Why a 23 per cent increase, Minister?

CHAIR: Member, allow the minister to answer. Are there other portions of the answer, Minister?

Mr BAILEY: Absolutely; I certainly have more to offer. What we have seen in the past financial year is, in fact, the transport and main roads department exceeded their expenditure on capital by more than half a billion dollars because we accelerated projects. There is so much infrastructure going on under this government, compared to the \$600 million in cuts that occurred under the Newman government when the honourable member was the assistant minister to Campbell Newman. The contrast there—

Mr MINNIKIN: Relevance, Mr Chair, under standing order 118.

CHAIR: Minister, a point of order has been raised. Are there any other parts of the question that you can touch on?

Mr BAILEY: Absolutely. I am reporting to the committee that in the past financial year Transport and Main Roads exceeded their capital outlay in last year's budget by more than \$500 million because we got so much infrastructure done that we have been bringing it forward into a different financial year. That is what investment, jobs and transport infrastructure are all about.

I refer to the honourable member's reference to the Eastern Transitway. That project was created by this government—certainly not by the previous government, of which the member was an assistant minister. The Eastern Transitway project will deliver cost-effective bus priority improvements between Coorparoo and Carindale. The \$22 million investment is the next step in providing a high-quality public transport corridor on Old Cleveland Road. This is doubling down on Labor's great achievement of doing the Eastern Busway stage 1, which bypasses Stones Corner. It is a fantastic piece of infrastructure built by the Bligh Labor government, and this runs further out from that. The aim of the Eastern Transitway project is to improve bus travel times in peak periods, to improve service reliability for buses along the corridor, to support the increased use of public transport along the eastern corridor and to assist in managing congestion on Brisbane's eastern transport corridor.

A business case for the Eastern Transitway was first done in 2015. It focused only on potential savings and travel times created by the intersection upgrades. Transport and Main Roads and the city council completed a further study of public transport on Old Cleveland Road in 2017 which found that a further seven minutes could be shaved off bus travel times by creating dedicated bus lanes on Old Cleveland Road without removing any car lanes during peak periods. Thirty-five per cent of trips on Old Cleveland Road are bus trips, taking people to Carindale, Carina, Coorparoo and the CBD.

The extra travel time improvements we identified by putting in dedicated bus lanes were on top of the travel time savings that would have been achieved were we only to do the intersection upgrades. Preliminary design began in late May this year and is expected to be completed later in the year. Community views will then be sought on a plan to build dedicated bus lanes on Old Cleveland Road, as we look to minimise the impacts on peak hour commuters.

The size of each intersection upgrade means the Eastern Transitway project needs to be delivered in stages as we recognise that Old Cleveland Road would be brought to a standstill if they were all done at the same time. There will be significant impacts to traffic flow and some loss of parking on Old Cleveland Road during each stage of construction so we need to get that staging right. We acknowledge that building dedicated bus lanes will mean a loss of parking in some areas, such as in Carina and Coorparoo, so we need to have that conversation and consultation with the community and look at those local street-to-street impacts.

We support a responsible incremental approach to expanding the bus network to respond to demand and improve network performance. Transport and Main Roads will seek the Brisbane City Council's approval for the staging plan ahead of starting consultation later this year. Pending that approval and the outcomes of community consultation, construction could start in the second half of next year. I also note that almost 50 jobs are expected to be supported by the Eastern Transitway project.

TMR will continue to monitor demand for passenger transport along the Old Cleveland Road corridor between Brisbane and Redlands. This information will ensure any future planning and investment is focused where it is most appropriate. TMR will also continue to work with both the BCC and the Redland City Council to identify future priorities for other investments along Old Cleveland Road beyond this initial Eastern Transitway investment.

I note at page 46 of the *Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program 2019-20 to 2022-23* a reference to the Loganlea train station. The issue there will be integrating the design with future needs to expand that rail network. With the growth in the northern Gold Coast corridor you have to get the capacity from Kuraby to Beenleigh right. That has some implications for the Loganlea train station.

The issue is that if we put it in the current location that may be made redundant in the future. Getting the timing right there is important in terms of ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely. We are committed to our rail network. We want to get that right. There is certainly a logical reason for the timing in terms of Loganlea station. Was there anything I missed, member for Chatsworth?

CHAIR: I do not think so. I think it was a very fulsome answer.

Mr MINNIKIN: There was also the Loganlea station upgrade, but that can wait for another time.

CHAIR: That was what was just spoken about.

Mr BAILEY: That is what I was just talking about.

CHAIR: I am conscious of the time, but I was wondering, Minister, whether you had responses to any of the questions taken on notice?

Mr BAILEY: I have an update here and then I think the CEO of Queensland Rail might have a couple of updates as well. In terms of Goodna Special School, I am advised that a meeting occurred. It is up to the Ipswich City Council which has responsibility. We are certainly happy for Transport and Main Roads to talk to the member to see whether there is anything we can do to facilitate things.

Mrs MILLER: Minister, can they go straight to the Ipswich City Council, please?

Mr BAILEY: Sure. I can do that.

Mrs MILLER: And put pressure on them to do the right thing.

Mr BAILEY: Certainly. I can give you that commitment.

CHAIR: Are there any other answers to questions taken on notice?

Mr Scales: I have not got a date for the member for Bundamba, but in terms of the Ebbw Vale park-and-ride you can tell the good people of that area that tenders for construction closed on 25 July. Tenders are in and they will be evaluated so I will say late next year.

Mrs MILLER: Thank you very much. Can I ask another quick question?

CHAIR: No, I am sorry, member for Bundamba, we are out of time. I was hoping Mr Easy might have an answer to the other questions.

Mr Easy: I have some answers to the questions asked by the member for Chatsworth. The first one is in relation to advertising. The printed collateral you have seen at Central Railway Station and Fortitude Valley Railway Station came at no cost to Queensland Rail. In the interests of transparency, the printing and advertising costs for QR for the entire return to full service campaign totalled just under \$40,000. Two key components of that were press and radio to notify customers of changes, which was \$22,000, and A5 fliers to customers at stations to advise of changes, which was \$12,000. They were all very important to particularly notify customers in advance of the timetable but also the changes in stopping patterns.

In relation to footplate time. As I have said, footplate time is calculated on the time drivers spend driving a revenue train service relative to total working hours. This measurement is based on the revenue hours undertaken by drivers no matter what their shift—normal or overtime. Therefore, Queensland Rail is unable to separate the figures for footplate time for overtime hours. The application of overtime or normal time does not impact or change the metric for footplate time.

CHAIR: The last question, if you have an answer.

Mr Easy: There are two other answers I have. This is relation to the 93 drivers lost to supply. I will quickly work through those. In the cessations category there were 24 due to age retirement, two were dismissed, three unfortunately have deceased, five resigned, three retired medically unfit and two were as a result of medical separation. In the transfers there were 20 to tutor drivers, four to TOIs, seven to guards, 11 to regional drivers, plus a further one to regional tutors, two to the Rail Management Centre and two transferred to administration. Seven were moved to driver tuition at Mayne at reassignment.

The last one related to page 12 of the Strachan commission of inquiry where there is reference to the targets for both drivers and guards. The first section is recruited. On that page it said 78. We have now recruited 266 drivers. They are drivers who have been offered positions. We have recruited

400 guards. On that page there were 65 that had been offered at the time. The 200 and 200 target has been achieved for both of those. In terms of qualified there are 177 drivers and we will be achieving 200 by the end of this year and 314 guards against 31 guards that were in this snapshot. There are 74 drivers in training and 58 guards in training.

CHAIR: Minister, would you like to make a closing statement?

Mr BAILEY: I would love to. Can I offer a sincere thank you to all of our very hardworking staff across the department, our government owned corporations and Queensland Rail. It is a very busy and tense time for officials so thank you to everybody who has contributed so much to the estimates process. Thank you to the chair and the committee for the estimates session this year. Also a special thank you of course to my ministerial staff, including my chief of staff. It is always an intense time for ministerial staff as well. I am sure everyone understands that every minister relies on very good people and I am very lucky to have them. I thank them sincerely for all their support.

CHAIR: I thank the committee and visiting members for their time today. I thank those appearing today for their answers. I thank people for making it relatively easy for me. The time allocated for the consideration of the estimates of expenditure in the portfolio areas of transport and main roads has expired. Thank you once again. The committee will take a break. The hearing will resume at 2.15 pm with the examination of the estimates for the portfolio of the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport.

Proceedings suspended from 1.18 pm to 2.15 pm.

**ESTIMATES—TRANSPORT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE—HOUSING
AND PUBLIC WORKS, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND SPORT****In Attendance**

Hon. MC De Brenni, Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport

Mr R Chandra, Chief of Staff

Department of Housing and Public Works

Ms L Carroll, Director-General

Ms R Turbit, Assistant Director-General, Corporate Services

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

Mr B Bassett, Commissioner

Stadiums Queensland

Mr T Harris, Chief Executive Officer

 **CHAIR:** The committee will now examine the proposed expenditure in the Appropriation Bill 2019 for the portfolio areas of the Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport. The committee will examine the minister's portfolio until 6.30 pm and will suspend proceedings during this time for a break from 4.15 pm to 4.45 pm. I acknowledge the visiting members present: Mr Michael Hart, the member for Burleigh, and Ms Sandy Bolton, the member for Noosa.

I remind those present this afternoon that the committee's proceedings are proceedings of the Queensland parliament and are subject to the standing rules and orders of the parliament. It is important that questions and answers remain relevant and succinct. The same rules for questions that apply in parliament also apply in this hearing. I refer to standing orders 112 and 115 in this regard. Questions should be brief and relate to one issue and should not contain lengthy or subjective preambles, argument or opinion. I intend to guide proceedings today so that relevant issues can be explored fully without imposing artificial time limits and to ensure that there is adequate opportunity to address questions from government and non-government members of the committee.

The committee has authorised its hearing to be broadcast live, televised and photographed. Copies of the committee's conditions for broadcast of proceedings are available from the secretariat. I ask that mobile phones and other electronic devices be turned off or switched to silent mode. Please be advised that photography and video recording of the proceedings by officials or members of the public is prohibited. Also, I remind you that food and drink, other than water, are not permitted in the chamber.

On behalf of the committee, I welcome the minister, the director-general, departmental officers and members of the public to the hearing. For the benefit of Hansard, I ask departmental officers to identify themselves the first time they answer a question referred to them by the minister or director-general. I now declare the proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas of housing and public works, digital technology and sport open for examination. The question before the committee is—

That the proposed expenditure be agreed to.

Minister, if you wish, you may make an opening statement of no more than five minutes.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Chair and members. I would like to commence by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we gather today and pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging.

The 2019 budget confirms our commitment to remain steadfastly focused on what matters to Queenslanders: they have a job; they can pay their staff; they have somewhere to live that is safe, secure and sustainable; and their families are healthy and active. We are building on our record, delivering 1,427 new homes for Queensland's most vulnerable. The \$1.6 billion Housing Construction Jobs Program has supported 7,539 jobs and 77,893 apprenticeship hours thanks to our Buy Queensland policy, the same Buy Queensland policy that has seen 22,300 Queensland businesses benefit from \$6.8 billion worth of government contracts.

Labor has always stood for fairness and equality for all Queenslanders. The new \$1.3 billion Sport and Active Recreation Strategy—Activate! Queensland—announced on the weekend, levels the playing field when it comes to getting active, continuing our record of investing in community infrastructure and supporting local tradies to build it, creating 518 jobs in fact.

As a state we are proud of our teams and our sports players and the Queenslanders who make these great events happen. When Origin comes to Suncorp, from bus drivers to caterers, 1,500 Queenslanders are employed on game days. Our economy is \$15 million better off each time. I would like to acknowledge the very positive work of the Stadiums Queensland chair, her board and staff for their efforts in showcasing Queensland's talent. The North Queensland Stadium is supporting 750 construction jobs, with \$152.1 million invested in 480 North Queensland businesses to date.

The Palaszczuk government believes that your participation in sport should not be dictated by your bank balance or where you live. We are funding 56,000 more FairPlay vouchers, with expanded offerings including dance for kids in outback Queensland; Army, Navy or Air Force cadets; and community run gyms.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has the most transparent Digital Projects Dashboard in the nation. The dashboard currently has information on 150 projects being delivered by the Queensland ICT industry. We have enabled direct access to procurement opportunities to support the 94,000 ICT workers in our state. We rely on the Ministerial ICT Advisory Council for expert industry guidance. Together we are optimising the ICT industry and keeping it up to date, because that is what Queenslanders expect.

The Palaszczuk government is driving forward to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders as well, but now we are doing it alone after the Morrison government ended a 50-year commitment to financing remote housing construction. Our offer on a national partnership still stands. Our \$1.08 billion contribution is on the table. I am hopeful that a new pathway can be forged with the Minister for Indigenous Australians, Ken Wyatt, to improve the housing outcomes of all Indigenous Queenslanders. For the benefit of the committee, I seek leave to table correspondence to the minister.

CHAIR: Do you have copies, Minister?

Mr de BRENNI: Yes, we do. Alongside the Deputy Premier and the First Nations Adviser, Mick Gooda, we are mitigating the impact of the National Partnership on Remote Housing's expiry with an additional \$40 million for continued construction. In the first two years of our Housing Construction Jobs Program we commenced 1,427 new homes. Our Partnering for Growth strategy saw the unlocking of \$2 billion in equity for construction in the community housing sector, starting with the Brisbane Housing Company delivering 682 affordable homes. I acknowledge the significant work of the sector, placing Queensland as the only eastern seaboard state that has seen a reduction in homelessness since 2001.

Today I can announce that, given the success of the first action plan under the housing strategy, the housing and homelessness sector will be partnering with us to both evaluate its success and partner to develop the next four-year action plan. A tender process to partner with a tertiary institution and representatives of the sector will open tomorrow.

Our government proudly houses frontline service workers in the most remote corners of the state. If you are a Queenslander who commits your life to working to support Queenslanders, then we are supporting you. That is why this year's budget funded the construction of 113 new government residences in remote and regional communities by 2021. Through the Queensland Building and Construction Commission we are making sure those homes are built safely and that the tradies building them are paid. I acknowledge the efforts of the chair, board and staff of the commission.

In conclusion, I want to reflect on what Queenslanders achieve when we work together. The Palaszczuk government's Building and Asset Services is training the next generation of tradies through its apprenticeship program. It was these apprentices who this year were among the first to step up to the flood recovery efforts in North Queensland. I would like to thank all Building and Asset Services staff who coordinated the rectification of 773 sites and led the coordination of 221 local tradies in recovery works. I would also like to thank Housing and Public Works staff and the chair, board and staff of the Residential Tenancies Authority who ensured that 1,818 North Queenslanders were helped to ensure they had a safe, secure and dry place to stay.

Through the delivery of this year's budget Queenslanders can look forward to a prosperous 2019-20.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. You seek leave to table this document. Leave is granted. I now call the member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: Chair, I seek leave to table these documents. There is a press release, explanatory notes of a regulation and an RTI that the Queensland opposition has obtained. I have multiple copies for the committee.

CHAIR: Do you have a question, member, while we distribute these?

Mr HART: Yes, relating to this.

CHAIR: It is quite a hefty document.

Mr HART: My first question, Chair, is to the director-general.

Mr MELLISH: Point of order, Chair. I am not sure how we are supposed to consider a 100-page document before we table it.

CHAIR: I was going to say that if the questions relate directly to the content and body, you might have to give some discretion, member, as to having a bit of a look at it.

Mr HART: I certainly will, Chair.

CHAIR: It is a public document, isn't it?

Mr HART: Yes. Director-General, if you could refer to the explanatory notes and the sub legislation I have tabled. It states that a plumbing tradesperson who held a licence on 10 November 2014 onwards would not be required to hold an associated occupational licence under the Plumbing and Drainage Act; however, legislative amendments implementing this policy were not made and this regulation retrospectively fixed that problem. We all know there was an election in January 2015 and the government changed. My question is: did your department advise the incoming minister in 2015 that this legislation had not been changed and that the new government would need to change it?

CHAIR: Member, I have to seek some guidance here. The minister before us was not the minister at that time. Director-General, if you have an answer—

Mr HART: I will clarify that with the next question, but this is about the incoming minister.

Mr de BRENNI: Through you, Chair, point of order. There are a couple of things I would like to seek your guidance on. Firstly, how does this pertain to the 2019-20 budget estimates? We would like to hear from the member for Burleigh on that. Maybe when he refers to the incoming minister he can clarify who he is referring to.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. That is where I was going to go also with this document, which is quite lengthy to answer. I do not want to rule it out of order, member. I do not want to try and stop your questioning, but—

Mr HART: Mr Chair, I will be referring to individual pages at each question. Initially my question is about the sub legislation and how it relates to the budget. The minister put out a press release, which I tabled a copy of, which says that plumbers would be saved \$54 million. Converse to that, the government would have earned \$54 million from that saving, so it is about the budget of the QBCC and the minister's department.

CHAIR: Thank you, member. I assume you are referring to the first page there, the media release. Your question relating to that media release is what? What is your question?

Mr HART: This is part of the budget, so the question is on the sub legislation. Did the director-general's department brief the incoming minister in 2015 that this legislation would require a change? It is a straightforward question.

CHAIR: Member, how does that relate to the estimates that we are going through today?

Mr HART: Mr Chair, I will get to that in future questions. It is a straightforward question. Yes or no will do.

CHAIR: It is delving into the past, which is not before us today. If you could ask your future question and maybe that would enlighten why we need to ask this question. Is it possible to ask your questions in a different order?

Mr HART: Certainly, Chair, if you would like to. Could I have the QBCC commissioner come forward, please, and could he be provided with the right to information document?

Mr de BRENNI: Point of order, Mr Chair. The line of questioning from the member for Burleigh relates to matters that pertain to the inaction of the Newman government. I can see that he is looking to cover the tracks of the failure of that government to do the thing that the then minister promised to do on three occasions in the parliament, including writing to licensees. Neither the director-general, the commissioner nor I were in our roles in this portfolio at that time, and the substantial amount of information that he is expecting us to peruse is unreasonable.

CHAIR: I am struggling to understand what relevance it has to this—

Mr HART: Chair, when I get to ask my question I think that will become obvious.

CHAIR: You can ask the question. I might have to rule this line of questioning out of order, but I will give you leeway to ask this question.

Mr HART: I am sure you would like to protect the minister, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: Member, are you dissenting from my ruling?

Mr HART: No, Chair.

CHAIR: If you listen and hear me out. I said I will give you leeway to ask this question, but I am getting close to ruling it out of order. We cannot go through a document of this size and agree to table it without some time. I will allow you to ask this question and we will see where we go with it.

Mr HART: Commissioner, can you turn to page 19 of the right-to-information document that has been tabled, please?

CHAIR: It has not been tabled. The document has not been tabled because we have not had time to peruse it.

Mr HART: Mr Chair, I intend to ask questions of each individual page in this document. You do not need to look at every page. I intend to identify the pages that I will ask questions about.

CHAIR: Could we table each page individually, then? Do you seek leave to table page 19?

Mr HART: Mr Chair, I am tabling the whole document and then referring to it. It is a document. It is a complete document.

CHAIR: I do not think we can table a document this large when we cannot peruse it. I really do not think so. Do you seek leave to table page 19? Does everyone have page 19?

Mr de BRENNI: Chair, there is only one copy up here on the table and a question has been asked of me, the director-general and the commissioner. With your indulgence, it might be reasonable that a copy be provided to me and the director-general as well.

CHAIR: Member, is it possible to get copies of the pages that you will be referring to? We can do those copies now.

Mr HART: I can identify the pages in the whole document. I tabled eight copies of the document.

CHAIR: We will need some copies up the front for the people being questioned. The committee members, of which there are six, and yourself need a copy each and you have only tabled eight copies, which is not enough.

Mr HART: The opposition does not need copies.

CHAIR: Okay, of course. At this stage we will seek leave to table page 19. Is leave granted?

Mr HART: Pages 19 to 24.

CHAIR: Is leave granted to table pages 19 to 24? Leave is granted. You can ask your question. Once again, we are seeing whether this is relevant to the Appropriation Bill before us today.

Mr HART: Commissioner, the document before you is a ministerial briefing note which was written on 22 October 2016. Under the first two paragraphs of 'key issues', could you read to us what that says, please?

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for his question. Mr Chair, page 23 of the document that I have in front of me, that I have been given, has a decisional action date on the ministerial briefing note dated 15 December 2016. I am not sure specifically that I have the right document.

CHAIR: Yes, it is not relevant—

Mr HART: I will table page 31, then, for the commissioner to read. Can you read the first two paragraphs under 'key issues' please?

Mr MELLISH: Point of order, Chair: the member for Burleigh referred to a briefing note. I do not see any signatures on this. I do not know if it is a draft briefing note or if it is an actual briefing note. I just do not see any signatures on it.

CHAIR: We might go to the member for Noosa. Member for Noosa, do you have a question?

Ms BOLTON: Yes, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: We might go there while the member for Burleigh sees if he can make it relevant to this year's estimates inquiry.

Mr HART: Chair, I have already identified why it is relevant to this year's estimates.

CHAIR: I do not believe you did.

Mr de BRENNI: Through you, Chair, it would be interesting for the member for Burleigh to direct us all to where in the budget papers there is a contemplation of the collection of fines as a revenue source. That is not the budget papers, member for Burleigh.

CHAIR: It has to be relevant to this year's portfolio because there is some generalising. I am struggling to see where it is relevant. While we just have a think about that, we might go to the member for Noosa with a question.

Ms BOLTON: My question is to the minister. I refer to page 4 of the SDS regarding the Queensland Cycling Strategy. Given the decrease of \$1.7 million in capital grants for the cycling network, will the minister please clarify whether this network includes bike pathways and why this decrease has occurred, given the increased demand for the transition from cars to bikes and requests for these pathways?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Noosa for the question. I recognise that there is probably no better place on earth to cycle than here in Queensland, with our extraordinary climate, and I recognise that the Sunshine Coast is a popular place to do that. I have done it myself. The portfolio responsibility for the Cycling Strategy rests with the Minister for Transport.

Ms BOLTON: My apologies. Mr Chair, can I ask one more question, then?

CHAIR: Yes, please.

Ms BOLTON: Minister, I refer to page 8 of the SDS. The government's Dignity First Fund helps finance innovative ideas to assist people experiencing homelessness. Can the minister advise whether any applicants have asked to utilise surplus state land or buildings to develop affordable housing? I want to clarify that this is not social housing but more community housing and emergency accommodations by communities themselves for their specific community needs.

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Noosa for the question and I appreciate the opportunity to discuss Dignity First. It is one of the initiatives under the Queensland Housing Strategy, the first year action plan. As members will be familiar, Dignity First is designed to support innovation in the delivery of homelessness support services right across Queensland. We recently announced the successful projects.

I am advised that since its inception we have funded 95 projects through three Dignity First rounds. A wide variety of projects have been funded over the three years. There have been a range of capital upgrades to a range of things—for example, the Help a Friend Club in Toowoomba and the Women's Centre in Cairns. Mobile services delivering food, laundry and transport services on the Sunshine Coast at the Maroochy Neighbourhood Centre have been funded to purchase a vehicle. Funding was provided for the social enterprises offering training and employment opportunities in the Hervey Bay electorate through the Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre. Purpose Enterprises received funding for their Youth Employment Pathway Program.

I am looking forward to seeing the next round being delivered. The fourth \$2.5 million funding round opened on 21 June and will close on 16 August 2019. I do not have information in front of me in respect of the 165 applications that have been made over the last few years, but I remind the member that, if there is a proposal that meets the eligibility criteria in the community that she represents, the current round—the fourth round—is open until 16 August 2019. That is in the market for eight weeks. We look forward to seeing some more innovative proposals to support Queenslanders experiencing homelessness.

Ms BOLTON: Just to clarify, the question was regarding surplus state land and buildings. Would the government be open to a proposal regarding that?

Mr de BRENNI: We are interested in receiving proposals from all proponents. In terms of whether the Dignity First Fund has a scale enough to be able to support the sorts of transactions that might be required in relation to surplus land, I would have to say without seeking further advice that I doubt a \$2.5 million fund would enable transactions of land in the community that the member for Noosa represents. If there are other initiatives that the member for Noosa would like to put forward, certainly as part of our Housing Construction Jobs Program we have initiated conversations on the Sunshine Coast and right across the state as we work towards delivering on those targets, and we have invited proponents to come to the Queensland government and make suggestions about ways in which we could achieve the targets that are set out in the Housing Strategy and in fact continue to exceed them.

There are a number of pathways in which we can partner. Certainly we have been engaging with the housing and homelessness sector on the Sunshine Coast. I was at the Maroochy Surf Club a month or two ago where service providers came from right across the region to discuss with us options about how we can improve our service delivery. Like all of Queensland, the Sunshine Coast has seen a marginal decline in the number of people experiencing homelessness. We do think that is due to the excellent work of service providers like those in Noosa and also in part due to the Housing Construction Jobs Program that is delivering houses.

As I said earlier today in relation to another question, even one Queenslander experiencing homelessness tonight is one too many. It is incumbent upon all of us to look for innovative ways in which we can support people out of homelessness. I want to take the opportunity, through you, Chair, to reflect on the No. 1 cause of homelessness, which is poverty. Queenslanders—in fact, all Australians—are experiencing the lowest wages growth in a generation. It is very difficult to afford to buy a home or pay your rent when your wages are stagnant. It is important that we address the whole system issues, and some of those levers rest with the federal government. In relation to the levers that we have at our disposal, which is to work with the homelessness sector and local governments that may come to us with surplus land around initiatives, we will continue to explore all of those.

CHAIR: We will now go to government questions.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, with reference to page 7 of the SDS, will the minister advise the committee how the Palaszczuk government is delivering more social and affordable housing? Is he aware of any other approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Aspley for the question. It is a good question to follow on from the question from the member for Noosa. I think a duty of any good government is to help provide safe, secure and sustainable housing and accommodation, particularly to the most vulnerable in our community. I am sure all members agree with that. Of course, we take our job very seriously in that regard. That is why we backed that in with a \$1.6 billion investment over 10 years in building new social and affordable homes across the state.

Under Queensland's first ever 10-year Housing Strategy we have committed to build 5½ thousand new social and affordable homes right across Queensland. I am pleased to report to the committee that those targets are being exceeded. The Housing Construction Jobs Program has seen the construction of 1,427 new homes—over 300 more than our first two-year target—and they are spread across the state. There are 97 new homes in Cairns, 87 in Townsville, 28 in Central Queensland, 14 in the Wide Bay-Burnett, 93 new homes on the Sunshine Coast, 22 new homes in Toowoomba, 141 new homes in Ipswich, 161 new homes on the Gold Coast, 224 homes in Moreton Bay, and the community that I represent: 225 new homes in the Logan area and the Redlands, and 335 new homes here in Brisbane.

We are on track to meet the goals with the largest investment in social and affordable housing in Queensland in some time. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we are pursuing a range of innovative strategies, and I want to take the opportunity to speak about one of those, the Partnering for Growth initiative in which we are working with the community housing sector to unlock \$2 billion of capital to reinvest into social and affordable housing. I mentioned that the first of the deals landed under Partnering for Growth is with Brisbane Housing Company. I am pleased to say over the next four years it will see the delivery of 682 additional affordable homes.

We are leading the way; Queensland is leading the way in social and affordable housing. I did mention before that it has made it harder that we have had to go it alone in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. I do want to acknowledge and welcome the announcement that for the first time in some time we have a federal Minister for Housing in Michael Sukkar, although we are yet to see any indication from the federal government as to whether anything will change.

I mentioned that one of the biggest drivers of homelessness is poverty. The federal coalition has done nothing to address housing affordability for Queenslanders. There has been no plan to increase supply. An absence of a plan from the federal government to make a contribution to the delivery of additional social housing in Queensland makes it even harder to deliver, particularly given the 50-year commitment to remote housing not being renewed by the Morrison government. The Palaszczuk government, as you will see in the budget, is investing in all of those communities including remote communities. We believe it is important to do that to close the gap. It is very hard to see good outcomes in terms of education and health without people having a roof over their head. There were around 600 jobs supported by the remote housing program.

The only policy that we have seen from the coalition in respect of budget assistance has been for Tasmania with the decision to waive historical social housing debt there. What we saw was a backroom deal negotiated by the Morrison government where again Queenslanders have missed out. I wrote to Michael Sukkar on 5 July, and I do seek leave of the committee to table that correspondence to the federal Minister for Housing. There are copies available for the committee. If that debt was forgiven in the 2019-20 budget window, Queensland would be able to build approximately 957 new homes. I can assure all of the members of the committee, including visiting members, that some of those 957 homes would be able to be delivered in the communities that they represent. That would support an additional 919 full-time jobs in the construction industry. I ask all members of the committee and all members of the parliament to join with me in calling for a fair deal for Queenslanders and asking the federal housing minister to deliver for us what they delivered for Tasmania, which is a forgiveness of historical social housing debt.

Chair and committee, the first three years of the Housing Strategy action plan are almost up. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we will be teaming up with the housing and homelessness sector and a tertiary institute to plan out the delivery of the next four-year action plan. We will do that because we believe deeply in the responsibility to have a comprehensive plan to build more social and affordable housing in Queensland. We would like to see action from the coalition. However, I fear that they are likely to do nothing.

Mrs MILLER: I would like to call Graham Atkins please, the Deputy Director-General, Building Policy and Asset Management.

Mr de BRENNI: Chair, perhaps the protocol might be to invite the director-general—

Mrs MILLER: Yes, I would ask the minister to invite him to come up, please.

Mr de BRENNI: It is potentially a question the director-general could answer.

Mrs MILLER: It is the detail that I want, Minister.

Mr de BRENNI: I think the director-general probably has the detail. If she cannot answer it then I am happy to ask the deputy director.

CHAIR: Ask the director-general and go that way.

Mrs MILLER: Director-General, I think Graham would be better off answering this—

CHAIR: Is he on the schedule?

Mrs MILLER:—but in any case I want to know whether the noise complaints surrounding the new Ripley state school, the one that is being built, have all been dealt with. What is the issue with that? Graham will know that.

Mr de BRENNI: I think questions in relation to the delivery of education projects are questions for the Minister for Education.

Mrs MILLER: No, they are not. You build them.

CHAIR: Sorry, I am dealing with this last document that we are seeking leave to table. Is leave granted? Leave is granted. The member was asking a question about education?

Mrs MILLER: No. I am asking a question about the building of primary schools in my electorate. This is not a trick question, Minister; you do not have to worry. It is about the noise issues that I have been getting complaints about in terms of the new buildings there. I know Graham. I know that he is a very competent officer and I want to hear from him whether the noise issues are over.

CHAIR: Is the deputy director-general on the schedule to appear?

Mrs MILLER: Yes, he is here. He is on there. He is a witness.

CHAIR: Witnesses need to be on schedule 7.

Mrs MILLER: You gave me that this morning and said to me that these are the people. The document is headed 'Housing and Public Works—Official Witnesses' and it lists Mr Graham Atkins, Deputy Director-General, Building Policy and Asset Management.

CHAIR: I am sorry, member, but schedule 7 says—

Mrs MILLER: Why was I given that this morning?

CHAIR: Member, have you asked the director-general your question about noise complaints?

Mrs MILLER: Yes.

CHAIR: Director-General, do you have an answer for that?

Mrs MILLER: I may as well rip that up then? It is of no use at all? I think I need an apology from the secretariat on that.

CHAIR: We will deal with this at the moment.

Mr de BRENNI: Can I assist, Chair? I will ask the director-general to address how she will be able to provide that information, but I do want to make a direct offer to the member for Bundamba. Either at the conclusion of today's hearing or during the break in the hearing, I will make it a priority to get that information for you. I am happy to facilitate a conversation with my officers.

Mrs MILLER: I do not want a conversation. I just want 'yes' or 'no'. I just want to know whether it has been dealt with.

CHAIR: Member, they are offering to get that to you during this session.

Mrs MILLER: Why can't I know now? I asked the question: are the noise complaints dealt with?

Mr de BRENNI: I do not have that information and the director-general does not have that information. We do not make the rules for estimates—

Mrs MILLER: But the officer who does is here.

CHAIR: We will facilitate getting that to you, member. Do you have another—

Mrs MILLER: You are being provocative, Minister, of the question that I have asked on behalf of hundreds of residents who live in this new area of Ripley who have been putting up with these noise complaints.

CHAIR: Thanks, member. The minister and director-general have committed to seek to get you an answer during this session. Do you have another question?

Mrs MILLER: I do. In relation to the Goodna Special School and the upgrade that is happening there—

CHAIR: Member for Bundamba—

Mrs MILLER: It is a building.

CHAIR: Is your question to the minister or—

Mrs MILLER: Either of them. I do not care who answers it. You can give me an admin officer who will answer it, as long as someone answers my questions. When these buildings at Goodna State School are ready to be dropped in—I understand that they will be dropped in—will there be any shutdown of Queen Street in Goodna in relation to the traffic flow in that area?

Ms Carroll: In terms of the specificity of the question, with the minister's permission I would take it on notice but we should be able to get you some information during the course of the hearing.

CHAIR: Thank you. Member, do you have any further questions?

Mrs MILLER: I have some but I would like those questions answered first.

Mr de BRENNI: We are happy to provide that information. Within the constraints of this hearing, I do not have that information available to me.

Mr MELLISH: Minister, with reference to page 9 of the SDS, can you provide an update about how the Palaszczuk government is supporting Queenslanders to access and sustain housing in the private rental market and are you aware of any other approaches?

Mr de BRENNI: As I have indicated in my previous answers, there is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to providing housing assistance to vulnerable Queenslanders. That was a hallmark of the Queensland Housing Strategy. While the Palaszczuk government continues to build more and provide more opportunities for Queenslanders to move into social housing, we are also providing more and more private market products. We recognise that many Queenslanders seek a hand up and some assistance towards housing independence. Of course, every Queenslander has a right to safe, secure and affordable housing, either in social housing or in private housing. As part of the Queensland Housing Strategy we have developed a suite of products to suit more and more Queenslanders. We provide bond loans and rental grants to vulnerable Queenslanders seeking to cover the cost of accessing rental properties.

In 2018-19 the Palaszczuk government supported Queenslanders with 19,498 bond loans for individuals to be able to find housing in the private market. In addition, there were 5,897 rental grants. Rental grants are designed to assist people to meet the cost of renting if, for whatever reason, they do not have the available funds. I am very proud to say that just a couple of months ago we launched the

No Interest Loan Scheme to provide financial assistance to cover rent or buy household essentials, with the first locations, on the Gold Coast and in Cairns, already open and operational. We launched the Helping Hand Headleases, which will see the department headlease a private rental property then sublease it to a tenant. The purpose of that is to help that individual establish a rental history where they may not have had one and then eventually take over the tenancy. Providing some short-term funded support through that sublease enables the individual to develop their own financial and housing independence. So far we have supported 35 of those headleases. We also launched Skillsets for Successful Tenancies—Dollars and Sense, which gives aspiring tenants the skills they need to maintain tenancies in the private market. As at 30 June 2019 we had provided training to 87 Queenslanders. Clearly, our focus is on supporting people to be able to sustain their tenancy.

We have seen previous and alternative approaches that are focused on draconian measures targeted at measuring success by the number of evictions. That is not how we approach it. We approach our success by measuring the number of tenancies sustained so that people can do the things that matter to them: get a job, get their education, look after their children and have a roof over their head. As I said before, the Housing Strategy continues to be funded in this year's budget. The alternative approach that we saw from the LNP was to give the housing sector, a \$15 billion publicly owned asset, to the private sector to worry about and completely abdicate the responsibility for the provision of housing assistance. They were about to give away Logan social housing, with plans to give away—

Mr SORENSEN: Point of order: what does this have to do with this budget—honestly?

CHAIR: There is no point of order. The member referred in the question to page 9 of the SDS. It is relevant. Please continue, Minister.

Mr de BRENNI: I am presenting the alternative and the contrast, member for Hervey Bay. The 2019-20 budget will fund initiatives like the Helping Hand Headlease, the Rental Security Subsidy and the Skillsets for Successful Tenancies. When all we saw from those opposite was a policy of cut and run, it is only the Palaszczuk government—

Mr HART: Rubbish!

Mr de BRENNI:—with innovative budget measures and a strong commitment to the public delivery of social, affordable housing that provides Queenslanders with the housing support they need. I am looking forward to continuing to expand our offerings. I note the member for Burleigh refutes the idea through his comments that the LNP's plan was to transfer the management of social housing to the non-government sector. I am just perusing a document that was tabled by the member for Bundamba in 2013 titled—

Mr HART: I do not think this is relevant.

CHAIR: Minister, if we could just continue with that question.

Mr de BRENNI: Sure, titled *Transfer of the management of social housing to the non-government sector*. In contrast, the 2019-20 budget will fund the delivery of houses right across Queensland and I repeat my calls for the federal coalition to forgive historical social housing debt so we can deliver those 900 homes right across Queensland.

CHAIR: Minister, I have had some guidance with regard to the member for Bundamba's question to the deputy director-general. You can ask the deputy director-general to answer a question on your behalf or the director-general's behalf. They are allowed to come to the table as a witness to answer that question if you see fit. The member for Bundamba's question was about the noise.

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to indulge questions through that mechanism that pertain to the 2019-20 budget responsibilities for which my portfolio pertains.

Mrs MILLER: It does.

Mr de BRENNI: Noise complaints in relation to the delivery of capital works under the education minister's budget have always been dealt with by the education minister. I do not intend to depart from that protocol, but my commitment stands to the member for Bundamba that we will have a conversation in the break or immediately afterwards to be able to satisfy you of the answers to those questions.

Mrs MILLER: Chair, can I ask a follow-up question just because I was in fact quite right?

CHAIR: Quickly, yes. Please ask the question.

Mrs MILLER: My follow-up question then to Mr Atkins in relation to the building of Ripley state school—and it does relate to this budget because the building is actually underway—is I would like to know what discussions he has had with officers of Education Queensland in relation to this matter.

CHAIR: The question is of the minister to, if possible—

Mrs MILLER: To ask Graham please.

CHAIR: Yes.

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to assist in providing connections to the people who hold that information. I am advised that Building and Asset Services is not actually delivering that project. In those circumstances, we are certainly happy to be able to pick up the phone and answer those questions.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Mr de BRENNI: For projects we are not delivering, we cannot do that.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. We will now return to the member for Burleigh articulating a question to do with the budget on this issue, so please continue.

Mr HART: I ask for the commissioner of the QBCC to come forward please, and to this extent, Mr Chair, I refer to the SDS at pages 34 and 35. Commissioner, can you tell us how many builders have been ordered to fix defective work in the last financial year please?

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for his question. If I can just take a little bit of time to get some specific statistics that I have here with me.

CHAIR: Certainly.

Mr Bassett: Specifically in respect of the number of builders who have been issued directions to rectify in the 2018-19 financial year, I have here the statistics that we issued 849 in the 2018-19 financial year.

Mr HART: Commissioner, can you tell us how many builders have lost their licence in the past financial year because of defective work?

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for the question. It is important for the committee to note that not all directions that are issued in a certain financial year are actually complied with in the financial year. I just need to look at my statistics again if I can, Chair.

CHAIR: Take your time, Commissioner.

Mr Bassett: Thank you. Just bear with me please, Chair.

CHAIR: Member, while the commissioner looks for that, did you have a question for the minister?

Mr HART: I will get to the minister in a second.

CHAIR: Okay. We will wait then. That is fine.

Mr Bassett: I am sorry, member, but I do not have that specific information or I cannot find it specifically in front of me. If I can just take some advice from my staff, I will endeavour to come back—

Mr HART: Would you take that on notice?

CHAIR: The minister has to accept.

Mr de BRENNI: I think we will be able to get it. There are 107,000 current licensees in Queensland and at any given time there can be a variety of reasons. For the member for Burleigh and the committee's information, as at 24 July 2019 there were 1,647 licensees who were suspended and the total number of cancelled licences since reporting commenced on 24 February 2017 to me is 14,623. In certain circumstances where a direction to rectify incurs a demerit, the accumulation of demerit points can lead to a suspension and cancellation of licence. I am advised that there are 466 licence holders who have active demerit points in Queensland. My point is that we can come back on the specifics of how many licensees have had their licence cancelled as a result of demerit points that are incurred because of—and I think this is what you are interested in, member for Burleigh—defective work. However, what I have explained is that there is a significant volume and there is a plethora of reasons why a licensee will be suspended. It can be for non-payment, it can be for failure to follow directions around rectifications, defective works, a range of things. With regard to getting that information, I think the commissioner can take a few minutes to acquire that and come back to you.

CHAIR: Certainly. Are you happy with that answer, member?

Mr de BRENNI: I take the member for Burleigh's point that there are probably some and I am happy to answer questions in relation to—

Mr HART: Sure, if you can come back to us at some stage and just tell us how many builders actually lost their licences. Could we also find out how many builders have been fined while home owners have to foot the bill for defective work? How many builders have been fined for defective work?

Mr de BRENNI: We can try to ascertain that information.

Mr HART: A question to the minister then.

CHAIR: We are just taking that one down as well. Thank you; we have that.

Mr HART: Minister, I am aware of one woman living in Balgal Beach north of Townsville who has been waiting for seven years to have defects in her house rectified under direction by the QBCC. Her home is not up to cyclone code. Is this a sign of a failing system?

CHAIR: You are asking for an opinion there.

Mr de BRENNI: Respectfully, it would have been built under the LNP's administration, so perhaps you should consider your own policies—

Mr HART: Seven years?

Mr de BRENNI: Sorry? Did you say seven years?

CHAIR: Member, your question—

Mr HART: The lady has been waiting seven years to have her—

CHAIR: Member, your question then was—I am not putting words in your mouth; I just want to clarify—to the system and the success of the system, or you used the word 'failure'.

Mr HART: Sure.

CHAIR: You wanted to know how the system was operating. Member, I do not want to put words in your mouth—it is your question—but I ask you to rephrase the question.

Mr HART: I think I have heard the answer I wanted to hear.

CHAIR: All right. Do you have another question?

Mr HART: Yes, we will move on. Minister, I want to talk for a second about your best practice industrial relations policy. You instigated that partway through the construction of the North Queensland Stadium. There was a \$43 million variation to the contract. Will you confirm that during a site visit to the stadium last year you told all workers that they would be getting paid higher rates regardless of when they began working at the stadium?

Mr de BRENNI: No.

Mr HART: Minister, was there an instance where you were booted off site at the Townsville stadium during a visit there because of the problems between one member of the workforce earning more than another member of the workforce?

CHAIR: Member, is this relevant to the Appropriation Bill? If the minister wishes to answer he can, but I fail to see where it is.

Mr HART: Pages 4 and 13 of the Housing and Public Works SDS.

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to answer questions in relation to the implementation of the best practice principles, particularly in relation to the North Queensland Stadium project. There was a variation of \$43.5 million approved by our government, and \$3.5 million of that was to be allocated towards the delivery of wi-fi within the stadium. It is important that we meet our commitments to ensuring that this stadium is state-of-the-art and I look forward to it being open in time for the Sir Elton John concert.

The best practice principles commenced on 17 May 2018. Watpac was directed to apply the best practice principles. On 27 November 2018, a deed of variation was finalised with Watpac which incorporated the best practice principles into the managing contract. The original project budget of \$250 million is now \$293.5 million. The government increased the funding, as I said, by \$43.5 million—\$40 million for the best practice principles.

The best practice principles amendment to the guaranteed construction sum was to ensure that subcontractors whose contracts were executed after 17 May 2018 were able to apply for a variation with their contracts with Watpac. It is important to acknowledge that Watpac assesses those variations. There is a process of checking. The reason we do that is that any amount of that variation for those contracts is intended to be specifically for workers' wages.

Remember, we did this to ensure that workers in Townsville get paid a decent amount of pay for the job they are doing on an iconic Queensland project. We said that all projects over \$100 million in Queensland, by value of their status, should have best practice principles applied. Watpac considers those contract variations and the funds go to employees. We audit that through our compliance staff.

The variations to date amount to 15 variations which were approved by Watpac at a value of \$12 million. Fourteen tenders repriced, or contracts, included best practice at a value of \$3 million. All of the variations claimed by the subcontractor for wages go into the workers' pockets. We make no apology for that. There are certainly projects that predated 17 May 2018 where best practice principles did not apply.

For workers in Townsville, in an economy where it has been, like many places in the nation, more difficult to find decent, secure, ongoing jobs, we wanted to do several things. We wanted to make sure that a significant component of the work on that stadium was done by local contractors. As at 16 July, 93.7 per cent of construction hours have been done by local contractors; 95 per cent of the training hours have been done by local workers; 77 apprentices and 10 trainees are working to deliver the stadium, obtaining the benefits of the improved wages and conditions; an estimated 480 local businesses have been engaged in the extended supply chain; and \$152.1 million to date has been invested in local businesses. All in all, our approach to this ensures that workers on the North Queensland Stadium operate under the best practice workplace health and safety systems and standards and there is a focus on providing jobs for trainees and apprentices. We believe that if you are building a Queensland government building in Townsville you deserve to get the same sort of pay and conditions that workers in Brisbane get. That is the fact of the matter.

Mr HART: The people who are working on a contract that is pre 17 May will be on a different rate? They will be on a much lower rate than the people the variation applies to? Have you considered fixing that issue between the two sets of employees?

Mr de BRENNI: I do not set the rates of pay for subcontractors to any project. That is a matter—

Mr HART: You set the policy, though.

Mr de BRENNI: That is right.

Mr HART: And the policy—

CHAIR: Let the minister answer the question and have a follow-up question. You are more than welcome to answer that.

Mr HART: The policy leads to that difference between the two pay scales of people doing exactly the same job.

Mr de BRENNI: It is not a matter for me in my responsibility as Minister for Housing and Public Works or any of my other portfolio areas to make the employment decisions about any subcontractor. They make those of their own volition. There was no prohibition on contractors engaged before that date having paid additional wages and conditions.

Mr HART: Your local benefits test could apply a 30 per cent weighting to someone applying for a government contract. In the North Queensland Stadium, the catering contract went to an interstate company. How does that fit with supplying local work for local companies?

Mr de BRENNI: That is an excellent question. I am very happy to answer it, because it is one that is important for the committee and the parliament to understand. The decision around the definition of 'local' comes down to who benefits. Who benefits from the decision to give that contract would be the local workforce. The criteria around how you determine how local a company is is where the workers live—not about anything else but where the workers live. The 600 workers employed by Spotless are working in 1300SMILES Stadium right now. They worked last weekend. They will work at the Cowboys games as they work towards the end of the season. If it is the member's suggestion that perhaps those 600 workers should lose their jobs, I object to that.

Mr HART: Sorry?

Mr de BRENNI: Spotless announced that it would retain all of the positions currently at 1300SMILES—all of those positions. Those men and women who have been showing up, driving out to 1300SMILES, cooking the hot dogs and the chips, serving the beer and providing the water for the kids will continue to be employed. One hundred per cent of them will continue to be employed at the new North Queensland Stadium, which I think is a very good outcome for that workforce. If you are

somebody who has been working at 1300SMILES for years and years, the prospect of losing your job would be a daunting one. I do not support the idea of workers anywhere in Queensland—anywhere in this country or anywhere in the world in fact—having their job security threatened.

The good news is that Spotless announced that it would retain all of those positions and it will employ another 300 people. For the benefit of the committee, 100 per cent of those extra 300 people live in Townsville. Not only are we seeing a huge benefit from the construction of the stadium—the 750 workers who are delivering it as we speak; we will also see a total of 800 jobs created in catering for people in Townsville.

The important thing about this also is that Spotless has long-term existing supplier relationships with Townsville companies. Companies like Ingham Road Seafood have been supplying to Spotless. They are going to continue to supply to Spotless. They are going to supply more. They employ people in Townsville.

Popcorn Kingdom in Townsville employs people from Townsville. They will probably sell more popcorn and probably employ more people in Townsville. Hot Diggidy Hot Dogs, Funky Ice and Candy Shak are all Townsville based companies employing people in Townsville. Maintaining and expanding on those partnerships is not just important for the job security of the workers at 1300SMILES who will move over to North Queensland Stadium it is important for all of those existing supplier relationships.

I know that the member for Burleigh objects to the idea of the Buy Queensland policy. I remember, and Queenslanders remember, when they came into the Queensland parliament and voted against the Buy Queensland policy. They wanted to put Christchurch over Cairns. That was what they did. I invite the member for Burleigh to go to Townsville and tell Ingham Road Seafood, Popcorn Kingdom, Hot Diggidy Hot Dogs, Funky Ice and Candy Shak that the relationships that they have with Spotless are not good enough.

Mr HART: Nobody made that suggestion.

CHAIR: Minister, I think you have satisfied the member with the answer to that question. I will ask him if he has another one.

Mr HART: Yes, I have. I seek leave to table some documents around the transfer of a property in Townsville. I have a question for the director-general.

CHAIR: Leave is granted.

Mr HART: Director-General, the QVAS document is on a house in Kirwan in Townsville. You will see that there are two transactions on the same date. In one of them the house was bought from a private entity for \$325,000 by New Wave Housing. Later that day it was bought by the Department of Housing for \$380,000. That is a \$55,000 profit in one day. I am sure there is a reason around that. I understand that New Wave was also engaged to build multistorey units on that site for your department. Can you explain why the department would give somebody a \$55,000 profit in one day on something like that?

Ms Carroll: I thank the member for the question. Given that I have only just received this information, through the minister I might take some time to have this considered and come back with an answer shortly.

Mr de BRENNI: Chair, through you, I am fine for the director-general to take some advice on that.

CHAIR: Are you happy for that to happen?

Mr HART: Absolutely. Can the QBCC Commissioner return to the table, please? I want to go back to the line of questioning I started with. With regard to a plumbing licence and an occupational licence, your department is responsible for overseeing that. In 2014 the QBCC instigated a policy where licensed plumbers would not have to pay a fee to renew their occupational licence but that legislation was never changed. Can you tell us if that caused a problem to the QBCC and what you did about it, please?

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for the question. Through you, Chair, can I ask specifically what type of problem? I want to make sure that my answer is not odious in so far as going too far outside of where the member is asking me to focus. I want to make sure that I can specifically answer the question for the member.

Mr HART: Did it cause you a problem with taking legal action against plumbers who no longer had an occupational licence when they lost it because they had failed to pay their licence renewal fee?

Mr Bassett: What I can tell the member is that the regulatory functions for plumbing and drainage work were transferred from the Department of Housing and Public Works in 2014 and at that time, as the member will know, the government advised plumbing and drainage licensees that they would only need to hold and pay for one licence. There was no legislation put forward to change that policy. There was no impact insofar as us making a decision in respect of whether we should or should not take regulatory action in respect of any individual.

Mr HART: Can you tell us ultimately how many occupational licences failed to be renewed and therefore, before the government rectified this issue last year, how many of those people lost their licences?

Mr Bassett: Just to be clear, I need to make sure that I can answer the member's question. Is it over a specific period of time, because I would need to get some advice from my staff over specific periods of time so I can make sure that I answer the member's question?

Mr HART: From 1 January 2015 to the end of 2016.

CHAIR: We are referring to this budget though, member. How is that relevant?

Mr HART: This issue was rectified in legislation last year and on 1 March this year those licensees no longer had to pay their occupational licence so there was a budgetary impact to the QBCC because they no longer collected that money.

Mr Bassett: Mr Chair, if I may, for the member, the budgetary impact on the QBCC in the 2018-19 financial year I am advised is \$710,000.

Mr HART: How many plumbers lost their occupational licence in that two years?

Mr Bassett: I will have to take some advice on that.

CHAIR: I do not see the relevance to this budget.

Mr de BRENNI: I think what the member for Burleigh is trying to articulate, and if I can assist the member for Burleigh maybe I can assist the entire committee, is the then minister Mander's failure to do the thing that he set up in parliament. I want to beg the chair's indulgence to provide the background.

Mr HART: How about I ask you a question and then you can provide the background to it. I will ask a specific question and you can answer it. Is that okay?

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to take the question for the commissioner.

CHAIR: I will go back to chairing here. If you could ask the minister a question.

Mr HART: Over the period from 2015 until now, were you informed in any way by your department or the QBCC that this legislation needed to be enacted to fix this problem and why did it take you four years to fix it?

CHAIR: And the impact to this budget, thank you, Minister, if relevant.

Mr de BRENNI: It was not just my department advising me. On 22 May 2014 LNP's Tim Mander issued a media release telling the world that a plumber would not have to pay for a contractor and an occupational licence. Members, the parliament sat, between 22 May 2014 and the end of the 2014 parliament, for over 20 sitting days over many weeks. No legislation was passed by the LNP regarding this issue to keep their word—this despite the LNP's track record on guillotining bills. The LNP, as we remember, also wanted to let unqualified people mess with the drinking water supply through installing water meters. The advice that I received was to enable an amendment to the way that the commission imposed licences to mean that you had to hold both licences but you didn't have to pay for both a contractor licence and an occupational licence. If you paid your contractor licence your occupational licence would come free.

There was no capacity for the QBCC to contract out of the act. The act specified the licence fees for contractor licences and occupational licences. It is a fact of the matter that the parliament made a decision it would impose both of those fees quite some time ago.

It came to my attention that the fee was not being charged, that there were, in fact, licensees who had not paid for their occupational licence, based on advice given by the LNP when it was in office, because they took the LNP at face value that they did not have to pay for an occupational licence. There were promises in parliament. They stood up in parliament multiple times. A press release went out saying that you no longer needed to pay. However, what they failed to do was come into this place and introduce and pass a bill to enable the second licence fee not to be paid. To go into more detail on the member for Burleigh's question—and I know he is hot under the collar about this issue. He gets quite upset about it regularly at a range of functions.

Mr HART: You have not fixed it after four years.

Mr de BRENNI: We embarked on a process of engaging with the construction industry around the development of the Queensland Building Plan. It was important to us to ensure that a couple of things happened, the first being that the laws of this state were complied with. You cannot just ignore them, member for Burleigh. If the parliament has made a law, it is to be complied with. That is what the QBCC did. We also made sure that the individuals who had taken the LNP at face value and who had been let down by the LNP—and you heard the amount that the commissioner was talking about. The real risk here is that if you do not pay for your occupational licence you are taken to not have one, which means that you are not performing work licensed and that exposes you to a fine.

Mr HART: Right.

Mr de BRENNI: The amendments that the Palaszczuk government made removed the need to pay for the second licence, but you can still hold the licence. We also amended the regulation to ensure that work conducted mistakenly without having the licence, because people trusted the LNP foolishly—

Mr HART: After four years.

Mr de BRENNI:—will not be taken to be unlicensed work. That is an important reform. We have worked through it. We have worked through it with the sector. It has been welcomed by occupational plumbers who hold a contractor licence right across the state time and time again.

Mr Bassett: Excuse me, Chair: I would like to correct my previous statement in respect of the financial year and the deficit around the \$710,000 in revenue from the plumbing and drainage licensing. I said the 2018-19 financial year. I apologise to the committee. It is actually the 2019-20 financial year. I want to correct that statement.

CHAIR: Thank you, Commissioner. We will move to government questions.

Mr MELLISH: I refer to page 13 of the SDS. Will the minister outline how the Palaszczuk government's investment in the North Queensland Stadium is helping Townsville and supporting jobs in North Queensland?

Mr de BRENNI: We are committed to investing in Townsville. We are also committed to delivering a truly world-class stadium for sports fans, concertgoers, the players and the workers who will keep that stadium operational. We are also making sure that the delivery of the stadium maximises economic value for the people of North Queensland. It is a key commitment of the Buy Queensland policy that we have heard about this afternoon. That key commitment is to put local companies and workers first, where they belong.

Watpac, as the managing contractor, is required to assess procurement tenders for the North Queensland Stadium. They do that in accordance with the government's Buy Queensland policy and the best practice principles that we have traversed this afternoon. Buy Queensland ensures that Queensland workers are put first. The stadium is supporting 750 jobs over its design and construction phases. I mentioned that 93.7 per cent of construction hours are by locals, that 480 local businesses have been engaged in the extended supply chain and that 49 out of the 65 trade packages let to date, worth \$152.1 million, have been let to local subcontractors.

I want to give the committee some examples of how the construction of the stadium is benefiting local firms. One example is Mendi Group. Buy Queensland ensured that the Townsville company Mendi Group had the opportunity to supply the turf system at the Townsville stadium, which is all important on any good Rugby League field. Mendi Group is a successful long-term employer of people in Townsville. They are already delivering civil earthworks and roadworks on the site. I have met some of their apprentices who have picked up a job, after living in Townsville for some time without employment pre the stadium. They have engaged pitch specialists HG Sports Turf to design the pitch and supply the patented ready-to-play turf system. They have also engaged local turf grower Fortini Earthmoving to work closely with HG Sports Turf. You can see the ripple effect of the benefit of the construction of the stadium to Townsville businesses and their staff. The contract has enabled Mendi to employ an additional 23 Townsville workers, including six apprentices and trainees. That is the Buy Queensland policy at work.

Clearly, on the alternative that we have seen in terms of the approach to the delivery of these sorts of major projects, we have heard during this hearing that it offends members of the opposition that we should choose local workers first. Clearly they are concerned that we feel that tradies in North Queensland should be paid the same as tradies in Townsville. We do believe that they deserve local jobs. The produce suppliers do not need to be told that their longstanding relationships with the catering supplier at the North Queensland Stadium are over. It is clear that under the LNP's procurement plan

workers would have also faced a race to the bottom on wages. They have always been against this stadium. People will remember then prime minister Turnbull being dragged kicking and screaming to make a contribution to this.

We are very proud of the project that is being delivered. I look forward to seeing its continued progress. I look forward to seeing the Cowboys play at the North Queensland Stadium in early 2020.

Mrs MILLER: Minister, I refer to the website hpw.qld.gov.au/aboutus/BusinessAreas/BuildingPolicyAssetManagement. It states—

Building Policy and Asset Management provides integrated asset and facility management services ...

It further states—

Our services include:

- providing procurement and contract management of building, construction and maintenance services for departments and agencies responsible for schools, hospitals, housing ...

I want to know, given this document that I am quoting from: is your area responsible for the procurement and contract management of the new Ripley schools, the Fernbrooke State School extension, the Bellbird Park State Secondary College extension, the Goodna State School extension and the Goodna Special School extension?

CHAIR: Member, you might have to go through them one at a time.

Mrs MILLER: I am sure Graham knows them.

Mr de BRENNI: I can assure the member for Bundamba that I am advised that Goodna is not a project that the Department of Housing and Public Works, through Building and Asset Services, has any engagement in. However, I am happy to get some advice. Perhaps you can provide me with a list of schools that you are interested in?

Mrs MILLER: I just did.

Mr de BRENNI: There is a significant amount of capital works being done across the state in schools. Some of them are delivered by Housing and Public Works and some are not.

Mrs MILLER: Given the document that I read out to you, how does the public know—and my people in particular—whether you are responsible or whether Education is responsible?

Mr de BRENNI: Ultimately, in this setting this afternoon, the Minister for Education is responsible for the delivery of her budget and the capital works within it. If you are interested in advice that is being provided by the Department of Housing and Public Works on specific projects—

Mrs MILLER: Yes, I am.

Mr de BRENNI: if you would like us to take a list—

Mrs MILLER: I have given you the list. My concern is this. It says that your department and that area is responsible for 'providing procurement and contract management of building, construction and maintenance services for departments and agencies responsible for schools ...' If I cannot get a straight answer how can my people get a straight answer?

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to give you a straight answer in relation to—

Mrs MILLER: It is confusing.

Mr de BRENNI: the work of housing and public works. This year the figure is over \$1.1 billion worth of projects and 100,000 invoices. I will not have the information available to me in terms of which ones of those relate to those schools—

CHAIR: You can take that on notice.

Mr de BRENNI: I can seek to get that. I would need the member for Bundamba to give me a list—

Mrs MILLER: I just gave you the list of all the schools.

CHAIR: That is why I said we might need to go through them one at a time.

Mrs MILLER: I will give it to you now. They are: the new Ripley primary school, the new Ripley high school, the extension of Fernbrooke State School, the extension of Bellbird Park State Secondary College, the extension of Goodna State School and the extension of Goodna State Special School.

CHAIR: We will seek to get that list.

Mrs MILLER: Please understand that my people will be confused about this. We know that Education does some of the delivery, but this document quite clearly states that your department provides procurement and contract management. Is it only some contract management?

Mr de BRENNI: The director-general has indicated that she may be able to provide some clarity in advance of specific answers coming back to that list of schools.

Ms Carroll: It is quite a complicated web across government. One of the things that housing and public works does across building, construction and maintenance more generally is provide contract management advice, standardised contracts and things like that that either BAS use on our behalf or other departments use across government. In terms of delivery of actual construction, Education manages quite a lot of that themselves. They do contract BAS. It is a commercialised business unit. The model is that agencies can come to the department and use BAS's services—and they do so at varying times for varying sorts of things, as you would be aware.

In terms of schools, the education department would have the full list of all their schools and the things they are constructing and who is managing them. Are they directly managing it for themselves or is that construction being delivered by Building and Asset Services. We only know the ones that we have that direct—

Mrs MILLER: That is fine. I just want to know which ones you have and where they are at. If you have any of these, I want to know the general contract arrangements in relation to noise?

CHAIR: You will seek to get that today?

Mr de BRENNI: Yes.

CHAIR: Member, do you have another question?

Mrs MILLER: I do in fact. I have a question in relation to the quote I read you. It reads—

Our services include:

- providing procurement and contract management of building, construction and maintenance services for departments and agencies responsible for schools, hospitals, housing, police stations, correctional facilities, ambulance stations and other facilities

Can you give me an example of the 'other facilities'?

Mr de BRENNI: If I am clear, your question is in respect of Building and Asset Service's delivery on behalf of other agencies. You would like some example of what they might be?

Mrs MILLER: Examples of the 'other facilities' you might be managing.

Mr de BRENNI: The delivery of renovations to things like courthouses. Building and Asset Services manages the delivery of things like sporting facilities in some cases. I know that in some communities it has delivered upgrades to government employee housing. There is a range of projects that it works on—big and small.

I wanted to clarify something. I said \$1.1 billion of work. The actual work last year was \$1.021 billion. The director-general advises me that some of that other work is national parks work as well. I saw some disaster recovery work done in national parks up around Far North Queensland and the Whitsundays following the cyclone. What Building and Asset Services has is a strong reputation for being able to go into a regional community where there is not a strong private market with the capability. More often than not Building and Asset Services will set up in advance of a natural disaster occurring. It is critically important that they work quickly to make sure we get important frontline services up and running. I pay tribute to the work of Building and Asset Services, particularly around supporting the re-establishment of schools and social housing in Townsville following the recent monsoon.

Mrs MILLER: In relation to government employee housing, I have been told by some police throughout the state that some of the police housing is being sold. Are you aware of that?

Mr de BRENNI: The approach to government employee housing is that as alternative rental properties become available—properties that are affordable for frontline service workers—in some circumstances the housing is sold to facilitate the construction of homes in more remote Queensland. I can inform the committee that in 2018-19 there were 56 residences and one block of vacant land sold. These were sold in places like the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba where there are strong housing markets. Then we replaced them in places like Doomadgee and other remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and Far Western Queensland where there is no alternative housing supply.

Mrs MILLER: Which department's housing has been sold or which offices of those departments that had employee housing has been sold?

Mr de BRENNI: I would have to come back to the member for Bundamba on that particular question. It would be safe to say that there would be no circumstance in which somebody is exited into homelessness, particularly a frontline service worker, without alternative accommodation being available for them.

Mrs MILLER: The alternative accommodation is that they go into the private rental market whereas beforehand they had government housing. It has been raised with me, particularly by frontline police officers, that their housing is under threat. In other words, the housing provided by the state government. I want to know from which frontline services—whether they are clerks of the court, whether they are police, whether they are teachers—and which departments this housing has been sold.

Mr de BRENNI: We will have to come back to you on that. I only have the headline figures about the approach. I think I said in my opening remarks that we are delivering 113 new homes this year. Last year's divestment approach was 56 residences and one block of land. I do not have in front of me which departments had them. In respect of the police issue, I am advised that for operational housing for police the QPS continues to manage that and be responsible for that. That is not government employee housing. Operational police housing remains a responsibility of police.

Mrs MILLER: Again, this document is probably wrong because it should say 'some government housing'. It says 'government employee housing', which to me would mean all up. It should in fact be more honest and say 'some government employee housing'. Anyway, if you will take that on notice, I would be grateful.

Mr de BRENNI: We will see whether we can get that information for you this afternoon.

CHAIR: Member for Traeger.

Mr KATTER: I refer to page 41 of the SDS, Minister. It is to do with remote housing. Recently in Burketown the community group that are usually consulted with were overruled to allow a house occupancy that was completely out of sync with the desires of the strong community consensus, risking losing valuable young workers in the town, when other alternatives were available to the successful house applicant. Based on this example, will the minister commit to giving back some control to these communities or mandating community input to ensure that government policy is in sync with the desires and aspirations of the local community?

Mr de BRENNI: Can I just clarify that your remarks are in relation to government employee housing? You referred me to page 41 of the SDS. I went there but I may have gone to the wrong place. I presume it is a question following on from the member for Bundamba in respect of government employee housing. Is that correct?

Mrs MILLER: The issue is that the member for Traeger is a member of this committee. My understanding is that he does not have to refer to any page of the SDS and neither do I.

Mr de BRENNI: I am just clarifying whether he is asking—

Mr KATTER: I will find it for you. I did refer to something earlier, but it will take me a minute to find it for you.

CHAIR: Member, do not worry about finding it.

Mrs MILLER: No. You do not need to find it.

Mr de BRENNI: That is okay. I am just asking whether it is in relation to government employee housing or—

Mr KATTER: It is public housing.

Mr de BRENNI: The delivery of social housing in that community?

Mr KATTER: Yes.

Mr de BRENNI: The question is about whether or not it was built in the right location?

Mr KATTER: An older person who had another option, which was the seniors unit, was given the two- or three-bedroom house which meant that a young couple were displaced. They did not have access to the seniors unit and therefore risked having to leave the town. The community is saying, 'We used to get a say in who should go into a house.' It seemed entirely inappropriate when there was a seniors unit available for that person. Then the office in Mount Isa said, 'No. They are our rules and you have to abide by them.' There used to be community consensus or input, but now it seems that there is not and the outcomes are bad for the community, as far as I can tell.

Mr de BRENNI: First of all, I thank the member for Traeger for that clarification. You are absolutely right that consultation with the community is part of any good approach to how we deliver social housing. In fact, we have just concluded work on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan, which takes in a lot of remote communities, where these issues are particularly acute in smaller neighbourhoods where everybody knows who is moving into which places. I can appreciate the discomfort that some individuals may feel in those circumstances if they are aggrieved.

I cannot speak in relation to the specific matter, but I will ask the director-general to address the policy issues around the allocation of social housing. Before I do that, we do want to make sure that the way our housing service centres operate is with a person centred approach, that they properly understand the needs of all of the individuals they are seeking to support to try to make the best and most sophisticated decisions. In some circumstances the public may not be aware of all of the elements of one of the particular entities and their needs. I am not saying that that has happened in this case, member for Traeger. My expectations are that, wherever possible, we do deliver the best outcome. Director-General, perhaps you can go to the allocations process and the work that we have been doing in that space under the Queensland Housing Strategy.

Ms Carroll: Yes. One of the things we do in unusual circumstances—in particular, in remote Indigenous communities—as part of the allocation process is have some consultation. We often undergo that in a broader sense looking at who is on the housing register, looking at the available properties and also seeking feedback from the community. Sometimes one of the things that we have to look at on our housing register is who is in the highest priority group—for example, who might have very high needs—and how we do those allocations.

If there has been no consultation in the community, we certainly will take that back and look at ensuring that does not occur again in the future. However, I do know from circumstances in other communities that often all of the community members do not agree on who might be allocated different properties. One of the things we are looking to emphasise through our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan is making sure that we look at how we get good community engagement and good community consultation on the way through and how we resolve the issues where people have different points of view and different opinions—in particular, whether it is about allocation. Through Mr Mick Gooda we have helped engage with all of the communities about the allocation of the \$40 million that the minister referred to before and how that would be divvied up amongst the communities. It is one of the things that is quite tricky for us to do. We certainly will take that back and ensure there has been some engagement with the community. We can follow that particular one up.

Mr KATTER: I understand that there always are complexities. The reason I have carried this issue so far from this small place is that there was complete consensus with council and the community. It was one where I was confident; otherwise I would not be game to bring it up. Perhaps I could ask that that be given particular attention, because I think it is a good case in point where consultation has not been done.

CHAIR: Will you take that on board, Minister?

Mr de BRENNI: I can take that up on your behalf, member for Traeger. I will ask the director-general to pay particular attention to the particular circumstance you are talking about. You and I can have a conversation in the coming week about the outcome of those conversations.

More broadly, I mentioned before that the Queensland Housing Strategy was really about making sure that all of the housing service centre staff across the state took a more customer focused and human centred approach to the delivery of services. There are certainly varying levels of how we have progressed in that space, I think it would be fair to say. There is absolute excellence in some regions; there is work to be done in others—and we acknowledge that. That is why, as part of the development of the second action plan under the Housing Strategy, we will partner with community organisations. We will certainly provide an opportunity, I think, for local MPs to provide some feedback as well. We did that in the development of the first action plan. I travelled to communities that the member for Traeger represented at the time to engage. We will continue to do that in the development of the second action plan and make sure that we address that better in the future.

Mr KATTER: Burketown is a really good example. I refer to page 4 of the SDS and the strategies of affordable housing. I have 15 years experience as a valuer and I could see the decline of lending in those areas, particularly as branches closed down and more lending decisions were made in Sydney or credit areas and not at the branch level. That decline in lending capacity, despite the integrity of a lender or a house purchaser, has meant that places like Burketown are now screaming out for public

housing, which is really expensive to deliver in a place like Burketown, where it costs \$500,000 or \$600,000 a house for public housing but \$100,000 or \$200,000 in the private sector if they could access lending. There is a real gap in the retail market for lending. I understand there are some existing products. I want to know what strategies there are, because whatever is there now is not working. There are gaps and people cannot access funds. It is not only people on low incomes but also middle income earners who cannot access finance and may only get loans for 60 per cent.

Mr de BRENNI: Member, I do obviously share your concern. No matter where you live in Queensland, particularly for those people in remote Queensland who live in some of the harshest climates and do some of the toughest work, it is not practical to say to them that there is no housing there and they just have to up and move. It is not that easy; we understand that. I recall having a meeting with councillors from the Burketown shire, as it was at the time, to discuss those issues. You did mention some products. I am advised there are four: a Pathway Shared Equity Loan, a Queensland state housing loan and a Queensland Housing Finance Loan. The Queensland Housing Finance Loan is a very, very good product. It does not have a lot of take-up. Part of the reason for that is that lenders have very competitive rates, but we do recognise that they do not necessarily extend their competitive rates to a lending decision, particularly in remote Queensland. There are mortgage relief loans as well.

When we last met with representatives of local government in those areas we agreed that we would provide further information and outreach out of our housing service centres. I am happy to ask the director-general to continue that exercise. I do suggest again that, given we have the opportunity now to develop our next four-year action plan under the Queensland Housing Strategy, perhaps this is an opportunity for us to investigate exactly how we can address those concerns. Because if there are no rental properties available, they cannot get private finance and they are left with no alternative, then we have to work together to figure out an alternative.

Mr HART: If I could have the QBCC commissioner back now. Mr Bassett, you would be aware of the story on the ABC last night about a unit owner who is facing bankruptcy after a serious defect in a luxury \$1.7 million unit. Why did the QBCC close the file on this case when the works were clearly not rectified?

Mr de BRENNI: The commissioner advised me in recent days that he has a personal conflict of interest in relation to this particular property. The commissioner advised me that he would not be dealing with any of the matters in relation to that. With your leave, Chair, I ask that given those circumstances he be relieved of having to answer questions in relation to that.

Mr HART: Fair enough. Minister, I will ask you then. You may have seen the ABC last night. Did you seek an urgent briefing from anybody in the QBCC as to what outcomes might be available to the homeowner there?

Mr de BRENNI: This matter came to my attention when I heard about it on radio for the first time at 7 am yesterday morning. I did seek some urgent advice about what was being done to ensure that every particular opportunity was being afforded by the commission to support that individual in the circumstances. I do think that it is inappropriate for us to delve into the specifics of the individual circumstances of an individual's home. I understand that the Queenslander in question has indicated that she is preparing to commence proceedings in a court, and in those circumstances it has been my practice in all circumstances in relation to individual matters that we do not ventilate individual matters in relation to investigations.

CHAIR: We certainly would not want to influence any legal outcome that the person may be able to pursue.

Mr de BRENNI: That is right. I can assure the member for Burleigh that, in all cases that are brought to the attention of the commission or brought to my attention and therefore passed on to the commission, every effort is made to ensure the powers of the commission are fully exercised to deliver the best outcome for all concerned.

Mr HART: It sounds like there is a bit of a backstory there. I will move on.

Mr de BRENNI: I take offence at those remarks and I ask the member for Burleigh to withdraw.

CHAIR: Member for Burleigh, do you withdraw?

Mr HART: I withdraw. Director-General, I refer to the answer to question on notice No. 10 in relation to consultants in your department. Can the director-general explain why consultancy costs for the department last year were almost \$4.5 million?

Ms Carroll: In relation to the particular consultancies that the department undertook last year, there were a variety throughout the course of the year. Some of them were predicted; some of them were not predicted. A range of consultancies were undertaken for a range of things; for example, the evaluation of project bank accounts, which was a commitment through the legislative process so those costs are included in those consultancies. Within the Department of Housing and Public Works post the machinery of government changes we had some additional staff come into corporate services. We have undertaken a range of reviews and used consultants to assist us in those reviews to ensure we are getting the best efficiency and effectiveness and utilising our staff in the best way possible across a range of corporate service areas. There were a range of different consultancies that we undertook during the course of the year.

Mr HART: Can you tell us what the original budget for consultancy was?

Ms Carroll: I believe the original budget was \$2.5 million. As I said, there were a range of consultancies that we knew were coming; for example, the project bank accounts, the particular panel. We were certainly not going to curtail their work, so we made sure that through the consultancies we undertook we got the best value we could out of utilising—

Mr HART: What was the consultancy spend in 2017-18 then?

Ms Carroll: I do not have that one particularly at hand in my brief, but before the end of the session I could come back to you. Sorry, I do have that answer. In 2017-18 the expenditure was \$5 million.

Mr HART: May I have the QBCC commissioner back again. Commissioner, I appreciate I asked you about builders who had lost their licences for defects. Could we also have the number of builders who have lost their licences for not meeting minimum financial standards since the start of the year, and could we also have the number of subbies or contractors who have lost their licences because they did not meet minimum financial requirements? If you do not have that information available you can take it on notice.

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for the question. I can certainly give part of the answer now in respect of the recent work that the QBCC has undertaken in respect of minimum financial requirements. The member may be very well aware that there were some changes to the law around minimum financial requirements. The QBCC has for the first time in many years now had the ability to look at the individual financial situation of, in particular, the large category licensees. Specifically in respect of those new laws, as at 30 June 2019 I can say that 742 of 765 category 4 to 7 licensees had provided financial information that was required to be provided by 31 March this year. As at that period of time we had suspended 17 licences and imposed conditions on seven licensees for failing to meet the minimum financial requirements.

It is important for me to say here to the committee that we take the same approach in respect of every licensee. While the new minimum financial requirements are new in respect of reinstating the annual reporting requirement for categories 4 to 7, those licensees have always had the requirement to meet the minimum financial requirements. We make sure that we assess the individual circumstances for every single licensee and we take the appropriate regulatory action. I can get some advice from my staff for the member's specific question regarding subcontractors.

CHAIR: We will have to get the minister to agree to that.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to consider that. I do wonder, though. The specificity of these sorts of questions is what questions on notice are for. The member for Burleigh had adequate opportunity to ask questions of detail that do not pertain to matters that are canvassed in the budget.

Mr HART: I am happy to take it on notice, Minister.

Mr de BRENNI: Hang on, member for Burleigh. I am engaging with the chair.

CHAIR: Just let the minister finish his statement, please.

Mr de BRENNI: It is a longbow to suggest that the questions the member for Burleigh has been pursuing this afternoon—really any of them, I think—have much to do with the consideration of the 2019-20 budget. Where he may have some ground, he ought to have asked those questions on notice at the opportunity he had to ask those questions on notice. I am happy for the commissioner to seek some advice this afternoon from officers that he may have with him to endeavour—

Mr HART: Point of order, Mr Chair.

CHAIR: I am just letting the minister finish.

Mr HART: Point of order.

CHAIR: Okay. Go ahead.

Mr HART: There is no requirement for me to ask questions on notice—

CHAIR: And, member, I am not going to—

Mr HART: I am happy for it to be taken on notice.

CHAIR: Okay. Minister, the member does have a right to ask those questions. Although it may not be the right time to get those specifics, he does have the right to ask those questions. Member, do you have another question? The minister said that he is happy to take that one.

Mr de BRENNI: Well, we will come back to you this afternoon.

CHAIR: Yes, not on notice but we will get it back during the course of this afternoon's proceedings.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you.

Mr HART: Commissioner, the QBCC collects a lot of confidential financial information. How are you protecting that information?

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for the question. The QBCC and I as the commissioner of the QBCC make sure that we restrict access to that confidential information, particularly in regard to category 4 to 7 licensees. As we are moving towards becoming more of a prudential based regulator—which is about the capital adequacy of, in particular, the large companies—it has become very prominent and known to us that a lot of those companies are in fact publicly listed companies and therefore might be the subject of stock market fluctuations et cetera. We have taken our responsibilities very seriously in that regard and are in the process of developing a market manipulation and risk management strategy that is not dissimilar to what other regulators, such as ASIC, the ASX and APRA, would have in place.

The thing we can do there—and we are still working through that—is look at putting in place blackouts in respect of trading for our staff. There are only a very small number of staff in the commission who not only have access to that confidential information but actually are involved in the decisions in respect of removing somebody's licence. They are some examples as to how we are making sure that we protect that information.

Mr HART: Commissioner, in light of that response, is that information available to members of the QBCC board such as Jade Ingham and Rob Schwarten?

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for the question. In my response to a question last year that was not dissimilar, I spoke very directly about the independence that I as the commissioner of the independent statutory authority hold. I have a legislative obligation to make sure that any decision that I make, or that my staff who have the appropriate delegation make, is free from any influence or suggestion of influence from the QBC board. I can confirm that none of those board members that you spoke about have access to the internal systems of the QBCC and therefore do not have access to that type of confidential information.

Mr HART: Minister, last year you announced \$300,000 from the QBCC for the liquidator of the Cullen Group. This morning the LNP has been contacted by two out of 29 subcontractors who have been chased now by the liquidator. Can I ask you whether that \$300,000 was meant for a liquidator to chase subbies instead of dealing with the issues at Cullen?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Burleigh for the question. In terms of the arrangements put in place by the commission for the liquidation and the funding of that liquidation and the details therein, I might refer those matters to the commissioner, who is conveniently at the table and can provide some clarity for you around that.

Mr Bassett: Thank you very much, Minister. In respect of the member's question, we have committed, as the member has outlined, to supporting the public examination of the Cullen Group Australia Pty Ltd and Queensland One Homes Pty Ltd. A public examination is conducted under the Corporations Act 2001. That public examination is about undertaking an investigation into the examinable affairs, as defined under the Corporations Act, in respect of how the directors or other people relevant to the operation of the entities that may be the subject of the examination dealt or acted in the lead-up to an entity going into liquidation or administration. The purpose by which we provided that funding is to support the collection of evidence in respect of the specific conduct of the directors of Queensland One Homes Pty Ltd and the Cullen Group Australia Pty Ltd, not in respect of seeking to recover debts from any other person.

CHAIR: Thank you. The committee will now adjourn for a break. This hearing will resume at 4.45 pm, continuing the examination of the estimates of the housing, public works, digital technology and sport portfolio areas.

Proceedings suspended from 4.17 pm to 4.45 pm.

 **CHAIR:** Welcome back, Minister and officials. The committee will now continue its examination of the proposed expenditure for the housing and public works, and digital technology and sport portfolio areas. Minister, do you have any answers to provide from the first session?

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you for the opportunity to address some of the matters that were raised in the previous session. The first one I would like to address is the question in relation to government employee housing and the divestment and reinvestment approach. I mentioned in my opening remarks the new housing construction for government employee housing and I also spoke to the number that were divested. I want to explain the process there. Where a department finds that it has a vacant property, it returns it to us and indicates that they would like to no longer have that available given that they have nobody to occupy it. I indicated that I would provide a breakdown of the departments, which is as follows: the department of communities, two were divested; Department of Education, 19; housing and public works, five; Queensland Health, nine; Queensland Police Service, 20; and TMR, one. I want to point out that in respect of one of the properties for the Queensland Police Service the tenant had not moved out and, instead, approached the government and asked to purchase the property, which we facilitated. A transport and a main roads employee did the same in Bowen and in Emerald respectively.

The member for Noosa asked a question about the use of vacant Queensland government owned properties, particularly on the Sunshine Coast, perhaps around the Noosa area. The opportunity to provide unsolicited proposals from the market is enabled through the Housing Ideas Bank. The Housing Ideas Bank was operational on 17 August 2018. It invites good ideas and encourages them to come alive without replacing formal, open market procurement processes but will support driving innovative solutions. Anyone interested in submitting an idea or proposal at any time can visit the department's website. They will automatically be directed to a SmartyGrants system which will reflect the department's branding and a response is sent within five days. I do encourage members, if you have proposals to help us grow social and affordable housing, to do that through www.qld.gov.au/housing/programs-support/housing-ideas-bank.

Before I hand to the director-general and then to the commissioner to round out the provision of information we committed to, I have some information in answer to the question about Burketown. Burketown has 14 social housing properties which, as the director-general indicated, are allocated based on eligibility for social housing under a set eligibility criteria including income limits. There is a severe shortage of available housing in Burketown which has led to the formation of the Burketown Community Housing Consultative Committee. The Mount Isa Housing Service Centre, who manage social housing properties in Burketown, engages with the Burketown community housing consultative committee. In terms of the circumstances that the member for Traeger went into—and I will not go into them in any greater detail because there are individuals involved other than to reiterate our commitment to continuing to engage. In the case that was mentioned I can assure the committee that people housed in that location are eligible social housing tenants, but we will continue to work with the consultative committee.

With your indulgence, Chair, I want to ask the director-general to address the matters that she has some further advice on.

Ms Carroll: In response to the member for Bundamba about the schools and Building and Asset Services involvement, the department is not involved in the delivery of Ripley primary school. We are not involved in Ripley high school. In relation to Fernbrooke State School, we are working with the Department of Education around the delivery of two prefabricated buildings for delivery in September. In terms of Goodna Special School we were involved in a project in January this year but have no further involvement at this stage. We are not involved in Goodna State School or in Bellbird Park. We will commit to update our website to be clearer about the fact that we are not involved in the work of all of those departments.

In relation to the question from the honourable member about the land purchase at Kirwan, the department through our Housing Construction Jobs Program had conducted an expression of interest process. Through that process there was a transaction around two adjacent sites. The particular identification that you have made is for one of those sites. The purchase with New Wave Housing was around both of those sites, so the proposal came in around the development across both sites.

New Wave did not own either of the sites. Part of the arrangement through New Wave was that it would purchase the sites and then the government would own them. At the end of the day, we maintain ownership of the buildings. Both transactions occurred on the same day. The valuation across both sites meant the department paid \$760,000 for each. The other site that we do not have the material for—we are getting a copy and we will table it when we have that available—had an estimated value of \$855,000. The balance across the two meant that we were not paying above valuation; however, we will ensure we have both of those documents to provide to the member.

Mr Bassett: I have some information here in response to the member for Burleigh's question about the number of cancellations of licensees for defective works. Builders licensed by the QBCC lose their licence, as the minister said before, if they accrue 30 demerit points within three years. They can be banned for life if they do continue to attend. Like a driver's licence, the purpose of this scheme is to provide a graduated enforcement response which causes builders doing the wrong thing—those building defective work—to modify their behaviour. As we all know, the majority of those who work in the building and construction sector do the right thing.

As a builder begins to accumulate points, they will become increasingly aware through interactions with the QBCC that they need to change their business practices or their building methods. Licences are cancelled for a period of three years. For the 2018-19 financial year, total demerits issued for defective works totalled 1,696 points. There were four licensees cancelled for all types of excess demerit points. There was one licensee who was cancelled solely due to defect related demerit points. There were two licensees cancelled partly due to defect related demerits.

Mr Mellish: Minister, with reference to page 8 of the SDS, can you advise the committee of the Palaszczuk government's work to reform the minimum financial requirement framework and are you aware of any other approaches?

Mr de Bremni: It is an important question, because the Queensland building and construction industry is an economic powerhouse. It is a significant driver in the economic prosperity of around 230,000 Queensland households and it contributes \$46 billion to the state's economy. It is important that we foster a fair, safe and innovative industry that continues to grow confidence, particularly around that workforce but also investors. At the moment, over 107,000 construction industry licensees operate in Queensland. Members will be familiar with me saying that we believe that if you do a hard day's work you deserve a fair day's pay. We are working hard to make sure that, as I said, Queensland is the premier place in Australia not just to live but also to work and invest.

In respect of minimum financial requirements, we reversed changes made by the previous LNP government that removed mandatory financial reporting for the state's largest licensees, with a turnover of over \$30 million a year. Instead, we have given the Queensland Building and Construction Commission a direct line of sight to companies that may be in trouble. Really, we are cleaning up the mess left by the LNP when it cut annual reporting. That meant the commission did not have a true line of sight to the real financial health of some of the state's largest builders until it was too late. As a result, many people lost money and lost their businesses. It really opened the door to what can only be described as abhorrent practices in the industry. Members opposite lauded those changes in parliament under the guise of red-tape reduction, but it simply pushed the risk of investing in the building and construction sector right down the chain, simultaneously cutting the income of tradies across Queensland.

Our approach has been to deliver reform in two phases, the first in January 2019 and the second on 2 April. We have strengthened reporting requirements by restoring the requirement to licensees in categories 4 to 7 to provide annual reports—as it was before the LNP's 2014 changes. There is a new penalty for failure to provide financial information, of 20 penalty units. We reduced the net tangible asset report trigger to 20 per cent for licence categories 4 to 7, ensuring QBCC has the information it needs and at a time it needs it. This gives the commission early warning of changes in the financial health of a licensee and subsequently reduces the impact of company collapses.

There is also a new penalty for failing to advise the QBCC. We have introduced a more robust approach that assesses licensees' abilities to pay debts. It is more of a balanced scorecard approach—a tiered, risk based approach—that puts the requirements where the risk is. We have also afforded the commission greater scrutiny around the use of assurance, in particular around the use of deeds of covenant and assurance and related entity loans, to meet the minimum asset thresholds, thereby lifting the lid and ensuring that assets that are supposed to be there are there and that they are not encumbered for somebody else. Of course, we have expanded exclusions to ensure licensees cannot use their personal toys to boost their financial position. People cannot pay their rent with a jet ski or a golf cart.

We have worked closely with industry to make sure that we have this right, and we have, and we know it is working because the industry is responding. The QBCC has been working with 765 of the state's largest licensees to audit their financial health. I am very pleased to announce today that, as a result of the new minimum financial requirement laws and the QBCC's enforcement action, \$323.7 million has been injected into the Queensland construction industry by licensees, and this included seven licensees with increases of more than \$10 million each. That is an incredible result that gives tradies and employees of these companies more certainty, better job stability and peace of mind knowing that these companies are operating within the law and within the mandatory financial requirements.

At the end of the day that means that they know that they will get paid for the work they have done. I want to acknowledge the cooperation and compliance of the majority of licensees in the state. We are very pleased at the outcome of this capital injection and the cooperation of the industry in supporting us to reverse the reckless changes placed on the regulator by the former LNP government.

Mrs MILLER: I have some questions in relation to the housing sector of the portfolio. How many public housing tenants have been evicted in the past year?

Mr de BRENNI: We have that information. The total number of evictions for this year is 106. I have information that I can provide to the member in relation to the reasons for those, if you would like.

Mrs MILLER: Yes.

Mr de BRENNI: Evictions have been for a range of reasons. There have been 60 for rent arrears and 34 evictions in relation to behaviour that does not meet our fair expectations of behaviour standard. For damages to property—and this is for malicious damage to property—four people have been evicted for those reasons. In terms of abandonment, this year there have not been any. In respect of ongoing eligibility, there have not been any.

I want to take the opportunity to make a point in respect of the evictions process, and I note that some of the members opposite have criticised the government for not doing enough to evict tenants. The facts are this, members: in 2014 the then minister for housing made amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act which set a different standard for social housing tenants in terms of the process to evict them. I inform the committee that that is the process that continues to this day. The law has not been changed. The 2014 amendments are the amendments that we use.

The 2014 amendments introduced I think by the then minister, Tim Mander, require the use of acceptable behaviour agreements as an instrument to prove to QCAT that an individual has failed to meet the standards. What we have introduced in addition to that through the Queensland Housing Strategy and through the fair expectations of behaviour process are tenancy management plans as well, and I can provide some data about that. In the last year there have been 1,813 breach notices issued for disruptive behaviour and around 1,320 tenancies—that is, the place—were issued a breach notice for disruptive behaviour.

It is important to note, and the member for Bundamba will be familiar with my remarks in respect of the behaviour of tenants, that attempts to characterise Queenslanders who live in social housing as a cohort of individuals that somehow typically have behaviour that is of a poorer standard than other Queenslanders is unacceptable and I refute it and I reject it. There are 629 tenants who are actively being managed through tenancy management plans and last year there were 167 tenants who completed acceptable behaviour agreements as specified in the RTRAAs.

Mrs MILLER: Is it the case that if people are evicted or are going to be evicted the department of housing does not actually technically evict them until they have found another property for them to go to?

Mr de BRENNI: As I think I mentioned earlier, we do not see it as a measure of success evicting Queenslanders. Homelessness can have a debilitating effect not just on the individual and their family but on the communities in which they are evicted. In all circumstances we try and manage the individual's behaviour through the tenancy management plans. There are a range of interventions that are used. We know that they work. In fact, just a couple of weeks ago I was contacted by the member for Kawana who complained about the behaviour of tenants. By the time he and I had engaged on that and I had the opportunity to speak to the department, the department had already spoken with the tenants, a tenancy management plan was put in place and the neighbours had responded that the issues had been resolved. We know tenancy management plans work.

Mrs MILLER: Minister, the issue is—and this is what I have been told from people in my electorate—the eviction process is a Clayton's eviction process because even though you evict them you still find them another place to live. I know what you are saying about homelessness, but you are moving them from one area to another area and assisting them in doing so. There are issues around that in terms of whether or not they do learn that their behaviour is not acceptable or appropriate.

Mr de BRENNI: I am happy to continue to answer the question.

CHAIR: Thanks, Minister, and then we will move to the other side, but I would like you to finish this.

Mr de BRENNI: The approach that the department takes, as I have mentioned, is a human centred approach, and we acknowledge that in certain circumstances for matters of personality people may not connect well with the other individuals living in close proximity to them. It is within, I think, the realms of reasonableness that in certain circumstances the decision to engage in a tenancy management plan or an acceptable behaviour agreement can lead to a process of the seeking of a notice to leave which then requires the department to issue an application to QCAT.

The reason I want to make this clear is that in many cases QCAT is reluctant—particularly reluctant, as we probably all should be—to exit the most vulnerable people into homelessness, so other alternatives are looked for. For instance, in terms of finding an alternative, appropriate home for an individual in circumstances where the person's behaviour or their conduct is considered to be criminal, I can confirm for the committee that in those cases where those evictions happened this year—I think there were 12, but I can clarify that—in no circumstances were those individuals afforded additional housing through the Department of Housing and Public Works.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Mr BERKMAN: Minister, you would be well aware of the privatisation of building certification back in 1998. Ever since then we have seen building standards slip and widespread public concern about the inherent conflict of interest in the private certification industry. I am aware of the COAG commitment to implement the 2018 Shergold and Weir report on the registration and oversight of private certifiers. Beyond that and putting that to the side, will you consider bringing building certification back into public hands?

Mr de BRENNI: This issue has been contemplated for some time by the Ministerial Construction Council. I convened an industry engagement dialogue with about 23 or 24 of Queensland's industry leaders from the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors, who are acutely affected by the matter you raised, right through to the Master Builders, architects, engineers and everybody in between. It is incorrect to say that there is no public certification. Many local governments continue to provide that service within those local government areas. I am uncomfortable with—and with respect, member, I do not think you were trying to do this—a perception that all people who perform that profession are somehow compromised. I think the overwhelming majority have been operating with the highest level of integrity. I think it is fair to say that that probably is not replicated as much across some of the other states. We have certainly seen the pursuit of profit over quality and safety by developers over a number of decades.

The suggestion that we rule out private certifiers or the suggestion that we do not provide the exclusion carve-out for the use of cladding was something that was contemplated at length by the industry. It is something that was contemplated at length by other states and territories. It became the considered view of all of the experts, including the authors of the *Building confidence* report, that in the interim, before there is a more rigorous process in place, particularly for complex buildings, the appropriate thing to do would be to allow for the exclusion carve-out for certifiers to continue to operate. I gave a commitment publicly that Queensland would move that way. Other states are doing exactly the same.

Two weeks ago the Building Ministers' Forum convened in Sydney. We led the debate around this issue and I am pleased to be able to inform the committee that there will be a process of identifying a mechanism for the certification of complex buildings—and I am talking about multirise apartment blocks, things like schools, hospitals and shopping centres—that works towards eliminating the sorts of things we have seen at places like Mascot and Opal in other states.

We would not be in a position in Queensland today to shift all certification back to local government. We are not geared up to be able to do that. There are some things that I would like to see happen in the certification sector around professional standards. The building ministers agreed to the development of a professional standards scheme similar to what is operating in the sphere of architects and engineers. We will be working on those with great vigour across the second half of 2019.

Mr BERKMAN: Recently, in answer to a question on notice you quibbled over the use of the term 'social housing waiting list', so I would like to try again on that question, this time using the term 'housing register', which is helpfully described on your website as a single list of approved applicants waiting for social housing—in effect, a social housing waiting list, if I might be so bold as to suggest that—

CHAIR: Are you going to ask a question?

Mr BERKMAN: The question is whether it is the government's policy to eliminate the social housing waiting list, or housing register, and to reduce to zero the number of children on that list, given that there are around 12,000 children currently on the housing register?

Mr de BRENNI: I said in response to a question earlier that one Queenslander being homeless tonight is one Queenslander too many. It is our ultimate goal to ensure that no Queenslanders are homeless, regardless of their age or their location.

I want to go to the preamble to your question, because I think the context is important. The register operates on the basis of need. You or I could add ourselves to the register but, quite frankly, we are not getting ourselves a house tonight. We will be making sure that those most in need get those homes. That is why it is not a waiting list. There is no order in which you are going to be able to be allocated, or be given certainty about the time. That is why we are pursuing a significant campaign around the delivery of social housing construction, around affordable housing construction. It is important to note as well—

Mr BERKMAN: Minister, can I just—

Mr de BRENNI: Just because you are on the housing register—

CHAIR: The minister is answering the question.

Mr BERKMAN: Certainly, although the website says that the register lists applicants in order according to a number of factors.

Mr de BRENNI: Need, not time they have been on the list.

Mr BERKMAN: Need, where they live and the date their application was approved.

CHAIR: Member for Maiwar, order! The minister is answering your question.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Chair, for the opportunity to finish answering the question. We are all working as hard as we can to ensure that no Queenslander is experiencing homelessness or experiencing homelessness for any longer they need to, or experiencing homelessness without the degree of dignity that a sophisticated society can put around those persons.

It is also important to note that individuals on the housing register are not all sleeping rough. Individuals on the housing register could be living in accommodation that they find to be creating rental stress in terms of affordability. They could be living in a place that may not be optimum for a disability or a mobility disorder that they may have acquired. I want to clarify that the housing register, from which we make allocations based on need, is an instrument that we use for the purposes of ensuring that those most in need in Queensland are supported.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister. I now go to the member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: My next question is to the director-general. Have you received any complaints about the minister or his staff's conduct towards public servants in your department?

Ms Carroll: No, I have not.

Mr HART: Can you tell the committee where the sign that was removed from the Lady Cilento children's hospital presently is?

Ms Carroll: My understanding is that the sign was taken down—the large sign from the top of the hospital—and as part of that process broken up and disposed of.

Mr HART: Can I clarify that the sign for the Lady Cilento children's hospital has been destroyed but the sign for Terry Mackenroth that was put up is still in storage somewhere? Is that correct?

Mr de BRENNI: The sign that was a matter of a pretty pathetic stunt from the member for Callide last year was reutilised, as I understand it, in other locations.

Mr HART: I would say it was a priority. Director-General, can you tell us how much it cost your department to rename the Lady Cilento children's hospital, now that it is completed?

Ms Carroll: The total budget and expenditure was \$302,082.

Mr HART: Minister, can I clarify something you said in the answer to the question about the ABC television story last night about the \$1.7 million unit? You said that the first time you heard about it was seven o'clock this morning.

Mr de BRENNI: The first time I heard about it on radio was 7 am yesterday.

Mr HART: You have had no correspondence from anybody or no media inquiries from anybody?

CHAIR: Member, we have discussed this particular one and it was a bit contentious. I ask the minister to flavour his answer accordingly.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you, Chair. I am happy to have my office check records about whether or not there has been any correspondence provided to the department or to myself. As I said before, the first time I heard about this on radio was at 7 am yesterday morning.

CHAIR: Thank you. You have stated that a few times. Member for Burleigh?

Mr HART: Director-General, the Ethical Supplier Mandate is part of the best practice policy. That starts on Thursday, I think. Has industry been fully consulted on this measure?

CHAIR: Before you answer, I acknowledge and welcome the member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Chair.

Ms Carroll: The Ethical Supplier Mandate is being rolled out in a progressive way. The mandate starts for the building construction and maintenance category on 1 August 2019. It will start for the transport and infrastructure services category on 1 October 2019. The purpose of that is to ensure that through the implementation phase of the Ethical Supplier Mandate there is opportunity to address any feedback that we get around the implementation. There has also been a commitment that the implementation will be reviewed in 2020 and then consideration given to a broader rollout. There was some engagement with the industry at the end of 2018 around the design of the Ethical Supplier Mandate. It is now being implemented from 1 August.

Mr HART: There is something called the penalties and sanctions committee which will be deciding on penalties and sanctions, I guess. Can you tell us who is on that committee?

Ms Carroll: I will check if I have the detail of that. Effectively they are bureaucrats headed by the chief adviser, procurement. The idea is to have that committee consider the matters that come before it. Particular suppliers will be given an opportunity to respond to the issues that are raised and then that committee can have a look at what that information is that is coming through. There are documents available that have that committee listed, and I can provide it later in the hearing.

Mr HART: Thank you. Could the QBCC Commissioner return to the table. I seek leave to table an article from the *Courier-Mail* today.

CHAIR: Leave is granted.

Mr HART: Hopefully you are familiar with the article in the paper today. It is headed 'Cladding crisis heats up a notch'. It says that 237 strata buildings have been identified as containing combustible cladding. Can you confirm that that is your information as well?

Mr Bassett: What I can talk about is the work that the Queensland Building and Construction Commission is doing in respect of the Safer Buildings Program. The Safer Buildings Program has been introduced to make sure that Queenslanders have comfort that the buildings they work, live and play in are not put at risk by combustible cladding. There are three separate stages—

Mr HART: Sorry to interrupt. We are going to run out of time. Can you just confirm whether that figure of 237 is correct as you understand it or wrong?

Mr Bassett: I cannot speak to data that is published in the newspaper. What I can talk about, member, is what the data in the Safer Buildings Program is telling us. There have been over 19,000 individual locations—

Mr HART: I will move on if that is okay or we will run out of time. Minister, the Victorian government has recently announced that it will contribute \$600 million towards any rectification that might happen in that state with regard to combustible cladding. Have you considered doing the same thing here and ultimately who is going to be responsible for fixing the buildings that are identified as needing work?

Mr de BRENNI: I am aware that the Victorian government indicated that it would establish a \$600 million fund. The Victorian government called upon the federal government to meet 50 per cent of the costs of that. I think it is worth noting that that was rejected by the Commonwealth. I note that the

member for Burleigh is an avid reader of the paper and will have seen my remarks on many occasions in the paper that we have made it very clear in Queensland that our position is that the companies that have made huge profits out of constructing these buildings are the ones that should be responsible for the rectification of it and that they should be responsible for the costs of rectification. It is not our view that Queensland taxpayers should pay for the serious mistakes, and in many cases wilful mistakes, made by large companies that have made massive profits by ignoring their responsibilities.

Let us be really clear about this: it has not been legal to install combustible cladding on high-rise buildings. Those companies that did that have broken the law and in many cases knew that they were doing it. The building construction companies that are responsible for that are the ones that should be held to account for doing that. I am advised that in respect of a number of the buildings, building owners that have reached a conclusion that they need to have their building rectified are preparing to exercise their legal avenues to pursue recovery from those companies.

I will also point to the non-conforming building products chain of responsibility legislation introduced into Queensland, the first of its type in this nation—including the imposition of extraterritorial powers so that we can pursue those outside the state or outside the nation—which ensures that everybody is held to account for their actions, whether it is architects or engineers who specify the incorrect materials or construction companies that fail to follow the correct specifications and instead put a dangerous product on the side of a building.

We have said very clearly that those companies should pay and, in addition, we have said that occupants of buildings have a right to know. Therefore, for Queensland buildings where there is a confirmation of a risk where combustible cladding is found, I can advise the committee that, in those circumstances, the obligations of the legislation that the Palaszczuk government introduced require the building owner to place in the foyer of the building a notice advising occupants that their building has been found to have an issue. There are a number of such buildings throughout Queensland. The owners of those buildings, singularly or collectively, as I said, should be able to exercise their legal rights.

It is important to note, though, that Queensland's exposure to the issue of combustible cladding is a lot less than in Victoria and New South Wales. There is a reason for that. We have had a good standard of compliance in Queensland for a long time. We have also had the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services play an integral role in the completion of buildings. They have been active in making sure that products that are used that are of concern are not finding their way onto the side of buildings.

I repeat my calls to the Prime Minister to use the powers that he has to ban the importation of combustible cladding. I have been calling for that for a number of years now. In the interim, he has an opportunity to back in Queensland and Australian manufacturing jobs and require the use of any cladding to be Australian-made product, where we can have confidence about what it contains. He has resisted that. He has resisted the opportunity to back Queensland manufacturing jobs. It is very disappointing. It leaves a residual risk, which I hope the Commonwealth will reconsider.

Mr HART: Minister, you have had the report of the implementation panel for project bank accounts now for a couple of months. When can we expect to see that tabled? Will it be made public? You also said that every subbie would be paid every time and on time. When can we expect to see project bank accounts extended to private contractors?

Mr de BRENNI: I take it that now the LNP is supportive of project bank accounts, despite its vehement opposition to them.

Mr HART: We always were.

Mr de BRENNI: We can all go back and look at *Hansard* to see what the members opposite had to say about them.

Mr HART: Please do.

Mr de BRENNI: In respect of the implementation and evaluation, yes, the government has the report. The director-general spoke to the in-depth work done by that implementation and evaluation panel in relation to a question in respect of consultants. The government is considering the findings of that report. It is pleasing to be able to advise the committee that well over \$550 million worth of Queensland government projects have gone through project bank accounts established by us. I will elaborate on that, if I can: at 30 June, 144 project bank account projects awarded; 27 of those projects reached practical completion; and \$560 million, with 60 head contractors.

I can say that the summary of that report has been shared with leaders of industry. There has been a discussion with the Ministerial Construction Council about the government's approach to this. They are fully aware of the scale of the work that is being done. I think it is important to recognise that what Queensland is leading here is a fundamental overhaul of the way that construction projects are paid for. When implemented, it will be the most comprehensive system operating in the country, if not the world. I think it is important to ensure that we get that process right and that we implement it in the time frames that are most appropriate. I can assure the member for Burleigh that at some stage in the near future there will be a parliamentary sitting and if he is there he will get to see me table a copy of the report.

Mr HART: This year?

Mr de BRENNI: I am not sure of your holiday schedule. The legislation requires me to table it as soon as practical. As you would be aware, the Cabinet Handbook sets out specific requirements for government ministers to ensure that matters that are being considered by government are done with a degree of confidentiality. Once we have concluded those considerations and are in a position to announce our decision, I can assure you that we will table that report, in accordance with the legislative requirements.

CHAIR: I am conscious of the time. Member for Burleigh, can you ask a quick question?

Mr HART: I call the commissioner of the QBCC. With regard to the member for Maiwar's question about professional indemnity insurance, Commissioner, can you give the committee an indication of what the government has told you about what can be excluded in these insurance policies? Is there particular wording? What happens if an insurance company does not use that particular wording?

Mr de BRENNI: Before the commissioner answers that particular question, I want to provide some preliminary context to that, if that is satisfactory. At the Building Ministers' Forum two weeks ago, these matters about the wording in insurance policies were discussed. It was clear from advice from the Insurance Council of Australia that there were, it is fair to say, varying levels of expertise and technical expertise existing within insurers around the types of words. An outcome or action of the Building Ministers' Forum was to be providing, through the Insurance Council of Australia, to their members some technical advice to ensure that wordings of exclusions in policies did what they were intended to do. I am happy for the commissioner to answer the question.

Mr HART: I accept that answer. That is fine.

CHAIR: You do not want to question the commissioner?

Mr HART: No, that is fine.

CHAIR: We will move to government questions.

Mr MELLISH: With reference to page 47 of the SDS, Minister, can you update the committee on the Palaszczuk government's responsive approach to the North Queensland flood recovery efforts?

Mr de BRENNI: Obviously it is important that we deliver on our commitments to ensure that all Queenslanders have a safe, secure, sustainable and dry place to call home. It is no secret to anybody here tonight that the recovery after the North Queensland monsoon event was a monumental effort by Queenslanders across the north. In fact, 72,108 SES and community recovery calls were taken by the Department of Housing and Public Works through Smart Service Queensland. Some 60,495 customers accessed information at the qld.gov.au/alerts site. Queensland Shared Services assisted by making 7,919 community recovery payments, totalling \$32.9 million, throughout the 2019 disasters.

I mentioned in my opening remarks that, whether it be in remote communities, in the city of Townsville or in between, having a roof over your head as quickly as possible is critical to ensuring a return to normal life, particularly for young people who are often traumatised in these natural disasters. We worked hard to assist 1,818 people to ensure they had a dry place to stay in circumstances where their homes were uninhabitable. As any diligent landlord would do, we supported 4,985 public housing tenants during their time of need.

The Rental Recovery Hub was a national first. It was established in partnership with the Residential Tenancies Authority. I want to acknowledge the significant contribution of the Real Estate Institute of Queensland and Tenants Queensland who all came together for the first time to support renters through a natural disaster. Through the Rental Recovery Hub 252 bond loans and rental grants were provided to flood affected families. We restored 231 social housing properties. Of the 164 homes that were deemed uninhabitable, I am pleased to say that we rehoused all those tenants by 31 March 2019.

Members will be aware that there has been a recent report produced as a result of the monsoonal trough rainfall and review undertaken by IGEM. It examined the preparation and planning by state and local governments, dam operators and associated emergency procedures. The report praised the Queensland government's response. It indicated that our disaster management system has in fact matured, with local leaders and agencies demonstrating the lessons identified from previous events.

Some of the learnings that we have implemented have been in terms of the recovery effort. I want to acknowledge the QBCC for establishing the North QLD Flood Register to ensure that it was easy to find a licensed, Townsville based tradie or a licensed remote area tradie to carry out the work simply by submitting your location. It would identify those prepared to work there and where they were from. Some 1,017 contractors registered on that register to promote local trades.

The department also used the North QLD Flood Register. Some 99 per cent of the 221 contractors that Building and Asset Services engaged were from the local community in which they were conducting repairs. I am advised that the one per cent that were not from the local community came about when we completely exhausted the local trades personnel to do the work. Work simply needed to be done. I think that was for some property clean outs.

It is important to note that the Rental Recovery Hub is still open. We understand that there are some people in communities in North Queensland who are still struggling to get life back to normal. We are working with state and local government agencies to ensure that any housing issues are addressed as they arise. I am pleased to report though that there are no emergency housing assistance requests open at the moment. All social housing is fully operational. In Townsville we have built an additional 87 homes in the last two years, bringing the total number to 4,105.

Mrs MILLER: Minister and Director-General, I was contacted on Sunday by residents of Gateway Lifestyle over-50s village, which I know you are responsible for under the legislation. Basically, they have had a change of ownership of the Gateway Lifestyle village. The new owners, which I understand are Hometown, have cut off all the residents' landlines and also their internet access. The residents have begged the asset manager to please return these services. They have asked me to ask the minister and director-general if there is anything at all you can do to help them in this circumstance. They are older people and a lot do not have mobiles. They need this access for health services or to call ambulances and to also, if they have the internet, access simple things like train timetables and bus timetables. Can you do anything to help them please?

Mr de BRENNI: Yes, we absolutely can. I thank the member for Bundamba for bringing that to my attention. Do you know whether it is a retirement village or a manufactured home park?

Mrs MILLER: They are all old people, but I think it might be a manufactured home park. They are all individually owned manufactured homes.

Mr de BRENNI: Paying site rent?

Mrs MILLER: They do pay site rent. They tell me for my information that they pay into their coffers roughly \$33,400 a fortnight and they receive very little in return. They have to beg for everything. Residents are working very hard to raise money for a few little luxuries and bus outings. It seems extraordinary that the owners have done this. They are punishing the people who are living there and it is not on.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you for raising that with us. We can immediately send the regulator into that property to start providing immediate support and advice to those tenants. Over the last two years we have conferred upon tenants in retirement villages and manufactured home parks some of the most supportive arrangements anywhere in the country in respect of their rights on site. We actively pursue the upholding of those rights. We have been funding services to provide advice and guidance to tenants and residents to ensure that they know how to exercise those rights. In many cases, they are quite vulnerable.

I think all Australians have been appalled at what we have seen over the last couple of years. We were appalled by what we saw with regard to the treatment of nursing home residents on the Gold Coast a couple of weeks ago. I continue to be horrified by the treatment of Queensland's vulnerable, whether they are aged or disabled, that I see in some of these settings. That is why we have a regulatory arm within the Department of Housing and Public Works that can go and immediately commence investigations. I can assure you that those investigations will start immediately.

Mrs MILLER: So the location of this particular place is Brisbane Terrace, Goodna. The old people are so frightened and so upset that they do not have phone access even to their families.

Mr de BRENNI: I am advised that the regulator received a complaint from one of the tenants as well and has commenced the investigation as we speak.

Mrs MILLER: What needs to be done to restore their telephone service immediately rather than go through a huge process? They need their phones tonight if we can get them.

Mr de BRENNI: I think raising it in this forum is a very good step to seeing those telephones restored tonight. I see no reason telephones should have been cut off. I think it is a basic human need. Imagine if you needed to call an ambulance for emergency services. You mentioned that many of the people living there are elderly. We will take some steps to do that this evening through contact directly with the park operator. We will request that they restore those essential services immediately. I do not want to see a lengthy process either. It is quite an abhorrent circumstance. It should never have happened. From what I have heard from the description you have provided tonight it is completely outside the regulations that apply to manufactured homes. We will investigate how we deal with that secondary to restoring essential services.

Mrs MILLER: I have another question in relation to the land that the housing department owns at Collingwood Park. This is land that was part of subsidence many years ago. The answer that we have always got from the department of housing is that they cannot put housing up because of the slab issue, which I fully understand. However, because of the shortage of seniors housing, quite a number of people have asked me whether you could put low-weight cabins—like those in caravan parks—on all the land that is owned in Collingwood Park specifically for the use of seniors.

Mr de BRENNI: One of the challenges that we have encountered over recommendations to the government about affordable housing is the accessibility arrangements for some of those cabins. We have worked hard to set a high standard in respect of the homes that we deliver. I know that all members would support the principle that people who live in social housing should be afforded a home that is dignified—that it has things like floor coverings, which have not always been a factor in our homes, and things like window furnishings and simply allowing tenants to have curtains or blinds. Those things come through social housing now as standard, as you would expect in any home.

We do find that with modular housing it can be very difficult to deliver a disability accessible product. We are looking all the time to make sure we are delivering the most effective and quickest to market outcomes for social housing. I think it would be fair to say that our challenge as a government is not necessarily the availability of our own land; it is the availability of enough capital to build enough homes that meet those standards so that, if a constituent of Bundamba moves into a home, as they age and mobility becomes a challenge they will be able to age in that place as long as they are a good tenant and pay their rent.

In terms of our overall growth in that region, since June 2017 we have delivered an extra 141 homes. I know that over the course of the Housing Construction Jobs Program we will continue to deliver more homes in that region. I am just looking at the total number that are going to be delivered there. The font is a little too small for me to read, but I can come back to you on that. I am not convinced that cheap and nasty housing—and I am not suggesting that that is what you are proposing—

Mrs MILLER: No.

Mr de BRENNI:—is the way for us to go. What I would prefer to do is find ways to deliver more quality affordable social housing for constituents who need it. In fact, in the next couple of weeks we will be commencing an expression of interest process with the property sector in the Ipswich region to identify partners as part of our ongoing Housing Construction Jobs Program. I am hopeful that we will see some of the good take-up that we have seen in some of the other regions and that we can quickly get to market some homes to accommodate those individuals.

Mrs MILLER: Can you lease the land that you currently own to a developer or other agency to provide this type of accommodation? It is perfectly located. The only issue has been the subsidence issue. If the accommodation is lightweight, I am told that that is okay.

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you for the suggestion. Perhaps we should deal with it in a similar context to the recommendations from the member for Noosa, who has some proposals around some land in her electorate that she would like to see developed for social and affordable housing. Perhaps we could deal with it through the Housing Ideas Bank as well. I am not sure whether the member has some recommendations in terms of the sorts of property investors or developers who might be able to deliver that sort of product and could partner with that.

I am advised by the director-general that, in terms of the product we want to deliver, that land would not be suitable because of the significant remediation that might be required and because of the subsidence, as you are very aware of. I am happy to ensure that the member and her office are briefed on the expression of interest process that is going out around the Housing Construction Jobs Program and more fully on the Housing Ideas Bank to get those sorts of proposals in.

CHAIR: We will now go to the member for Surfers Paradise.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you to the committee for having me here today. Thank you, too, Minister and staff, for being here to answer some questions about sport. Minister, could you update the committee on the \$200,000 investigation done by DHPW into securing IndyCar for the Gold Coast by March 2020?

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you very much for the question. Clearly this would be something of keen interest to the member, not only in his parliamentary role as shadow minister but also as the local member for one of the greatest tourism hotspots in the nation—Surfers Paradise.

As stated by the Premier, I have received the scoping study and the early advice regarding Indy. Much of the information in that, as I think all members can appreciate, was provided to government by international and domestic motorsport organisations and they did so on a commercial-in-confidence basis. Obviously they are high-stakes proposals. The report will be considered by government. It is anticipated that we will be able to do that by the end of the year.

A decision, like all decisions around those sorts of events, needs to confirm and to be dependent on careful consideration of all of the costings, the feasibility of the event and the overall value for money for Queensland as a whole. I think the process has been thorough, but it is now a process of considering the advice before making any decisions.

Mr LANGBROEK: For my next question the reference is the response to non-government question on notice No. 10, which was about the consultants' fees, which I know have already been asked about today. Did the \$200,000 for this investigation come from external consultants and specifically DHPW or Sport?

Mr de BRENNI: I might get the director-general to respond to that one.

Ms Carroll: Yes, the costs associated with that study were from the Department of Housing and Public Works' budget.

Mr LANGBROEK: Is it part of the over \$4 million that was referenced in that answer to the non-government question on notice?

Ms Carroll: It is part of those consultancies.

Mr LANGBROEK: For my next question I refer to page 129 of Budget Paper No. 4 and the Gabba refurbishment. Minister, could you please update the committee on the naming rights issue for the Gabba which we discussed this time last year about potentially when we can expect naming rights to be finalised?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Surfers Paradise for his interest in the Gabba. I think there are two parts to the question. I am happy to address both of those. The \$35 million capital injection into the Gabba was the result of numerous engagements with hirers of the venue. There are men's and women's AFL and cricket teams, concert hirers et cetera who had indicated to us that they felt that the fan experience at the Gabba certainly was not keeping up with some of the newer stadiums built. We have seen significant amounts of money spent in Western Australia and in South Australia on the upgrades to those venues.

Ensuing discussions with Cricket Australia led to conversations about what it would take to ensure that fans' expectations were such that it was prepared to commit to the first test of The Ashes being back in Queensland. I think that is important to Queensland. Quite frankly, it is important to the Australian cricket team. We perform very well when the first test is at the Gabba. I am advised that Stadiums Queensland is working with the department in terms of workshops with those hirers to make sure that the final product we procure for that \$35 million meets everybody's expectations.

In terms of the naming rights, I will say this and then I might—with your indulgence, Chair—invite the CEO of Stadiums Queensland to provide some clarity around the naming rights process. It is a process that I understand they are working through with a great deal of care, given the complexities around the different hiring arrangements in between cricket and AFL in particular. You would be aware that they have sponsorship arrangements you do not want to offend. To provide further guidance to the committee Mr Todd Harris, the CEO of Stadiums Queensland, is here to provide any further advice that he feels is appropriate.

Mr Harris: In relation to naming rights, following the release of the interim task force report in the middle of 2018 there were fairly extensive discussions and negotiations that took place between various hirers at the Gabba to ensure that a number of commercial elements that originally were not obtainable for a naming rights arrangement were acceptable to be released to the market. At the conclusion of

those negotiations we released an expressions of interest process on 3 March 2019. That expressions of interest process has recently been wound up, and there are a number of continuing positive discussions with a number of proponents in an effort to try and secure a naming rights partner for the Gabba.

Mr LANGBROEK: Minister, can I go to a different issue. The reference is the answer to non-government question on notice No. 9, and it is about delays in the delivery of the Underwood sports park. My question is: why did it take until 26 June 2019 to award the \$9 million project to a construction company when the project was supposed to be finished that month?

Mr de BRENNI: The inference in the question that the project has been delayed is factually incorrect. In fact, the response to non-government question No. 9 says that the Underwood sports park is scheduled for completion in February 2020. We have worked closely with local community organisations there; namely, the Rochedale Rovers Soccer Club, Meals on Wheels, the RATS Cycling Club, Logan City BMX, Underwood Park Netball Association and the Logan City Council to ensure that the project we deliver meets all of the expectations. The time frames that we have put in place are important because they have allowed the Logan City Council to make an additional contribution. They are adding a \$1.2 million contribution to that to expand the scope of those works.

We engaged Urbis to do some master planning, focusing on connectivity around the precinct, and we have chosen a delivery methodology as a bit of a new approach to how we do these projects that allows us to get a more capable product delivered in a quicker time. The last thing you want to be doing in terms of constructing infrastructure at a sporting club is ruling out half a season or not having change rooms available. The modular construction can be added as clubs expand, but it will also streamline the construction process. As you are aware, offsite construction then comes in and it is put together. It minimises disruption to the normal use of the precinct. The other really critical thing is it negates the use of temporary facilities. If football or netball needed to be played, there was an expectation from their governing bodies that so many change rooms, referees' rooms and the like would be available. That would have required, if we constructed throughout the playing season, temporary facilities to come in.

Instead, following a tender process Ausco has been awarded the contract to complete the infrastructure works. I am confident they will deliver a good product, as are all of the clubs and the council. They are the preferred supplier to Football Queensland, the QRL and the AFL. Demolition is commencing this month of buildings that will make way—extraordinarily, for the first time in the 40-year history of the place—for change rooms for girls playing netball. As Mahalia Cassidy of the Firebirds said on the weekend, 'It's 2019, for goodness sake. Why don't we have these sorts of facilities everywhere?' We are working hard on delivering those. The project is planned for completion in March 2020.

Of course, as the local member I will be paying particular attention, just as I do to all projects, to make sure that it delivers the best outcome possible for all of those clubs. At the end of the day, it is really about making sure that more Queenslanders have a chance to get out and get active. Underwood Park was the host for the launch of Queensland's 10-year sport and active recreation strategy Activate! Queensland just Saturday gone. We want to see the development of more precincts like this where we see people come and bring their families to sport, but they can also engage in other forms of recreation. I often think that, when I am there watching my daughter—who is nine years old—playing netball, I really could be doing something active myself. I know that precincts like Underwood Park will provide that opportunity, making sure that more Queenslanders have a healthy weight, making sure that we deliver better mental health outcomes and that more and more Queensland kids have the opportunity to participate in sport.

Mr LANGBROEK: Can you clarify for the committee whether there was not a commitment made by the Labor Party at the 2017 election—and I have a copy of it here—that said that the project could be completed by 2018-19? There was no inference in my question. I am referencing Labor's own election document.

Mr de BRENNI: Delivery of the construction project in those time frames would have meant that we would need to make the players' facilities unavailable during a season. It was the preference of the clubs not to do that. I think that the time that we have taken to rescope the project and wait for the council to come with additional contributions has been welcomed by the club members. Not having to hire temporary facilities while the other ones were demolished also means that we have been able to put more into the finished product.

I can remember watching my younger brother play soccer at Rovers 35 years ago. I enjoy going there to watch my daughter play netball. I love cycling at the venue myself, and I think it would be a poor outcome if the delivery methodology meant that some of those facilities were out of action during

the period. The rescoped time lines and the rescoped package overall were the subject of deep and thorough consultation with the committees of each of the codes on-site, some of which I attended to satisfy myself that they were indeed comfortable with that approach.

Mr LANGBROEK: How are we going, Chair? May I continue?

CHAIR: That is fine. Please continue.

Mr LANGBROEK: My next question relates to page 54 of Budget Paper No. 3 and the 'community infrastructure solutions'. Could you give us a breakdown of the \$50 million? It is broken into \$15 million, I believe, for the Springwood AFLW stadium and then there is the other \$35 million. What other projects are relevant?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Surfers Paradise. I will just get advice on those. It was \$15 million for Springfield—

Mr LANGBROEK: What did I say? Springwood?

Mr de BRENNI: I would love to have another \$15 million for Springwood, but I think I have had as much as I can to date. I am advised that works have started out at Springfield already—at least early works—to deliver a dedicated training facility for the AFLW in partnership with the Brisbane Lions. I am just getting some advice on the remainder of the projects.

Mr LANGBROEK: Just before you get to that, as I understand it—and I have not seen your announcement there—we talked about this at last year's estimates and you were waiting for a federal commitment.

Mr de BRENNI: For Springfield?

Mr LANGBROEK: For Springfield. That had been done and I am just wondering about the formal notification from you and the government about when AFLW will happen at Springfield?

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you. Construction on the \$70 million project is expected to commence in late 2019. I know there are advisers from AFL Queensland who are headquartered out in the region now. That is all the advice I can give you at this stage. The completion will be June 2021. There are contributions from other levels of government, with \$30 million from the Ipswich City Council, \$10 million from the AFL and the Brisbane Lions, and \$15 million, as you said, from the Australian government.

Mr LANGBROEK: Okay. The second part of the question was about the balance of the \$35 million that comes from the \$50 million for community infrastructure. This is in Budget Paper No. 3, on page 54. Could you advise the committee about some of those other projects? I understand it could be Harrup Park in Mackay and Ballymore rugby. Could you advise the committee?

Mr de BRENNI: Thank you for the question about the Activate! Queensland strategy. That is exactly what it is—it is a 10-year, \$1.3 billion strategy to ensure that more Queenslanders are able to get out and be active. It has a first-year action plan, and the Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Partnerships Office will drive the delivery of projects. In terms of where exactly it is going to be spent, a number of those projects are yet to be determined. We will be working with community organisations and state sporting organisations to ensure that we are able to meet some of the critical targets that we have set out in the strategy. We will be making sure that 60 per cent of all children—that is a significant shift up from 41 per cent—get the required level of exercise each day.

You would be aware that the health minister is responsible for driving a reduction in the level of suicide in our community. We think targeted investment of funds through the infrastructure projects can lead to better mental health outcomes. We want to make sure that we continue to deliver things like the Female Facilities Program. I will be making further announcements as the strategy rolls out in terms of inviting proposals from community sporting organisations and also considering some of the significant projects that I know have been considered by government. There are a number of projects that are of interest around the state, and you mentioned some of those. Some of those could be funded through this and others would require other funding sources—maybe contributory funding sources like we saw with the Springfield project or indeed the Underwood Park project.

I guess the point I am making is that we have a high-level strategy embedded by an action plan that has some additional funding. It requires us to change the way we are delivering projects, and we will be making announcements about the details of those as the strategy and its associated action plan roll out.

CHAIR: Member for Surfers Paradise, I am happy for you to have one more question if you have one.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you. I will go to female facilities, then. On page 54 of Budget Paper No. 3, the Surfers Paradise Rugby Union Club and the Broadbeach United Soccer Club, which are in my electorate, have both been awarded grants, for which I know they are very appreciative, and they are for significant amounts of money. Would you please advise if the Surfers Paradise Apollo Soccer Club, with female players, can apply?

Mr de BRENNI: I think there will be another opportunity for all clubs that meet the eligibility requirements. Typically, they are clubs that are properly incorporated not-for-profit clubs. All of these programs are oversubscribed, as they always have been. One of the things I have seen advice from the department on when they have had to prioritise them is that they look to support the establishment of female competition. I think there have been occasions when they have avoided creating female facilities for a club that is not surrounded by other clubs.

If your proposition is that there are other soccer clubs in proximity that have a strong female player base and developing player base and then other clubs are able to set up the same sorts of things, then I think not only would it be eligible but the department would probably advise me that they would be preferable, rather than doing something in isolation. I think it would make sense. At the end of the day, sport is about competition in many regards.

I do appreciate the question, because we have seen strong uplift in terms of the number of women players. We have to really encourage that at a statewide level and make sure that young people are getting involved as well in the Activate! Queensland strategy. We will employ 20 community coordinators and 20 coordinators in the education sector to bring those two sectors together. One of the other things that we will be looking at is the establishment of community dialogue led by elected representatives, community organisation leaders, schools and clubs to come together to say how they can get the most effective outcome for shifting the dial on those important indicators.

We really want to dispense with that competitive grants process, where all of the clubs were vying for the same money. They were expending all of this effort and sometimes engaging costly consultants to do that work. What we are considering now as part of the next round is a process which is more of a low-doc process, an expression of interest that says, ‘Our community has had a conversation. We think if we deliver a project that looks like this, it will have the best impact for encouraging more girls to play. It will encourage people who have not played before. We can support people coming from disadvantaged backgrounds if we have some community coordinators coming in. We have a close connection with a school so let’s do some co-location.’

If we can formulate those sorts of things without there being that big burden on clubs in terms of formulating significant paperwork in that competitive grants process—which in most cases they are not successful with—and there is a more collaborative, integrated, partnership based approach, it is certainly something that has been welcomed by state sporting organisations. They have a clear picture of where they think their infrastructure needs are across the state. They want to see investment where the Queensland government priorities and their priorities align. I think most local members have a pretty good read on where they are at.

Mr KATTER: Minister, intervention in the Northern Territory has forced a lot of itinerants, who are often prone to substance abuse, into Mount Isa. It has become a rising problem that has caused all sorts of social issues, one of which is housing. I am wondering if there has been any interaction between your department and the Northern Territory government. Has there been any role played there to try to address what is a big and growing issue?

Mr de BRENNI: I do appreciate your concern about those matters. I certainly observed the impact of that when I visited Mount Isa. I know it is of great concern to you. I want to advise that we have not had a meeting of housing ministers for about a year, unfortunately; the Commonwealth has not convened that meeting. As I indicated before, I think it is probably in my letter to Michael Sukkar that I hope that a housing ministers meeting will be convened soon. I do want to ask the director-general to address whether the conversations have been happening at an officer level.

I can commit this. At the next housing ministers meeting I am hopeful of ensuring that part of the discussion is around a collaborative effort between Queensland and the Northern Territory and any other collaboration across states to address those issues. Perhaps the director-general could go to how the officers might be collaborating.

Ms Carroll: Certainly, and I thank the member for the question. At the local level where we have a border—and I do understand the issues that you are describing—we try to have dialogue with our counterparts in other states or territories to look at what can be done on both sides. I know at certain

points of the year these things are more significant than at others. I will endeavour to go away and make sure our officers make further contact with the Northern Territory government about the issues you are raising.

Mr MELLISH: With reference to page 47 of the housing and public works SDS, can the minister update the committee on the Household Resilience Program?

Mr de BRENNI: Chair, with your indulgence, I seek leave to table a fact sheet on this for the benefit of the committee, and there are copies. The document coming around talks to the Household Resilience Program. It is a \$20 million program to address the needs of regional Queenslanders and deliver regional construction jobs. It is all about making sure Queenslanders in storm prone communities can literally batten down the hatches before cyclones hit. It supports families in being able to afford vital upgrades on their home and, importantly, it has been saving them money as well; it has been saving them significant amounts of money on their premiums. Projects have included roof replacement, roof tethering and window protection, and we have provided up to 75 per cent of the costs of these improvements.

I am very pleased to advise the committee that as at 22 July the government has provided more than 1,700 grants to families living in regional Queensland—in fact, \$17.7 million in grants to those who need it most: low income Queenslanders who are worried about whether or not their home is going to withstand the next big storm. We have targeted this in areas where there are high-risk weather events.

The benefits of the program have been felt right across the community. In Cairns, there are 363 homeowners who have had their homes upgraded to make them storm resilient; in Hill, 78 homeowners; in Townsville, 828; in Mackay, 196; in Rockhampton, 169; and in Bundaberg, 148. Not only has this resulted in homeowners feeling safer in their homes but, as you can see, through this provision they have enjoyed an average saving on insurance of 8.63 per cent.

I want to acknowledge Suncorp in particular for its support of the program and its provision of no fee and no interest loans to participants in the program as well. It has actually generated an estimated \$29 million worth of work and supported 95 jobs. Importantly, 95 per cent of those jobs have been undertaken by local businesses within 50 kilometres of the residence. That has been a big factor in the success of the take-up: the indication to those homeowners that the person who is going to come and fix their roof or garage or weatherproof their windows is going to be somebody they know; they are going to get some work out of it. They are companies like Elite Roofing, A&J Roofing, Bradshaw Plumbing and Alline Roofing Systems that I met in Rockhampton—the boys came out from there and met with me, the homeowner James and his family who had their roof cyclone proofed. It is no surprise, though, that families are choosing to use those local tradespeople, because they want to support them.

As we know, Queenslanders are a resilient bunch and they are no stranger to wild weather. Sometimes all they need is a little bit of help, and this program and this government are doing that.

CHAIR: I seek leave for this to be tabled. Leave is granted. Minister, just before we finish—and I am aware of the time—there were still a few questions on notice. I can go through them. From the member for Burleigh there was a question about the number of subcontractors who lost licences for not meeting financial standards.

Mr de BRENNI: I think the commissioner has that information.

Mr Bassett: I thank the member for Burleigh for his question. I have received some advice. We cannot get a breakdown by subcontractor. The reason for that is that we licence people or companies as contractor licences. It is actually a commercial decision as to whether or not a licensee contracts directly with a developer or owner or subcontracts to a head contractor. Some contractors do both.

I do have the licensee enforcement action for the financial year 2018-19 and I can go through that for the member if that would be useful. In the 2018-19 financial year the number of licensees we suspended for failure to comply with minimum financial requirements is 79. Licensees whom we immediately suspended for failing to comply with MFR, 13. That is a total of 92 minimum financial requirement suspensions. In the same financial year, 2018-19, we cancelled 28 licences for failure to meet minimum financial requirements.

I do have a response to the member for Burleigh's question around the number of plumbing occupational licences which lapsed or otherwise failed to renew across the time period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2016. I am advised by my staff that in last year's estimates hearing non-government question on notice No. 4 asked a similar question. The minister's answer to that question provided the

figures on the number of these occupational licences which lapsed in each of the six complete financial years: financial year 2012-13 through to financial year 2017-18. This answer has already been incorporated into Hansard.

My specialist staff with expertise in the QBCC's licensing program have examined today whether it is possible to provide an answer which specifically covers the customised time period about which the member for Burleigh has inquired. I am advised that that would be a very difficult and expensive operation for us to do at this point in time. The primary reason for that is because of our success in bringing 90 per cent of plumbers back into full compliance with the law during the last year, our system currently shows only data as next due date for renewals, which are forward looking. I can advise that there was an answer in response to a question on notice last year about this, and I do have a copy of that. However, I do not have copies for the committee.

Mr HART: It is in the RTI anyway.

CHAIR: That is fine. Thank you very much for that. The next question I believe was for the director-general regarding the penalties and sanctions—committee members.

Ms Carroll: The agencies on that committee are—it is chaired by housing and public works, as I indicated—the Department of Education; the Department of Justice and Attorney-General; the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning; the Department of Transport and Main Roads; the Public Safety Business Agency; Queensland Health; and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. Yes, it is a senior representative from each of those departments.

CHAIR: There was a question to the minister about hearing something on the radio. Minister, you were going to check whether there was any correspondence prior to that.

Mr de BRENNI: In relation to the member's question involving the QBCC matter that I heard on the radio yesterday morning, I am advised that my office has received correspondence. A response is being prepared for me to reflect the QBCC's ongoing involvement in the matter.

CHAIR: Finally, the member for Bundamba asked about noise complaints regarding a school. I think the minister went through the schools, but I not sure if that was—

Mrs MILLER: I still want an answer, even if it comes from Education.

Mr de BRENNI: We are happy to follow that up. Chair, the director-general has a correction.

Ms Carroll: I think I endeavoured to give some additional information about the two properties at Garner Road. When I gave that answer I said that it was \$760,000 for each property, but it is actually \$760,000 for both properties. I want to make two other corrections. When we gave the minister the list of government employee housing properties, the minister indicated that it was the department of communities. It was the department of community safety. Our shorthand was not very good in our note to the minister. Also, we had a discussion about the changes to the notice to leave in the RTRA Act. Those changes commenced in 2013.

CHAIR: Thank you. Minister, would you like to give some thanks or feedback?

Mr de BRENNI: I will. I thank the members of the committee and the visiting members. We will undertake particularly to focus on the issue raised by the member for Bundamba about the tenants at the Gateway village. Thank you very much for bringing that further to our attention. I thank the director-general; the staff of the Department of Housing and Public Works in all its divisions; and the chairs, boards and staff of the QBCC, the RTA and Stadiums Queensland. Thank you for the opportunity to present to this estimates hearing tonight.

CHAIR: I seek leave to have that last document tabled. Leave is granted. The time allocated for the consideration of the estimates of expenditure for the portfolio areas of housing and public works, digital technology and sport has expired. I also thank the minister and departmental officers for your attendance. Thank you to members of the committee and visiting members who attended the hearing. Thank you to Hansard and everyone else who assisted here today. I declare the hearing closed.

The committee adjourned at 6.32 pm.