

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Friday 4 October 1985

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. D.C. Brown
 Mr R.J. Gregory
 Mr G.M. Gunn
 Mr K.C. Hamilton
 Mr J.H.C. Klunder
 Mr J.K.G. Oswald

The Committee met at 9.30 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had a scintillating fortnight; I hope that that scintillation remains for today's proceedings. I will allow the lead speaker for the Opposition to make a short statement if he so desires, and I will also allow the Minister to respond or make a brief statement of the policies.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: With your permission, Mr Chairman, could I have an indication of how we will proceed today so that I can have State Transport Authority and Highways Department officers here at the appropriate time? Department of Transport officers are here now, so perhaps we can deal with that vote first. The Committee will note that the State Transport Authority is tucked away with Services and Supply in the miscellaneous lines.

I suggest that the State Transport Authority ought to follow the Department of Transport because Mr Wayte, who is in charge of the North-East Busway, is here. Following that, perhaps we could delay voting on the STA until we reach the miscellaneous lines, and then we could do the Highways Department's lines. My fear is that we could deal with STA and Highways Department matters under the Department of Transport and then repeat the exercise under the STA and the Highways Department. Is that acceptable to the Committee?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is basically acceptable to the Opposition. However, there is a further complication because there is some STA expenditure under both recurrent and capital; and there is also some Highways Department expenditure under both recurrent and capital. Yesterday in Committee B a very open and frank discussion was allowed on all subjects. We took all the votes at the appropriate time, which allowed us to break it up and deal with it in a sensible manner.

I suggest that we spend about two hours on the Department of Transport this morning and then about two hours on STA, including capital items; then about two hours on Highways. At about 4 o'clock we could vote on those departments before moving onto Services and Supply from 4 until 6. I appreciate that we will not be able to take the final vote on the miscellaneous, Services and Supply line until 6 o'clock.

If the Committee is happy with that arrangement, I think it will allow the Minister to call his staff in accordingly.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am perfectly happy with that, if that is the Committee's wish.

The CHAIRMAN: I have pointed out before that I have no power to alter matters; that can only be done by agreement. If that timetable can be agreed, I have no disagree-

ment whatever. Does the member for Davenport wish to make a short statement?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Today is not a day for speeches but for questions and answers. I would like to get on with them immediately.

Transport, \$28 824 000

Witness:

The Hon. G.F. Keneally, Minister of Transport.

Department Advisers:

Dr D. Scrafton, Director-General of Transport.
 Mr D.M. Ryan, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Transport.
 Mr K. Collett, Registrar of Motor Vehicles.
 Mr P. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of Transport.
 Mr I. Lees, Director of Road Safety.
 Mr G. Bettcher, Senior Project Officer, Department of Transport.
 Mr A. Wayte, Project Director, North-East Busway.
 Mr M. Philipson, Senior Project Officer, North-East Busway.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the vote open for examination.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Federal Government has introduced into the House of Representatives the Interstate Road Transport Bill and the Interstate Road Transport Charge Bill. Has the Minister discussed these matters with the federal Minister and, if so, has there been agreement in principle about the adoption of that legislation, which will have an effect on South Australia?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: There has been considerable discussion at ATAC meetings over a period between the Federal Government and various State Governments. Since I have been Minister I have corresponded with the Federal Minister. There are matters worthy of discussion in this area. A number of matters are addressed in the legislation (as the honourable member has pointed out), including speed limits for heavy vehicles. The question of insurance continues to be the subject of discussion. The Director-General will provide more detailed information.

Dr Scrafton: The recent legislation introduced in Canberra is the result of the national road freight inquiry—the main inquiry (as the Federal Government refers to it). Before its introduction there were many discussions between Ministers at ATAC meetings and between officers resulting from the decisions taken at those meetings. In effect the legislation implements the so-called 'fast track' package, which includes a number of urgent recommendations that came out of the national road freight inquiry.

In effect, it is a package of activities some of which are the responsibility of the federal jurisdiction and some of the State jurisdiction. It is necessary to have complete co-operation between the States and the Federal Government before it can be implemented. That in itself will be quite a problem because, if some States have difficulties with certain parts of the legislation, the implementation cannot take place.

The initial reaction from South Australia was that the package was acceptable to us in principle and that we would proceed along those lines. We have one difficulty with it and unfortunately it is not one that affects the transport portfolio—it is a matter relating to insurance. That is presently with the Department of Consumer Affairs or the Department for Corporate Affairs. The Minister has indi-

cated to the federal Minister that that will take us some time to resolve. Other than that, we are proceeding with the package of activities, that we are expected to implement to complement the federal legislation.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I therefore assume, from what the Minister has said, that part of the South Australian complementary legislation will involve a system to license all transport businesses in South Australia, as the federal Act specifically requires the licensing of those businesses (not trucks as such) throughout the whole of Australia, if it is to be effective. Has the South Australian Government therefore agreed to the licensing of such businesses?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I ask the Director-General to respond to that question, as he has been involved in some of these negotiations at a personal level in recent times.

Dr Scrafton: The answer to that question is 'No': the South Australian Government has not done so. However, although the enabling legislation makes provision for operator licensing, the agreement between the Governments does not allow for its acceptance. Let me put that another way: the States have not yet accepted that they will go along with operator licensing. What they have agreed to are the vehicle registration provisions which, in effect, will eliminate the present IS plates, plus other features of the package such as the registrations. But the letter from the then State Minister to the federal Minister indicates quite clearly that our agreement is subject to the fact that, although the federal legislation contains the provisions for operator licensing, the South Australian Government has not yet agreed to that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Has the South Australian Government, through its negotiators, agreed to the imposition of a federal registration fee? Also, has there been agreement on the requirement that trucks would need to be fitted with electronically charged monitoring devices?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The answer to the first part of the question is 'Yes', and the answer to the second part of the question is 'No'.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: To clarify that matter: I presume that the Federal Government can go ahead and require electronically charged monitoring devices to be fitted, if complementary legislation is introduced by South Australia?

Dr Scrafton: If I may answer that question: the State has indicated that it is not opposed to the proposed registration scheme which will eliminate IS plates within the State. However, one of the reasons for that was that the fees would be very similar to the fees that we charge now. So, to all intents and purposes, all that we would be doing is eliminating the cheap IS plates, and everyone would pay registration fees. But the technique for determining the amount of vehicle movement that takes place does not necessarily have to be electronic.

Yet, oddly enough, our Commercial Vehicle Advisory Committee—the Minister's advisory committee for commercial vehicles—has recommended that that be the technique used. However, officially we have not communicated that to Canberra. The official position is that any technique that is capable of determining what amount of interstate travel takes place in relation to the trucks is acceptable to the South Australian Government. I stand to be corrected on this, but I think that that is the only requirement asked of us by Canberra. However, that can be confirmed later in the day, if that is acceptable.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: If the member for Davenport requires further clarification of this matter we will seek to provide that information for him by the end of the day.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I express my thanks for those answers. When does the Government or the Minister expect the on-line computer to be operating in the Motor Registration Division?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Progress has been made on the on-line computer. I realise, however, that progress over the years has been seen to be reasonably slow, but this is a development that the Government wants to have implemented as soon as possible. On 24 January 1985, the Data Processing Board deemed it appropriate to suspend its appraisal of the MRD on-line system proposal until the Government Computing Centre had formally quoted against the MRD tender specification for the system. Further, the principal adviser to the Data Processing Board would chair a working party of MRD and GCC representatives to facilitate this process and resolve outstanding issues.

The working party considered three responses that were put forward by the GCC and final appraisal for the MRD on-line system proposal was completed by the board on 4 June 1985. On 24 June 1985, Cabinet approval was given for the MRD to call open tenders for the supply of computing equipment and related services to satisfy its on-line system requirements. In addition, a report providing a schedule of funding requirements and options is to be prepared in conjunction with Treasury for further Cabinet consideration.

Treasury is currently formulating funding options in relation to this task. The MRD released tender specifications through the Supply and Tender Board on 19 August 1985, and it is expected that final evaluation of tender responses will be completed in February 1986. Tenders will close on 21 October 1985, so they are still open.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What staff savings will be made within 12 months of the implementation of the on-line computer system?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Between 100 and 120 positions will be saved as a result of the installation of the on-line computing system in the MRD, and those officers will be redeployed within the Public Service.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 16 of the yellow book, under 'Resource allocation', it is stated that there has been a considerable increase in funds devoted to road safety programs during 1984-85 to the sum proposed for 1985-86. Can the Minister say what additional staff are to be appointed to the department to be employed on road safety activities during 1985-86? What new initiatives can be expected during the year in this regard?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I believe that road safety has a high priority not only with the Government but within the community generally. Recently, I issued a statement that over the past six months the statistics indicated that the number of fatalities and road accidents was the lowest figure for any six-month period for which we had figures. Over the past few days, however, there have been a number of fatalities, which has put a dent in those figures. We have an enormous concern about road safety and that concern is shared by everyone in Parliament and in the community.

The Government has approved the creation of 10 new positions, and applications for employment in those positions have been called from within and outside the Public Service. The new positions are senior project officer, project officer to strengthen the driver education subprogram, and a publicity promotion officer to provide professional coordination to the road safety publicity subprogram. Seven positions will be within the subprogram planning, research and investigation and comprise a clerical officer, a computer systems officer and a senior project officer for the data base. Two senior project officers will work in the field of alcohol and drugs and human behaviour. A project officer and engineer will be employed for two years on the rural roads crash study. In addition, 12 staff, who maintain the State's accident data base have been transferred from the Highways Department.

I point out that one of the factors that bears upon Government is that, as one improves capacity to research and prepare programs, one needs to be able later to provide the ongoing funds to put those programs into effect. So, there is a requirement on Government to become involved in road safety; not only to do the research and planning and to implement programs, but also to ensure that the programs are promoted effectively and that we receive the benefit from them.

I think that the honourable member asked what programs the Government would be implementing. During 1985-86 (and I think this was mentioned in the Premier's budget speech), the following programs will be implemented: the pre-licence off-road motor cycle training, red light cameras at traffic signals, a young driver of the year award, high mounted brake lights for Government cars and taxis and the promotion of the use of bicycle helmets. Those programs are in different stages of development, and I suppose we seek to fund them in different ways.

There are other road safety initiatives that the Government is to consider once we have the new positions and new resources on stream, and they are as follows: an expanded program of public education, including extensive publicity and promotion of key road safety issues, and regular inspection of heavy goods vehicle and passenger cars at change of ownership. You may recall that that program was strongly supported by the Automobile Chamber of Commerce, but that the RAA expressed some concern about it. So, there is still a lot of community participation, education and feedback in which we need to be involved. There is also the graduated licence scheme, which will be looked at federally. We hope as a State to be a recipient of some funds from the Federal Government to enable us to do the study on a graduated licence scheme, but that is still very much a Federal Government decision.

There is also the implementation of a child restraint rental scheme and a driver intervention program. All those programs require research and a report from the division and then, of course, a decision as to what the Government will do will have to follow. However, there is an extensive upgrading of the role of road safety within Government. We have been able to do this through the establishment of the Department of Road Safety. I might say that the police, the Department of Health, and the Highways Department all have their own road safety responsibilities and commitments.

All this effort is coordinated in a new council that has been established, namely, the Road Safety Advisory Council, which has a coordinating rather than an implementing responsibility—and which comprises Government officers and people from outside Government. The members of the committee are the Chairman, Mr Vin Kean, who is also Chairman of the State Government Insurance Commission and Managing Director of United Motors.

The members are Mr Donald Beard, a surgeon whose participation in road safety is well known; Keith Cys, Secretary, Transport Workers Union; Mr Jim Giles, Assistant Director-General of Education; Mr Ian Pearce, Director, Public Affairs, RAA; Dr Jack McLean, Director, Road Accident Research Unit; Councillor Isabel Redmond, from the Local Government Association; the Commissioner of Police or a nominee—David Hunt is Commissioner of Police, and Chief Superintendent Benson, whose involvement also in road safety is almost a legend in South Australia, is his nominee for most occasions; the Commissioner of Highways, Mr Michael Knight; the Chairman of the South Australian Health Commission, Garry Andrews, or nominee; and the Director, Division of Road Safety, Mr Ivan Lees.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister elaborate on the road maintenance scheme for buses, graduated licences, pre-licence

training for motor cyclists, and red light violation cameras, Young Driver of the Year Award, bike helmets, child restraints and eye level brakelights, which are a very important issue. Indeed, I am considering installing such brakelights on my cars, and I noted with interest in the *Advertiser* this morning or yesterday an article attributed to the Minister; it is very important. They are all very important issues, which I applaud the Government for taking on board. They are very important in reducing the problems on our roads. They are very important for children and adults alike.

It is very costly to the community, as we are well aware, not only in terms of human suffering but also in terms of accidents. It is costly in hospitals, particularly where people are interned for long periods because of accidents. It is probably not a very good use of the English language, but where people are 'vegetables' as a result of accidents it is rather traumatic for the families of those people. I look forward to more information because it is the sort of thing that can be disseminated in the community. I am prepared to distribute such information among schools and other groups and organisations within my electorate to keep them informed as to what the Government is doing and intends to do, because one way or another society will pay for these sorts of problems that we have on our roads. I will welcome as much information as the Minister can provide to this committee.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Thank you for the question, I have asked Mr Ivan Lees, who is Director of the Division of Road Safety, to join me at the table so that he may be able to give a more detailed response to that question and some of the issues raised. I recently had the responsibility of opening a seminar at the Royal Adelaide Hospital that focused on the need for the use of helmets in motorcycle riding, cycling, horse riding, including equestrian events, and sport. The suggestion was made that people who ride in motor cars may eventually benefit.

The seminar was chaired very effectively by Dr Peter Oatey, a neurosurgeon at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, who had a very good team of experts with him. The statistics, and particularly the films, that were available, showing the trauma and the brain damage that is effected by sometimes very simple accidents, were horrifying. The point that the honourable member makes about people who are 'vegetables' for the rest of their lives is even more horrifying.

The community focuses on deaths. If someone is killed in an accident, that is regarded as a tragedy of enormous proportion, and so it is; but the community does not always understand that there are people who have lost all brain control but are still alive. We have these people in our institutions and hospitals throughout South Australia and there is nothing that can be done for them except sustain their existence and look after their needs for as long as they live.

The responsibility upon all of us, and certainly upon the Government, is to try to ensure that as far as possible that sort of accident does not occur. The loss of brain function can appear to be fairly minor in a young person who has fallen off a bike and people notice very little change in that person, but the family notices a considerable change in the character, mental stability, schooling and general behaviour of that child. Sometimes I feel that the horror of the accident is worse if it happens to children. That is part of the Government's drive to implement a system that would encourage the wearing of helmets.

At this stage we feel there is more of a need for education than for regulation. One of the problems with regulation is that you build up some resistance merely because you are told by Government (by regulation) you have to do it and that causes some resentment. It is our responsibility to be

involved in education programs in terms of the use of helmets, and we will certainly do that.

I recently opened the awareness month for the Motor Cycle Riders Association in South Australia and they are very anxious to have a pre-licence off-road motor cycle training scheme. Such a scheme operates in Tasmania; I think they are looking at a scheme in Victoria; and South Australia is also looking at a scheme. I would ask Mr Lees to bring you up to date on that aspect of road safety. We have had a lot of support from the Motor Cycle Riders Association as they feel that the majority of motor cycle accidents occur, if not in the first 12 months, in the first one or two years.

Mr Lees: The question of vehicle maintenance and inspection was mentioned. The only vehicles which are inspected on a regular basis in this State are buses and country taxis. We recently changed and improved our system of bus inspection and I believe we now have the best system of bus inspection in the Commonwealth; indeed, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Road Safety made that comment also.

At present we are looking at two other areas of vehicle inspection and we are within weeks of completing our studies in these areas. One study is into the desirability of introducing some form of mandatory inspection of heavy goods vehicles; these would be goods vehicles probably which weigh more than six tonnes. We are also looking at the desirability of inspecting passenger cars at change of ownership. This is supported by the Chamber of Commerce. We are very near the end of our investigations there. I will quickly run through some other programs which were mentioned: the Young Driver of the Year award is to be formally launched by the Premier later this month.

It is very pleasing indeed that we have received quite substantial corporate sponsorship in this area. For example, the Advertiser group of companies is handling all publicity and promotion, and I am sure that it will handle it very well. Mitsubishi is not only helping with some of the promotion but also very kindly donating prizes. The Jaycees, a very substantial community based organisation, has agreed to provide all the arms and legs and support in the field, because we have to run regional and district heats and finals. The Jaycees will undertake virtually all the field work. Our officers are carrying out a coordinating role. We see this as a very useful program, something positive by way of encouragement for young drivers instead of hitting them with a big stick and punitive sanctions as we are usually accused of doing.

Another program referred to was the red light cameras. A working party is presently examining the details, and that working party consists of members of the Police Force, the Road Traffic Board, the Highways Department and the Division of Road Safety. I believe that in the early months of next year the first cameras will be installed at intersections.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: How many will there be?

Mr Lees: I do not know the precise number. I do not believe that the committee has actually finalised the number. It has come up with a priority listing, but it is trying to decide how far down the priority listing the first line should be drawn. I imagine that there will be about 20, but that is nothing more than an intelligent guess at this stage. I would not like to be held to that number.

High mounted brake lights were referred to, and some publicity is being given to that concept at present. I am developing a proposal that will go to the Minister next week, I hope, regarding equipping a substantial proportion of the Government's fleet with a third high level brake light. Extensive research in the United States has proved that the fitting of these lights can reduce the number of rear end

accidents by about 50 per cent and, indeed, next year the fitting of this third light is to become mandatory there. We see no reasons why reductions of a similar order could not be obtained here. Rear end collisions can be devastating; that is the type of accident that gives rise to whiplash injury, which can be quite debilitating. We are also involved in discussions with the taxi industry, because we would like some taxis to be equipped with these lights. The problems with equipping the Government fleet is that is not a very representative fleet, most of the driving being done in daylight hours, and so we would like to involve vehicles that run at night; hence our interest in taxis.

Child restraints were also referred to. We have engaged consultants to consider the whole business of child restraints, and those consultants have now reported. We are developing a package that, I think, will be presented to Cabinet within the next four or five weeks. It will recommend an increase in the publicity program and changes to legislation, because the legislation relating to child restraints is very loose and woolly at present and we believe it should be tightened. We are also considering the option of introducing a form of rental scheme, which may have to be subsidised by the Government. The cost of the capsules for babies or restraints for children is quite high, especially for a family who may have a use for these things for only a short time.

Mr HAMILTON: I thank the Minister and his staff for that information, because I am concerned about those matters. I have noticed over the past six months that an increasing number of people cross busy roads in close proximity to pedestrian crossings but without actually using those crossings.

I believe that there should be greater public education in this area. In some instances, it may be that people have to wait too long for the green light to come on before they cross. This may or may not be the overriding factor in what they do. However, it does alarm me. There are a number of pedestrian crossings in my electorate that people have petitioned for and asked for, and then, after they have been installed I find, much to my dismay, that people are walking across busy roadways without pressing the button or are walking across the road 10 or 15 yards away from the crossing and not using it. I believe that there needs to be greater education in this field.

The Government has announced that money to be raised by the auction sale of special number plates will be allocated to road safety initiatives. How much is expected to be raised by this sale and which initiatives will it be spent on?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will respond to the first part of the honourable member's comments. It might be appropriate to direct a question to the Commissioner of Highways when he is here about pedestrian crossings and the responsibility of the Road Traffic Board. I simply say at this time that the establishment of pedestrian crossings and traffic lights is one of the more difficult responsibilities that the department and the Minister have, because there is increasing demand throughout the city of Adelaide and some country centres for the establishment of pedestrian and traffic lights.

One has to be very careful about where these lights are placed because they need to serve the purpose for which they are installed. I am sure that nobody asks for them unless they believe they will be used. Secondly, sometimes if one unduly interferes with traffic flow one can cause more problems than one solves. The other difficulty that the honourable member mentioned about pedestrians crossing a roadway is that they develop a pattern and as road traffic builds up that pattern of crossing at a certain spot never changes so there is a potential danger point being created. Even so, we believe that pedestrian crossings are very widely used. At the same time, we are very conscious

of the fact that a lot of people who ought to be using them, particularly around schools, do not use them. That is a matter of education. The honourable member might want to take that matter further.

The whole idea of the sale of number plates, that is, 'The Great Plate Auction', was to raise money for road safety. It is based on very successful auctions held elsewhere in Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and in New South Wales. We expect the funds from that auction to exceed \$500 000. A figure of \$700 000 has also been mentioned. However, we are very much in the hands of the bidder for the plates. We know that the number 1 plate in Victoria, for instance, was auctioned for \$165 000. In Queensland the number 1 plate brought \$100 000, but I understand that, if there had been a more competent auctioneer, more than the \$100 000 might have been attained. I am told that it is not a good thing for Ministers of Transport to act as auctioneers for the prime plate at any auction.

In Western Australia the No. 1 plate brought \$75 000. Immediately after the auction it was bid up to \$86 000, but I do not think that the sale took place because once one buys a plate at an auction it is yours, and you have proprietary rights and can resell it. At the moment, there is no proprietary right in South Australia: all plates belong to the Government. There is a problem in South Australia that the other States did not have. In the other States once a person's registration lapsed, or the motor vehicle was sold, the plate was lost. In the 1950s and in 1967 the other States did away with numerical number plates and brought in alpha numero number plates. They took back all the plates, so they were in the possession of the Government and when they had an auction they had every plate available to sell.

In South Australia we have a different system. We have allowed enthusiasts and those people who wished to retain a special number on their vehicle to retain that number. They have only lost it if the vehicle has not been registered, or at the point of sale. That is a policy that we introduced in March 1984 and we have been enforcing it this year.

Those people who have continued to register their vehicle with the plates on will continue to do so. For instance SA1 is running around on a Ford Falcon panel van, which was not the original vehicle that that number was attached to. The person who has that number does not own it, but will be able to continue using it so long as they keep registering that Ford panel van. SA2 is on a Holden Commodore, which is also not the original vehicle registered with that number. Those numbers are currently in the hands of citizens of South Australia.

We can only auction those plates that come back to us either by the registration lapsing or a change of ownership, at which time the plate reverts to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. After the auction we are looking at a whole number of suggestions as to how we might be able to provide for those people who have a real interest and a genuine case in terms of numbers that may have been in the family, or numbers that have been attached to vehicles. A number of propositions have been suggested that we are looking at to address that matter.

The proceeds from the auction will go into the road safety division. We will be looking at implementing a number of programs. The two that I have announced relate to child and infant restraints and the use of helmets. We are not sure what the proceeds will be. We hope that people in South Australia are keen and that proceeds are high. I am looking at a figure over \$500 000: some people in the department feel that we could get a few dollars more than that—hopefully, they are correct. We have no specific intention at this stage to have a second auction. Whether there is one will depend on the success or otherwise of this auction. If

it is held, it will be in 12 months time, as has been the case in other States involved in second auctions.

Mr OSWALD: I wish to take a point of order, Mr Chairman. As Opposition Whip, some weeks ago I had a discussion with you concerning the hours of the session today. It was generally agreed that we would start at 9.30 and stop at 6 p.m. By so doing the Opposition forwent at least an hour of questioning that was set aside under Standing Orders. We have sat here this morning and I have made a note of the times. The Opposition, in an attempt to get questions on record, spent 12 minutes on its line of questioning and got answers. The member for Albert Park asked a batch of questions and the Minister spent 34 minutes on them. I point out to the Committee that a lot of those responses were virtually second reading speeches. The Opposition has offered to forgo an hour of questioning and answering, but if this pattern continues as the day goes on, we will have no hesitation in requesting that we sit through until 10 p.m.

Mr HAMILTON: You might not get it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Standing Orders provide for it, so you can not stop it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not uphold the point of order. It is true that the member for Morphett had a discussion with me in relation to details of today's program. However, the Chairman has no control over the number of questions that are asked or the amount of time taken by a member to ask a question or by the Minister to reply to it. I point out to members of the Committee that, in my opinion, the time taken in asking and answering questions in relation to the present session has been no different from the time taken in other Committee sessions that I have chaired in the past fortnight. I point out to the member for Davenport that he himself took a considerable time to ask a series of questions. I now call on the member for Davenport.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Twelve minutes to be precise—compared to 34 minutes, Mr Chairman. I just make the point (and back up the member for Morphett's comments) that Standing Orders allow for us to continue until 10 p.m. and, if necessary, we will do so. But that depends on the goodwill of the Committee.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The 1½ hour early start of the Committee must be taken into account, and that is not provided for in the Standing Orders.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I know, but we have offered to forgo an hour of questions, and Standing Orders allow us to go to 10 p.m. tonight.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the member for Davenport that his comments in relation to the point of order taken and so on, are in fact taking up extra time. As Chairman, I would take a very dim view of the member for Davenport's making this Committee sit for a longer period of time than has any other Committee. I suggest that he get on with the business.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It is not only me, but my colleagues as well, and I think the member for Morphett has adequately made the point. I refer to bus services in the outer metropolitan areas and, in particular, to a bus service operating from the Barossa Valley. The Department of Transport is responsible for the licensing of bus operators in country areas. I draw to the Minister's attention a letter sent to him on 4 September 1985 from the Barossa Community Services Board, signed by Keith Davis, secretary of that board. The letter states, in part:

At a recent meeting of the board attention was drawn to the fact that a private commuter service, which does not enjoy the subsidy, applied to the department [the Department of Transport] and was refused permission to reduce its weekly ticket fares.

The bus operator involved operates bus services from the Barossa Valley to Gawler. In an attempt to achieve at least

a reasonable patronage of his service he encourages people to use his bus service to go from the Barossa Valley to Gawler and to then use the express train service to the city. The bus operator wants to offer people special concessions. I have spoken to Mr Davis, and he has provided to me the relevant details from his letter to the Minister of Transport. In fact, I think he spoke to me before he sent the letter.

In relation to the Department of Transport's licensing of bus operators, why has the department refused permission for this bus operator to reduce his weekly fares? At a time when everyone is complaining about high costs, I find it incredible that the Government is refusing to allow a reduction in bus fares. Has that occurred and, if so, will the Minister immediately review that decision.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Did the bus operator want to reduce his fares, with a subsidy from the Government, or did he just want to reduce them?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: He just wants to reduce them. He realised that he would not get a subsidy, and he just wanted to reduce his weekly fares. However, the department refused to allow him to do so.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I have just sent for the response that as Minister I forwarded to the Secretary of the Barossa Community Services Board, Keith Davis. I will table that letter. I should have access to that information very shortly, at which time I will be able to provide the Committee with the relevant details.

The CHAIRMAN: As the Minister is probably aware, any information provided later must be in a form suitable for insertion into *Hansard*, and it must be received by 18 October.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will have that information in a few minutes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Again I make the point that I find it astounding that the Department of Transport, in licensing these various route operators, should go to the extent of refusing to allow a reduction in fares. No cost to the Government was involved—I want to stress that. No subsidy was paid by the Government, or anything else. It was a blanket refusal to allow the operator to reduce his weekly fare rate for passengers.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I understand that as part of the package he was offering there was to be a change in services. That is why I want the details in front of me so that I will know exactly what the package suggested to the Government was.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My next question concerns the closure of the Windebanks Bridge, situated below Mount Bold. This matter has been raised previously with the Minister of Transport. It is not a Highways Department matter, as it involves a local road, but it certainly has major implications and the matter has been referred to the Minister of Transport. I received a letter, dated 26 September, from the Happy Valley CFS Group Committee and City Council, signed by John Coppi, Group Secretary, which stated:

Re: Closure of Windebanks Bridge, Scenic Road, Mt Bold.

We have been informed by the City of Happy Valley that the Windebanks bridge is in an unsafe condition and has consequently been closed with locked gates. Council estimate that \$40 000 would be needed to repair or \$100 000 to upgrade the bridge. An application has been sent by Council to the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Tourism for State Government funding to repair or upgrade. A letter has also been sent to the Minister for Emergency Services asking that he support the application for funding.

Scenic road and the bridge are vital to fire fighting operations in the area and as an evacuation route should this be necessary.

The emergency services have been given keys to the gates but consider that if the bridge constitutes a risk to normal traffic then heavily laden fire trucks would be a greater risk and officers would be reluctant to put volunteers and equipment across.

We therefore ask if you would support the application by the Council to have the bridge repaired and restore a much needed fire access route. With thanks.

Yours faithfully,

John Coppi, Group Secretary.

What action has the Minister taken to ensure that this bridge is reopened as soon as possible? It must be borne in mind that we are entering the fire season and that this road is absolutely crucial in that respect. I do not expect the Minister to know exactly where the bridge is, but I emphasise to the Minister that it is one of only a few access roads to the area around the Mount Bold and that it is one of the very few escape routes in the event of a major bushfire going through that area.

Its location is not that far from the areas burnt in the Ash Wednesday fires, and certainly it is in one of the worst fire districts in the State. Can the Minister indicate the results of the requests that have been made to him, the Minister of Tourism and the Minister of Emergency Services, and what action will be taken to ensure that this bridge remains open?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The officers that I have at the table with me are not involved in this matter. It is a Highways Department matter: I can deal with this question later when the Highways Department officers are present or I can take the question on notice and provide the honourable member with a reply as soon as possible.

This matter is being dealt with by the Highways Department and by local government: local roads are still a matter of negotiation between those two authorities. The Department of Transport, as such, is not involved. I can take the question on notice and have the officers of the Highways Department alerted so that they can reply this afternoon. Alternatively, the honourable member can ask his question again when they are here. However, I cannot give the Committee that information until the officers are here with the documents.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister. I would appreciate the former course of action if the Minister could get his staff to notify the Highways Department so that a response would be available this afternoon. My next question concerns the accident towing roster scheme that has been introduced by the Labor Government and, specifically, the regulations that have been introduced by that Government. I acknowledge that the Liberal Government introduced the framework of the legislation. Liberal members have supported a roster scheme but have strongly opposed the regulations that were introduced. I have repeatedly expressed a concern about the regulations, and I now have before me detailed documentation about the way in which a Mr Wayne Williams has been dealt with.

I have written to the Minister on this matter a couple of times. Time does not permit me to relate the most incredible story ever of Government bureaucracy unfairly dealing with an individual who has tried to appear before the Appeals Tribunal, who had seven days in which to appeal, and who assumed that that period would run from the date on which the letter was posted, simply to find, on appearing before the tribunal, that he was stopped because it was seven days since the Registrar of Motor Vehicles actually signed the letter and it took about three days between the signing and the formal posting of the letter.

Under that sort of bureaucracy, an individual has had his individual rights of appeal removed because of what I would call the most trivial and stupid piece of bureaucracy that I have ever seen. I can read to the Committee a three-page detailed account of the sort of financial hardship and injustice that has been caused to this individual, who has tried and tried to get some deal of decency out of the Government over these regulations but who has been prohibited because

the regulations say that the company involved in the roster system must own the truck rather than hire it or lease it; that contract personnel who are taken on on a contract basis are unacceptable; and each operator must have four employees for each roster position.

What is the difference between someone who is taken on under a contract and a person who becomes the employee of a company that is involved in the towing roster scheme? I ask the Minister for a full ministerial inquiry into the details leading to Mr Williams' loss of all rights to appeal under the roster scheme and to the removal of his truck plates. In fact, the department was so keen to take those plates off him that, when his licence was due to expire at midnight last Monday night, the department was out there by 3.30 or 4 p.m. on Monday wanting to grab the plates off him.

This is the most extraordinary sort of diligence from government. I understand that the department even offered to send out a car with an officer to pick up the plates before Mr Williams' licence had expired. That is how diligent the officers have been in ensuring that every single injustice was meted out to Mr Williams. I ask the Minister for a full and complete inquiry and for the relevant details to be brought before Parliament.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am aware of Mr Williams' applications to the Government to be put on the towing roster. In fact, I have passed a message to him only today informing him that I had called for a report on his application prior to his wishing to see me. No doubt, he has contacted various people and, certainly, my office. I do not criticise him for that: he is free to follow such a course.

I reject, however, the criticism voiced by the member for Davenport as regards departmental officers but, because the honourable member has voiced one or two detailed criticisms, based on information obviously given him by Mr Williams, which reflect most seriously on officers of the MRD, I will ask Mr Collett, who heads the MRD, to respond.

However, before doing that, I point out that I have asked Mr Collett to give me a full report on Mr Williams' application, so that I may consider it. That is the same action as I would take as regards any person who contacted my office seeking the resolution of a problem that he had or perceived that he had. I will not respond to the request that a full ministerial inquiry (whatever that means) be held. However, as Minister, I am looking at what has happened, because I wish to be informed.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister says that he will not provide Parliament with basic information or an investigation?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am not saying that. I have said that, as Minister of Transport, I will call for a report on the specific case that has been raised by the honourable member. He has asked me to hold a full ministerial inquiry. I am not sure what he means by that and what would flow from it. I have asked for a report and, on receiving it, I will ascertain what further action or involvement is necessary at ministerial level. I will ask the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to respond to one or two of the more specific criticisms that the honourable member has voiced, as I understand it, on information that has been given him by Mr Williams.

Mr Collett: Mr Williams has been a problem throughout the past 12 months as regards his application for a position on the roster. He has never met the employment requirements that are stipulated in the regulations. His application has been referred, at least on two occasions if not on more, to the accident towing roster review committee, which has examined the matter in great depth and has recommended to me that Mr Williams be not granted a position on the

roster because he does not meet the basic requirements. I have obtained two legal opinions on the matter of contract employees versus employees and both opinions have stated categorically that contract employees are not acceptable under the roster scheme.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Exactly. It makes a mockery of the regulations.

Mr Collett: Mr Williams has a right of appeal to the tribunal, and he has exercised that right. However, when he appeared before the tribunal in chambers, the solicitor representing him agreed to withdraw the appeal. Another appeal will probably be lodged, because a letter recently went to Mr Williams rejecting his claim. That is sufficient for Mr Williams to go back to the tribunal and appeal against it. That is in hand. I have spoken to the solicitor who represents Mr Wayne Williams, and he informs me that that will be the case; that it will go back to the tribunal. I do not know what we can do, other than wait for the decision.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Let us have the full facts before Parliament for Parliament to make its decision. This matter has been going on for 12 months. The injustice that has been done to Mr Williams is scandalous, partly because of deficiencies in the regulations and partly because of the way they have been administered.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I have not had the opportunity to look at Mr Williams' applications. In view of the advice given to the Committee, it seems that there are considerable legal matters that need to be dealt with by the courts, and that is presently being done. Two groups in South Australia profess to represent the tow truck industry. One is the Automobile Chamber of Commerce which has expressed itself on a number of occasions to be completely happy with the regulations. That group believes that the regulations are appropriate and are working.

The other group, the Tow Truck Operators and Owners Association, has indicated that it has some concerns about the regulations. It met with me a month or two ago and said it was going to have an annual general meeting within two or three days and advise me of its concerns about the roster. That group sent a letter, which is now with the department, and the log of claims is being dealt with by the Roster Review Committee, which will then make a recommendation to me. The Government has undertaken to review the operations of the roster, that is, review the regulations.

The Act, the changes to the Act and the regulations were subjected to the parliamentary procedure. That does not mean that they need to be there forever. If there is reason to seek changes, those changes will be made. The matter that the honourable member referred to will be a subject of that review, I believe.

Membership:

Mr Ashenden substituted for Mr Gunn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair has grave doubts as to whether the sessional orders envisage the current type of questioning of the Minister. It is the Chair's opinion that questioning so far concerns points of administration, not lines. We are here to probe, in depth, certain lines of expenditure. The Chair is just pointing this matter out, particularly because the Opposition saw fit to raise with the Chair the matter of questioning the Minister. This is the first time that the Chair has experienced such questionings and I have grave doubts about whether it is within sessional orders.

Mr GREGORY: Page 9 of the yellow book shows a proposed 1985-86 expenditure of \$9.4 million in relation to securing and management of funds for State purposes. Is that really the collection of registration fees? I have found a personal problem with having a post office box as my

address. It seems that there is an inability on the part of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to send letters to that post office box. It was explained to me that the Police Department may want to come to my address one day to tell my wife that I have been killed in a motor accident.

I understand that this information is kept on a computer, which I thought was designed to make clerical work easier. Under the old card system postal addresses were easily attached under street addresses. I understand the need for street addresses, but cannot understand why postal addresses cannot be included in the record keeping systems of the Registrar. If post office workers work to the regulations, on some occasions they will not redirect mail with a street address to a post office box: they will just send it back marked 'Not at this address'.

Many people have reasons for having post office boxes. I do not want to be placed in the position one day of not receiving a renewal advice. A friend of mine in my youth came to show me his licence because he had been apprehended for speeding. I was looking at his registration disk and told him it expired three months ago. He told me that he had not received a renewal notice. Those sorts of things happen and it concerns me, because I am not the only person with a post office box.

Mr Collett: We can certainly arrange that. Of course, we must have a residential address because of legal matters—not necessarily accidents—in relation to serving notices to call up a licence, or whatever may be the case. However, we can arrange for renewal notices for drivers licences and registration papers to be sent to a post office box.

Mr GREGORY: Earlier today the member for Albert Park asked questions about cameras at traffic lights and the apprehension of persons who commonly shoot red lights. I was privileged to attend an address by Superintendent Benson on the second floor of Parliament House and he gave us a demonstration of some of the things that happen at red lights and of the camera in operation. Will the Minister explain in greater detail how the camera will work? Will people waiting on the road to turn right be in danger of being prosecuted because of delays in turning? What is the anticipated reduction in accidents at light controlled intersections where these cameras will be introduced?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Because of the technical detail involved in that question, I will ask Mr Lees to respond. I, too, attended the lecture by Chief Superintendent Benson on traffic lights, and it was very informative. The lecture also indicated the degree of problem that exists in what has been described as shooting the red light.

Mr Lees: I will try to answer the honourable member's question, but I am not sure that I can supply a complete answer. As far as the technical matters are concerned, the camera takes two photographs. The first photograph is taken following a slight delay after the light has changed, and a second photograph is taken sometime after that. From the two photographs it is reasonably easy to interpret the manoeuvres performed by cars at an intersection, allowing the police to determine whether or not action should be taken. I do not know what guidelines the police use to determine whether or not they prosecute, but I imagine that they operate, as they always do, with a lot of commonsense and a fair degree of discretion. I am sure that the police would have to be convinced that a serious offence had been committed before they prosecuted.

Some six months ago, as the Committee would be aware, a short trial was carried out at three intersections. They were not the most serious accident intersection locations, but the trial resulted in a very worthwhile reduction in accidents. I am sorry that I cannot recall the percentage reduction, but there was certainly a very appreciable change. I am confident that that reduction will continue when the

cameras are installed on a permanent basis, especially at those intersections which have a worse accident record than those at which the trials were carried out.

Mr GREGORY: Could Mr Lees provide the exact percentage in relation to the reduction in accidents at the camera controlled intersections?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Yes, that information can be provided within the instruction given by the Chairman about the material being suitable for insertion into *Hansard*.

Mr GREGORY: Can the Minister explain who will be in receipt of these concessions detailed on page 7 of the yellow book, and what review of those concessions (amounting to \$10.948 million) is undertaken to ensure that they are still worthwhile?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The Department of Transport is represented on the Inter-departmental Concessions Advisory Committee, which has met regularly between September 1984 and May 1985 and has prepared a submission for the Human Resources Sub-Committee of Cabinet. At this stage, no action has been taken on some of the specific recommendations. A continual concession review is conducted by a committee which reports to the Minister of Community Welfare, and recommendations are made to Cabinet. As I said, some matters are before Cabinet at the moment.

In relation to the concessions on page 128 of the Estimates of Payments, the first item covers full payment of train fares for two delegates to attend interstate national conferences for aged, disabled, and disadvantaged persons representing approved organisations. Transport concessions under 'Australian National' covers pensioners (for whom AN receives reimbursement) who are entitled to travel by rail at the concession fare (normally half the adult fare), and they also receive one free journey between any two AN central region stations each year. Other free AN travellers are the Governor and members of the Judiciary.

As to State concession cards, AN claims concessional reimbursement for holders of State concession cards issued by community welfare, for those people whose income does not exceed specified limits and who do not hold a social security card. The STA also issues a card to blind and incapacitated people, and that enables them to free travel at all times. In relation to charitable organisations, freight concession is granted to such organisations as St Vincent de Paul, Goodwill Industries, and so on. As the honourable member would know, there was an increase in payments in 1984-85 which resulted from the bushfire relief concession funding.

In relation to children, reimbursement is made only to the STA and not to private bus operators, and it is at half the common adult fare. The current child fare is 30 cents, whereas half the common adult fare is 50 cents; therefore, the reimbursement is 20 cents per child journey. With regard to pensioners, the STA country town bus service, private operators, and the Highways Department (that is the MV *Troubridge*) are reimbursed for each pensioner passenger journey up to the common adult fare. As the current STA pensioner fare is 30 cents, the reimbursement is \$1.70 between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Pensioners can travel free on a journey between those times, and there is reimbursement of \$1. The STA receives \$7 892 000.

Mr GREGORY: Could the department supply the actual amounts relating to the various concessions?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Yes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In looking at the proposed receipts this year, I recall a statement by the Treasurer that motor vehicle registration fees, drivers' licence fees and fuel franchise rates have been frozen. However, I note that receipts for the Highways Fund will increase from \$63.3 million last year to \$70 million in 1985-86. That is an

increase of \$6 million, or about 10 per cent. Can the Minister explain that large increase in receipts amounting to about 10 per cent (which is above the inflation rate), given the so-called freeze?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: As I understand it, the new registration fees came into effect on 15 October last year. There will be a full year effect rather than for eight or nine months, and there is an anticipated increase in registrations, which account for the increase in funds.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can the Minister clarify what he means by 'anticipated increase in registrations'?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: There is an anticipated increase in new registrations for the full year. In 1984-85 registrations amounted to \$54 355 000, and the proposed registrations for 1985-86 amount to \$58 470 000; licences amounted to \$8 621 000, and for 1985-86 the estimate is \$10 500 000; and personalised plates amounted to \$337 000, and for 1985-86 it is \$333 000 (although that figure will be impacted upon by the auction). There may not be as many people as last year seeking personalised plates. In effect, the answer to the honourable member's question is that we are seeing the full year effect of the 15 October increase, plus the expectation of an increase in new registrations.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: A short time ago the Minister answered a question in relation to concessional registration rates. During the budget speech last year the Premier indicated that that was under review and tabled a report that was prepared shortly after the budget was introduced. That report looked at concessional rates for all transport across the State. Can the Minister indicate when a decision will be made on those concessions (concessional registration for, say, primary producers), and will it be before or after the next State election?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Whether or not it comes before the next State election will depend on when the next State election is called. At this stage I do not have that information for the honourable member, as much as he and Parliament itself would like to be informed of that. Even if I wished to give it, I would not have that information, anyway.

Secondly, the timing for introduction of the concessions is in the hands of the Minister of Community Welfare, who chairs the concessions committees. It is within his responsibility to bring that submission before Cabinet. My participation in that will be as a member of Cabinet. I have to wait until the submission comes before Cabinet before I can have any involvement. So, I am unable to give the honourable member an answer. The matter should be taken up with the Minister of Community Welfare.

I will respond very briefly to a question raised earlier by the member for Davenport in relation to a decision I made on a bus operator's request from the Barossa to decrease his fares structure. I responded to that on 1 October. The reason that I said in my letter to Mr Davis that I had not supported the decrease from seven to six was that we already had supported a decrease from eight to seven. I said that I was prepared to look at decreasing it from seven times to six times, if that submission came in. I am not sure whether that submission is before the department, but I take the honourable member's point and I am prepared to look at it. We only recently approved a 6 per cent increase in the fare structure for that operator; then, immediately on getting the 6 per cent fare increase, he applied to reduce the fare structure from seven times to six times per weekly fare.

The honourable member has made the point; because he has brought it to my attention here in the Committee, so we will look at it. Frankly, I do not see any other reason for refusing that application, except that there is a standard among bus operators throughout South Australia that the

Government tends to try to maintain—that is, eight times the fare. I am not sure whether there is currently a submission from the operator before the department: if there is, we will work on it; if there is not, we will let the operator know that he should apply.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister make available a copy of the letter dated 1 October?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: We will get it photostatted now and give the honourable member a copy.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer to the special taxi subsidy scheme for disabled people, which will certainly be of great benefit to them. Looking through the budget papers I found very little information on this. I understood that the Minister had given a press release to at least some of the media, but I have not seen it. May I see the press release, if there was one? More importantly, can the Minister indicate how much money is being made available under the taxi subsidy scheme this year, the basis on which it will operate, when it will start to operate, and where in the budget lines that money comes from?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am not aware of any press release on this subject, but it is well known that the State Government is working towards the provision of a subsidised taxi service for handicapped people. In fact, a lot of the basic work was done by Mr Richard Llewellyn, the Disability Adviser to the Premier, and Mr John Hutchinson from the research development branch within the Department of Transport. It is hoped that the system will start from about 1 July 1986, so the funding would not need to be provided in the lines this year.

In any event, this matter is still being dealt with by the Premier through Mr Llewellyn. The finer points of the program as such have not been finalised. The reason it does not appear in the lines—and because it does not appear in the lines we are talking about something that is more relevant to next year's budget than to this year's—is because it is not proposed to start the scheme (if the decision is made to go ahead) until next year. We are still refining the program. I do not have any details about it at this stage. The final Cabinet decisions on funding, and so on, have not been made. As I have already said twice, it is not proposed to introduce the scheme until July next year, so it will be in the 1986-87 financial year.

Mr KLUNDER: What is the number and percentage of learner drivers who are successful at their first attempts at a practical test, and how does this percentage compare with that in previous years? I appreciate that this question may have to be taken on notice. If it is, can the Minister include the number of aged drivers who undertake practical tests each year, by age, and the percentage of those who pass each year, also by age.

Mr Collett: Looking at the monthly figures and the last figure that I have (for June 1985), the percentage in the aged area who passed their practical tests is 92.1 per cent; in the other areas it is 57.2 per cent.

Mr KLUNDER: Can I have a breakdown of those figures for aged people, by age, on notice?

Mr Collett: Yes, we can give you that on notice.

Mr KLUNDER: In view of the over-representation of young people in motor vehicle accidents, the consequent cost to the community, and the generally restrictive nature of the recent changes to the law relating to P and L plate drivers, does the Government intend to introduce any programs aimed at encouraging more responsible behaviour by young people to protect youngsters on the roads?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: This is a very important question, particularly for the Motorcycle Riders Association, because, although young people figure very highly in the statistics, the Motorcycle Riders Association considers that, if there is a requirement for young riders to be educated

and trained, there ought to be a requirement for young drivers also to be appropriately educated and trained.

Whilst it is true that there are appropriate training courses—otherwise you cannot secure your licence—nevertheless we are looking at what further education needs to be involved in the area of accidents and fatalities where young people are over-represented. The Young Driver of the Year award is designed to play a role in educating and alerting young motorcyclists and motor drivers—of course, mainly motor drivers.

I would like to provide a more complete and detailed response for the honourable member, because this is a serious question. I can confirm that the Department of Road Safety is very conscious of the points the honourable member has raised and we are trying to develop programs that would address that need. For instance, there is cooperation between the department and the Department of Education as to what programs might be appropriate in young driver education in schools.

Mr KLUNDER: I understand that drivers licences are often used for identification purposes by small business people, and I can sympathise with the Minister and his department in that drivers licences are obviously not intended for that purpose. However, drivers licences are so used, and it has been brought to my attention that people often photocopy other people's driving licences to use for identification. This is possible partly because blue is the only colour on drivers licences and when a licence has been well worn, the blue and the black are not easily distinguished, so consequently the copy often passes as an original. Can the Minister investigate the cost effectiveness of putting more and different colours on the licences so that it will become more difficult for people to use the black and white photocopy? What is the long-term possibility of photographs being included on drivers licences?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Responding to the last point first: Victoria has a photograph on the drivers licence and the other States and territories are looking at the provision of photographs. At present our Government does not have any proposal to include photographs on drivers licences, but I am certain that this matter will continue to be a subject of debate within the community, particularly as the other States and territories are moving towards this system. I am sure that eventually this Government will need to address itself to whether or not photographs on drivers licences should be the policy in South Australia.

Of course, if we had photographs on drivers licences they could be used as a form of identification. At the moment to use a driver's licence as identification can be a bit risky; nevertheless drivers licences are still used overwhelmingly as a form of identification, but as we now live in a plastic world that may change. As to the possibility of more and different colours, I will direct that to the Registrar.

Mr Collett: We are in the process of redesigning our licence form and a decision will be made on that very shortly. We will certainly take into account the question of the inks that are used in the process, because they can be easily photographed, or the whitening materials that block out typing can be used to produce a false licence and the misuse of licences. It is also a dangerous practice for businesses to use our present drivers licence as a form of identification. However, we have tightened up on the question of identification; as from 1 November any person who applies for a licence for the first time will be required to produce a birth certificate and other proof that they may need to identify themselves.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I make the point that, in a population of about 1.3 million, about 800 000 drivers licences are on issue.

Mr GUNN: The time has come for the operations at the Road Traffic Board to undergo urgent revision, and I think the time will come when it ought to be subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. On 6 September, the following letter was written to the Minister of Transport from the Coober Pedy Progress and Miners Association:

The committee of Coober Pedy Miner's Association has asked me to write to you regarding the moving of mining machinery, mounted on trucks along and across public thoroughfares within the town and to and from mining fields. The machinery causing concern are blowers... Blowers are set up to work on mining claims and remain indefinitely on site until a claim is worked out or abandoned. Occasionally, however, maintenance is required which cannot be carried out on the field and the implement has to be driven to town. Most blowers exceed the height of 14 ft and many are over the maximum of 8 ft width allowed. As these implements would average only about eight hours per year travelling on roads, they are not registered but owners obtain permits from our local police station to enable them to be moved.

It has come to our attention that these permits do not give legal cover for the implements as they are overheight and overwidth. A complicated application for a Special Permit has to be completed and this requires a weighbridge statement of weight of the vehicle. These mining implements (blowers) have been manufactured in Coober Pedy and the nearest weighbridge is in Port Augusta, over 600 kilometres south. A local manufacturer has stated that the completed unit is not more than 70 per cent of the truck carrying capacity and therefore weight is not a problem. The application has to be sent to Adelaide for assessment and it could be some weeks before the Special Permit is issued.

Currently, there is no legal means by which blowers can be moved on public roads and consequently no third party insurance cover, should an accident occur in the process of moving illegally. This situation puts an added strain on an already depressed opal industry.

The letter goes on to ask for particular action. Is the Minister in a position to state what action the department is prepared to take to alleviate these difficulties? As he occasionally visits Coober Pedy, the Minister would be aware that blowers are an integral part of the mining machinery. It appears to me that it ought to be a relatively simple matter to obtain permits on the spot. May I say that the more dealings I have with the motor traffic laws in relation to permits, the more annoyed I become, as a member of Parliament. I am of the view that the whole organisation is rather bureaucratic and in need of urgent review.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will respond to the last point first. The role and structure of the Road Traffic Board is under review by the Government. Members of the review team are from the Public Service Board, Treasury, the Department of Transport and the Commissioner of Highways office. That review has been continuing for some time. I must say that since I have become Minister of Transport the permit system has consistently been the subject of complaint and concern. Every complaint and every approach is investigated, and in fairness I should say that many of the complaints that have been raised through the Parliament and individually to me and to the department have not stood up to investigation. But that is not to say that there is not a problem.

I have had discussions with the Commercial Transport Advisory Committee and the Chairman of the Road Traffic Board. The review is independent in the sense that an officer from the department who has had no relationship with the Road Traffic Board or the permit system is involved. It is fair to say that considerable change is required. The Commercial Transport Advisory Committee that advises me on matters relating to the private commercial transport sector has indicated that it is pleased with the way in which the investigation is going. The honourable member says that, the more he sees of our permit system and the Road Traffic Board, the more he is concerned. It is true to say that the Chairman of the Road Traffic Board is concerned about the way in which the permit system is perceived to be operating at present.

The point I make is that the Road Traffic Board is the subject of a review and I imagine that the inquiry into deregulation of that unit, which is chaired by Mr Bakewell with an executive officer from my department working with him, will also advise about the operations of the board from the point of view of deregulation. I cannot respond to the specific issue raised by the honourable member, but I will seek to obtain an early reply. I am well aware of the role that the blowers play in Coober Pedy and of the difficulty in the more isolated areas for people who want to obtain permits, and we are trying to address those problems.

As the honourable member's district covers most of the State, he would understand that people come to South Australia from Broken Hill and Western Australia and the difficulty is in providing an appropriate system to enable ready access to permits when people cross into South Australia. I am aware of the system that applies in other States: I have been told that other systems allow more than our system allows. As a result of all the approaches, queries and complaints we have received in recent weeks and months, the investigation is proceeding as quickly as possible.

Mr GUNN: I thank the Minister, and I hope that, when these matters are being dealt with, a bit of common sense prevails, because it is very frustrating for people in isolated communities when they are told, 'No, you can't do this,' so they are forced to break the law. I am sure that the Minister is aware of the matter to which I now refer—the bus service from Broken Hill to Adelaide. The Minister will be aware that there has been considerable correspondence between the community at Burra and other places and me. This matter has been continuing for a fair while: people are concerned, and they find it difficult to understand why the bus that goes past their doorsteps cannot pick up children going to school. People do not want to send their children to school on the train, because they have to disembark at Keswick and then they must take a taxi. That is difficult for schoolchildren.

People in isolated communities have enough trouble educating their children without worrying about getting them on and off trains. They want to put them on the bus because it is quicker, cheaper and more comfortable. If people want to ride on trains, they should be encouraged to do so. At present, there are eight services each week from Broken Hill to Adelaide, but the licence system and the regulations that prohibit pickups along the way have long since outlived their usefulness. When will these outdated regulations be repealed?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am very well aware of the consistent and strong representations made by the honourable member on behalf of his constituents, particularly those at Peterborough and Burra, the two major areas affected by the Government's policy in relation to protection of the passenger rail service as against the bus service. Recently I approved a slackening of the policy in relation to other smaller areas which are within the honourable member's district and which are on the line between Adelaide and Broken Hill, but to this stage I have not been prepared to relax the policy in relation to Burra and Peterborough.

Many factors are involved. I am concerned about the possibility of losing the passenger service from Peterborough to Adelaide, and I am also very much aware that Australian National and the Federal Minister would grasp any excuse to stop that service. If the Federal Minister was to say that there was an adequate bus service that provides all the transport needs so that there is no need for the passenger rail service, his action could react against those in the community who want to use that passenger rail service. I am also aware that Australian National is contemplating extending the service of the Indian Pacific from Port Pirie to Adelaide and then back to Port Pirie and on to Western

Australia. Therefore, there may be a feeling that a passenger service could run from Broken Hill to Adelaide, going through Port Pirie and using standard gauge rather than changing at Peterborough and using standard gauge and broad gauge.

I have no reason to believe that that is being considered by Australian National or that it is a possibility: it is merely one of those rumours which circulate within the transport industry from time to time and which initially are rejected—but then one finds that the matter is being considered. If that is the case, Burra could lose its passenger service, because there would be a service from Peterborough to Adelaide through Crystal Brook. All those potential changes to the passenger service provided to those communities constrain me not to move too quickly at this stage. I have been prepared to relax the protection in relation to smaller communities, such as Mount Bryan and other communities where few passengers are picked up.

Mr GUNN: Will the Minister assure us that he will exempt schoolchildren? That is the problem. It is crazy that a child going to school has to be dumped off at Keswick and then take a taxi to wherever he wants to go. That takes a lot longer, particularly when children are going home. In some cases children could be dropped off right at their door. The Minister might have relaxed the situation in relation to Mount Bryan, or Whyte Yarcowie; that is good, but I hope that he will consider schoolchildren. This is a matter of great concern. The Minister would be aware that this matter has continued for a long period.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am very much aware of the problem that people are now landed at Keswick whereas previously they were landed at the Adelaide Railway Station with direct access to all services. I know that people feel isolated in regard to access to transport services. I can give the honourable member an undertaking that in the next round of considerations (there is continuing consideration, so I do not suggest something in the far future but in the near future) we will take on board the honourable member's suggestions, particularly in relation to children.

At this stage I am trying to ensure the retention of the Peterborough-Adelaide passenger service; which I believe to be directly under threat. At the same time, I want to enable people to have a choice of transport options available to them.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—State Transport Authority,
\$33 700 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. D.C. Brown

Mr R.J. Gregory

Mr G.M. Gunn

Mr K.C. Hamilton

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Mr J.K.G. Oswald

Witness:

The Hon. G.F. Keneally, Minister of Transport.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr J.D. Rump, Chairman, State Transport Authority.

Mr J.V. Brown, General Manager.

Mr I. Fitzgerald, Finance Manager.
 Mr G. McLaughlin, Budget Accountant.
 Mr K. Bengler, Financial Planning Manager.
 Mr A. Wayte, Director, North-East Busway Project.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: On 28 September the Minister announced that, having read the editorial in the *Advertiser* of 27 September (he apparently makes his decisions based on *Advertiser* editorials), he had decided to stop work on the relocation of the Grange railway station from the existing old station position to the new position across the road and off the main road on property owned by the State Transport Authority. I noticed in a newsletter, report No. 6, Henley Beach newsletter, issued by Don Ferguson, State member for Henley Beach, the following—and I find interesting the conflict that seems to be appearing between the local Labor member and Minister about this matter:

The State Transport Authority has now agreed to pay for the demolition of the existing station and the building of a retaining wall. Negotiations are to continue as to the financing of a new bus terminal adjacent to the new railway station.

He also said that meetings had been held between representatives of the Henley and Grange council, the Minister of Transport and him to work out these arrangements.

Last week on a talk-back program the Premier said that the relocation of the station would proceed. The *Weekly Times*, the local Messenger newspaper, reported on 25 September that after lengthy negotiations with council the STA had finally agreed to move the old station and build a new one. I find it incredible that the local ALP member and the Premier last week indicated that the station should be built yet we now find that the Minister, having read that editorial in the *Advertiser*, has decided not to build the new station. Will the Minister say when this work will commence? Why has he had it stopped? Is it solely because of the editorial that appeared in the *Advertiser*? How much is the resiting of the railway station expected to cost? Why does the Minister now see different circumstances from those that existed when the Premier and the local member last week gave agreement for this work to proceed?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Despite the *Advertiser's* wanting to claim that its editorial changed the Minister's view on the resiting of the Grange railway station, that is not quite how it happened. I know that the honourable member realises that that is not quite as it happened, but he will put his view as he sees fit. The Henley and Grange council has been negotiating with the State Transport Authority for at least 10 years. Indeed, I think that correspondence probably goes back further than that seeking to change the site of the Grange railway station.

The appropriate site, of course, is on STA land across the road from the existing site. In company with the member for Henley Beach, Mr Don Ferguson, I have had fruitful and friendly meetings with Mr Fred Angas, Acting Mayor of Henley and Grange and Mr Rodney Dodd. There is no doubt at all that the council strongly supports the move. Only this year have the STA and the Highways Department been able to put together the program and funding to meet the council's request.

I think that the cost to the STA will be about \$108 000. The Highways Department will have a role to play because it is looking at converting (at the request of council) that stretch of Military Road from a local road to an urban arterial road, which would mean that the Highways Department would then pick up the responsibility for maintenance and restructure of that section of road. There was a fair bit in this for the council.

There was also the safety factor in having the station across an increasingly busy road. After the decision became known, an article was printed in the local newspaper and the *Advertiser* expressing concern about this decision. My response to that was to say that we were doing this at the request of the local community. However, I want to know that it is the wish of the local community that we should go ahead. I have the word of council that they want us to do that. Council, quite properly, normally represents the view of the community. However, I wanted to be assured on that because of the nature of some of the criticisms that I have received.

Mr Fred Angas, the Acting Mayor, contacted me fairly quickly and said that they wished the change of site to go ahead. I said that we, too, would like it to proceed because we had programmed that work to take place. However, we need to be assured that what we are doing is in the interests of the local community. I also advised the local member, who had made representations to me on behalf of the council for the change of site, that I needed an assurance that this was what the community required. Those assurances were given very quickly, and the council undertook to write to me confirming them. I have advised the Chairman and the General Manager of the State Transport Authority that those assurances, those commitments from the council, will be coming to me and that those involved should continue the work.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So, now the ban that you imposed last week has been lifted.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Yes. I advised the State Transport Authority earlier this week (I am not sure whether it was Monday or Tuesday) about this matter. I certainly advised the authority last week that I was expecting correspondence from Mr Angas indicating that the work would recommence. I confirm with the Chairman of the State Transport Authority this week that the work should recommence. The people working on the site were put on to other jobs. They will be required to complete that work given to them, and I have just been informed that they will be back on site next Monday.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I want to clarify that: on Friday morning the editorial in the *Advertiser* criticised the proposed move; later on Friday the Minister put out a press release saying that he had stopped all work from proceeding; and then on Monday, after people had been shifted to other jobs, we found that the Minister had then given the go ahead for the whole project in relation of the relocation of the railway station to proceed.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I inform the Committee again that the first I knew of the concern that had been expressed was not from the editorial in Friday's newspaper. The first major story was in the Thursday newspaper, and some regional concern had been expressed. The honourable member can interpret that as he wishes. I always have regard to community concern and the rights of those in the community to express themselves, and I do not believe that local councils or Governments can ride roughshod over community expressions of concern, although obviously the honourable member believes that he can.

As a result of prevailing circumstances, I said, 'Let's stop the work.' At that stage the work had not progressed very far, and I decided that we should hold the work until we had reconfirmed that what we were doing at the request of the Henley and Grange council was in accordance with community wishes. It had been expressed in the media that what we were doing was not what the community wanted us to do. As a result of stopping that work, over the weekend Mr Angas was inundated with phone calls from concerned people in the area, asking what was happening and why had

the work stopped. These people wanted the work to recommence.

My colleague the local member has confirmed that Mr Angas's advice to me in this respect was correct. I pointed out to Mr Angas that, in view of the public nature of the controversy (perhaps a storm in a teacup), I would appreciate a letter from the council indicating its attitude and how it would like us to continue. Mr Angas kindly indicated that, if there was any criticism at all about the move, that criticism should be directed to his council, which was strongly committed to the Government's taking the necessary action.

He also knows that there are advantages in such a change of site for his council because of the work that the State Transport Authority and the Highways Department will do in his council area. As a result of that telephone call, and awaiting confirmation (I advised the State Transport Authority that that confirmation was forthcoming), I asked that the work be stopped. Those who were working on the job were immediately given other work that needed to be done and, when they have completed that interim work, they will return to the Grange railway station relocation site—on Monday I have been informed.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: If the Minister could obtain such assurances within 24 hours that the local community wanted the work to proceed, why did he not obtain that assurance before he gave official approval for the relocation to proceed? Secondly, when the Minister reversed his decision on Monday (having stopped the work on Friday), saying that it could go ahead, at that stage did the Minister make a public statement that he had again changed his mind? I suspect that the Minister may soon be nick-named the 'Stop-go' Minister, because of this 'Yes it's on, no it's off, yes it's on' approach—we have had three changes of policy in four days.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: In response, I will not bore the Committee by mentioning the Minister's reference to a nickname—which was probably unparliamentary. I point out that the quickest way to obtain a response from the community about anything is to stop the work—for a very short term. It was very effective, as the Acting Mayor of the local council involved has told me. The response that I was seeking to obtain from the community was overwhelming. The Acting Mayor has assured me of that, and I have agreed that the work should go ahead.

I see no sense in not responding to community concern. The Government is responsible to the electors of South Australia, who must be given an opportunity to express an opinion and not simply suffer from a decision taken by a Minister, a bureaucrat or a member of Parliament, if it is not what they want. If it was a sin to allow the community to respond to a local issue, first raised by the local council, then I admit that I am guilty of that sin, and I make no excuse for it.

If such a situation were to arise again in the future where I wanted to know what the thoughts of those in the local community were about a project that impacted upon their daily lives, the amenity of their area and the services that they wanted, I would again take action similar to that which I took on this occasion. The honourable member can describe it as he wishes: I describe it as democracy.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister did not answer the question. When he changed his mind again on Monday that the work should proceed, was a public statement issued to that effect?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: No, I do not know that I have put out a press statement to that effect, but I understand that the *Advertiser* has been in contact with my office and that my office advised at least one arm of the media that the work was to continue. How widely that information has been circulated, I am unaware. But, certainly I do know

that there are members of the media who have sought that information from my office and that they have been provided with that information. I am not aware of a press statement having been put out in my name, although I am fairly sure that there certainly has been media contact and that assurances have been given that the work will proceed.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the contribution by State taxpayers to the total costs of operating the State Transport Authority this year? Previously three categories have been involved: a contribution covering the deficit of the State Transport Authority; the contribution paid for concessional fares, and the contribution in any other special form. I think for the past two years there have been various loan remissions, which have been contributions by taxpayers to the State Transport Authority. What is the total figure, and what are the details for the three components of that figure this year? If I remember rightly, the projected figure for 1984-85 was \$104 million.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Because of the detailed nature of the information that the honourable member is seeking, I ask the General Manager, Mr Brown, to respond to that question.

Mr Brown: This is a little complicated because it involves taking figures from various tables.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: While the officers are getting that information, I will ask the Minister questions concerning the Wonggo Street bridge at Hallett Cove, because it is over STA property. Cabinet agreed that this bridge should be built. Did Cabinet agree to fund its construction? Is it to be constructed and, if it is to be, when? If it is not to be constructed, why not?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I do not want to be held to this, but I think there was an agreement by Cabinet that the bridge should be constructed; I would need to check that out. There was to be a contribution by the Marion council. I rather think that that is the sticking point. This matter is being handled by the Highways Department and I will ask the Highways Department officers to respond to the questions when they are before the Committee this afternoon. Mr J.V. Brown (General Manager of STA) can now respond to the earlier question that was asked by the member for Davenport.

Mr Brown: For 1985-86, the cash component is \$83 796 000; concession funds, \$19 848 000; capital works, \$33 700 000; making a total of \$137 344 000.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Previously, there was a loan remission, which was a payment from current expenditure and not capital expenditure. Will there be no loan remission or similar payment this year?

Mr Brown: This is correct. There is no loan remission for 1985-86.

Mr HAMILTON: The Committee will be aware of the impending Grand Prix, but are additional bus, rail and tram services to be provided during this exciting period for South Australia? I hope this event will be supported by all South Australians and visitors, because the program will benefit this State not just in the immediate future but in the long term. What type of additional services will be provided? STA employees have also sought this information.

Further, when will new rail cars be introduced in South Australia? They were programmed for introduction in about 1987. Albert Park railway station was recently upgraded and I was led to believe that the platform would be made to the same height as railcar doors. Unfortunately, I have been disillusioned and that has not been the case. Although the new rail cars are two years or more down the track, I am concerned that the difference in platform height will cause inconvenience to many elderly and disabled people in wheelchairs in the District of Albert Park.

Certainly, I do not want to be critical of the STA and I applaud the work that it has done. I have had nothing but good service from STA officers over the years and I was obviously mistaken about the height of the platform level, but I hope that the Minister in his reply can give me further information. Finally, I believe I know the answer to the question that has again arisen concerning the future of the Grange railway line. Given the question asked by the member for Davenport, I do not believe that the Government would be spending money on this line if it were not to be retained, but the question is constantly raised: is it true that the Grange railway line is to be abolished? I seek reassurance from the Minister on the public record, so that I can advise people within and outside my electorate that its future is guaranteed.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: There is no intention to abolish the Grange railway line. The Government has recently appointed to the STA a person who has very good experience of the needs of handicapped people. This lady (Mrs Drury) was involved in a serious accident and has been a paraplegic for some years. She will make a considerable contribution in her own right and will keep before the STA the importance of providing for seriously handicapped people. Not that the STA does not already provide for that but, as the honourable member knows, it is impossible for wheelchair people to participate in some STA services. Of course, trains are not one of those services.

In relation to the Grand Prix, some services will be affected and some services will be improved. Much study has gone into providing appropriate STA services during the Grand Prix. The construction of the Grand Prix course has had some impact on established services. For approximately one month preceding the Grand Prix (from now) until the Monday after the Grand Prix, the following bus services in the eastern suburbs will have to be detoured due to the closure of roads: route 12; route 12B (Rosslyn Park/Wattle Park); route 13 (city to Stonyfell); route 13B (city to Burnside); route 14 (city to Beaumont); route 15 (city to Glen Osmond via Portrush Road); route 820 and 821 (City to Aldgate via Somerton). Detour routes for the above services have been established to create a minimum of inconvenience to commuters. In addition, some disruption to these and other services using congested roads can be expected for a number of weeks prior to the event during the construction of the safety fences around the circuit.

The STA acknowledges that additional services have to be provided so that existing timetables can be maintained. On Grand Prix day (Sunday) services will be provided on some routes that currently do not have a Sunday a.m. service. It is our intention to widely publicise the service changes.

Mr Brown: It is proposed to operate two extra trains with maximum consists on the morning of the Grand Prix on the following lines: Gawler central; Noarlunga Centre; Outer Harbour with connecting train from Grange; Bridgewater and Belair. Those trains will be scheduled to arrive in the city between 7.15 a.m. and 7.40 a.m., and return tickets will be sold on these trips to get people home again. I will make the information about buses available. The Authority is raising the level of platforms as stations are reconstructed, but it is still limited in this endeavour because of the mix of rolling stock between freight trains and normal passenger services. Some have great overhangs; some are greater heights above the rails and curvature of the track also has some effect. Wherever we possibly can, we will improve the situation.

Mr HAMILTON: I do not believe the Albert Park railway station to be in that category in relation to overhang. However, I was led to believe that the platform would be increased in height. I appreciate its resurfacing, the instal-

lation of ramps some years ago, the lighting and the shelter—although some people say it is not big enough. I am somewhat concerned about this matter. I understand that the level was to be raised by laying brick paving. Representations have been made to me and a letter has been forwarded to the Minister. However, this does not seem to apply to the Albert Park railway station. I am somewhat bemused, because I was led unofficially to believe that the level would be raised, but it has not been done.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I hope that the General Manager can reassure the honourable member on that point.

Mr Brown: I can. My first statement was general. We are not just raising platform levels at Adelaide; we are doing it at every railway station.

Mr HAMILTON: I hope that that work will be done at Albert Park railway station, because that need has been brought to my attention. Under the previous Government, I was instrumental in having a ramp installed for people in wheelchairs. I applaud the previous Government for that very important and compassionate initiative. It is much appreciated in my district.

The Minister would be aware that in the past I have expressed concern about the level of fitness and state of health of railway employees. I am particularly concerned about railway crossing and other accidents involving employees. The program to improve the fitness level of STA employees is a tremendous initiative. How well are that program and the tests to which employees are subjected received by them and by the trade union movement? What positive responses has the STA had to it?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I ask the General Manager to respond. It is pertinent that the honourable member should raise that matter again, because only on Tuesday, I think, a death occurred between Woodville and Kilkenny. I understand investigations will reveal that it was a suicide. That is a tragedy, but the driver of the train involved can suffer considerable trauma because of a death that was caused through no fault of his own. I have previously given an undertaking that we will look at appropriate counselling, etc., in fact that is needed. Quite often, when it does not seem to be needed, it is. My experience and the honourable member's experience in railways would lead us to believe that that is the case.

Mr Brown: We have a medical officer on the staff of the authority, and he heads up an Occupational Health Service. The drivers have direct access to that medical officer when anything goes wrong, as in the case of the incident last week. We in fact go to the driver, because that is the correct thing to do.

We also have a chaplaincy service, which is available to drivers following incidents such as occurred last Tuesday. We offer these services, and the majority of employees take the opportunity to air their feelings at some stage after an incident. Following an incident, the drivers are immediately released. We go through all those issues and, although you will have to ask the unions what they think about that approach, I think you will find their answers are very favourable indeed.

Mr HAMILTON: I understand that a mobile bus is used.

Mr Brown: Yes, that is part of the Occupational Health Service we provide, and that is available to people at all times. Even with a medical officer, the chaplaincy service and the health-type service, one of the things that is very difficult to cover is the stress that these gentlemen suffer from time to time. The Minister has set up discussions between the various parties in order to research this problem, but it is not something that we can solve overnight.

Mr HAMILTON: I appreciate that. I think I should go on record as declaring my special interest, if you like, in this area, not only in terms of the trade union movement:

I have a son working as a railcar driver. Approximately an hour ago I received correspondence from Mr Graham Evans of Port Elliot, who raised the question of the Victor Harbor railway line. In that correspondence he talked about Steamranger services, the 1986 celebrations, and the fact that a jubilee train will not visit Victor Harbor. He also mentioned the 132nd birthday of the first public railway in the Colony, from Goolwa to Port Elliot, and the fact that this is one of the most scenic areas of our State and can offer 160 000 international tourists the opportunity to visit that area. However, he goes on to express concern about the State Government not exercising our State right under the Railways (Transfer Agreement) Act, and he also expresses concern about the following:

... also, for agreeing to AN's chosen arbitrator, allowing services to cease before arbitration and agreeing to the sale of 14 carriages to Victoria which have since become a major tourist attraction for that State.

How could an independent arbitrator ignore 40 excellent submissions, good signatures on petitions to Canberra, average of 112 passengers per train in the last six months of operation, and the unbelievable success of the Steamranger trips last year?

Australian National and the Federal Government still have an obligation to hand over this unique railway to South Australia in good order either as a gesture of goodwill to the people of South Australia for destroying our country railways or do it as a birthday gift to our State.

Steamranger and their huge army of volunteers have five steam engines, 30 vintage carriages and the expertise to create a permanent major tourist attraction which would make the Grand Prix a passing fantasy.

The footnote states:

Kevin, as an ex railway man, surely you can do something—time is running out. Remember, the people who want it come from marginal seats. The whole thing is the biggest scandal this State has had.

Could the Minister respond to that letter that I received in my box this morning? My understanding is that over the years the Minister has, in his previous portfolio, had discussions on this issue. It is a vexed question and a number of people have expressed a great deal of interest in the Victor Harbor line. I believe that the Government is very concerned about the matter and is trying to do its utmost to assist all concerned. I would seek a response from the Minister to send to Mr Graham Evans.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: This is not a matter strictly for the STA, but for the Department of Transport. I have been given the role by the Premier to bring together all the threads of the Victor Harbor railway proposition. I am in the process of doing that, and I hope that the Premier can make a statement on it within a reasonable time. The State Government did use all powers available to it in the arbitration process to maintain the Victor Harbor line. I believe that the arbitrator, Mr Jim Pascoe (a former commissioner of the Western Australian Government railways) did a fair job in the circumstances. It certainly was not the answer that we would wish, but under the terms of reference available to him I do not know that he had much option but to bring down the report he did.

We were certainly trying to encourage (and that is all we can do) the Federal Government to supply the funds that would enable us to provide a permanent way to Goolwa sufficiently safe to run a passenger service. We cannot run a passenger service down there, be it a commuter service or a tourist train, if the permanent way is not sound because there are problems of who is responsible for any accidents that might occur. We do not imagine that the track is in such desperate need of attention, but certainly it is in need of substantial improvement running into some millions of dollars. Those sorts of funds are not readily available to the South Australian Government.

We also need to understand just exactly what will be the operators' role and responsibilities, as well as what com-

mitment and discipline will be expected from them to run an effective tourist service. If we are going to have a service running from Adelaide to Victor Harbor, it is essential that it be an extremely good service to attract the sort of patronage that people are confident it will attract. As Minister of Transport, I am in the process of putting together all such information as a Cabinet submission. It will be going to Cabinet shortly, when the matter will be examined by the Premier and Treasurer. There are considerable costing implications that this Government will have to contemplate before any final decision is made.

The honourable member can inform his correspondent that the State Government is doing all it can reasonably be expected to do in a responsible way to evaluate the potential benefit to South Australia of the Adelaide/Victor Harbor rail service. To be brutally frank, we are not in the business of providing a service for somebody to play trains but we are in the business of providing the support—if that support is warranted—for a service that has significant economic benefits for South Australia. That is the criterion.

One has to determine that in relation to its attraction as part of a tourist package. In isolation, it would probably fall over; as part of a package it comes up somewhat better. The Government is being very responsible, as it should be, because it would use taxpayers' money in any favourable decision that it would make. However, it is still a matter for Cabinet to look at and for the Treasurer to consider.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can the Minister say what the total operating costs for the STA will be for this year?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Is that recurrent plus capital?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Just recurrent—the operating costs.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Using a round figure (and we will have a more definite figure in a moment), about \$150 million.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister just said that STA operating costs will amount to \$150 million this year. The operating cost last year, according to the Auditor-General's Report, was \$137.8 million. So, the operating cost this year is about \$12 million more than last year. Is that a fair assessment?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The actual figure is a little higher: it is \$152.4 million.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Therefore, it is about \$14 million more than last year. The Minister has already indicated that the contribution from the State Government to cover the deficit is \$83.8 million, which is almost identical to what it was last year. You have already indicated that the fare concessions—\$19.84 million—are basically the same as last year. Therefore, if operating costs increase by \$14 million (which the Minister has just indicated) and as the Minister has imposed a freeze so far on fares, obviously it is intended to very substantially increase fares immediately after an election early next year some time—to collect an extra \$14 million.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: No, the Government does not intend to implement a considerable or huge increase in fares. We have given an undertaking in relation to increased fares. In any funding of the STA we try to ensure that the authority runs as economically and as effectively as possible. It is a community service, funded by taxpayers' money.

I point out to the honourable member and to the community in South Australia that, to look at the funding of the STA or any public transport authority in isolation and compare the black with the red, one will always find an argument that public transport authorities are inefficient and a drag on taxpayers' money: that is easy to say. To evaluate the benefit of a good, effective, economical public transport system, one must look at the whole range of community advantages that such a service provides.

For instance, if one is commuting people by rail or bus, the numbers of motor vehicles that are kept off the road and the consequent benefit to the community in terms of the reduction in accidents, insurance, hospital beds, and so on is important. So, when one looks at the total cost of a transport system, one does not merely look at the red and black and then make the sort of judgment that the honourable member is seeking to make. One runs an efficient and economical service, which is essential. That is what the Government and STA are on about. Merely to judge the value of the service by the deficit is to put the cart before the horse.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am not worried about speeches—I want the facts behind the figures. Recurrent expenditure for the STA this year is \$152.4 million, and that is \$14 million more than the \$137.8 million last year. The Minister has already indicated that the contribution from the taxpayer will be \$83.8 million this year; and the contribution from the taxpayer last year was \$83.5 million to cover the operating deficit. The Minister has already told me that the fare concession this year is \$19.8 million, which is almost identical to the \$19.3 million last year.

We know what the costs are. Let us do some basic sums. A freeze has been imposed on fares so far, so the only source of revenue for the STA to cover its operating costs is, first, the fare concessions, secondly, the fares from fare paying passengers and, thirdly, what the taxpayer pays through the budget for the deficit. The Minister has told me that the contribution from the taxpayer is the same; and he has told me that the contribution for fare concessions is the same. Therefore, one must come to the automatic conclusion that either the STA is to run a \$14 million deficit (totally unfunded from the budget this year), or the contribution from fare paying passengers is going to increase by \$14 million. I want to know which of the two options it is?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I had already told the honourable member that the \$14 million that he is pointing to is not going to be recouped through increased costs to passengers in this 12-month period. That commitment has been given. The Government has been able to turn around the economy of South Australia from the disaster that the honourable member left when he was in government. In three years we have been able to return to the taxpayer some of the benefits of this improved economy. We have done that in a number of ways, including the tax rebate package of \$41 million, and the further concession in terms of electricity.

One way that we are able to return to the people of South Australia the benefit of the improved economy is to put a halt to the increases in charges. We are doing that. The honourable member wants me to say that we will do what he quite obviously would do if his Party was in government, that is, increase the charges of the STA. That might be his view, and he is welcome to it. If he wants to go out and say that that is what he would do if he was Minister of Transport at some future time, it is okay for him to say it. I am saying that the Premier has already advised the community of South Australia about our policy, and I am not going to add anything to that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Mr Chairman, you said earlier today that Estimates Committees were about getting facts and figures on the various budgets. The Minister has already laid out certain facts, so we are aware of the only area that the Minister has not given details on. Can the Minister, from the budget estimates, give the projected revenue to be taken from fare paying passengers (not including concessional paying passengers)? It is quite obvious that the only sources of income for the STA are concessional fares paid by the State Government, the contribution from consolidated revenue to pay the operating deficit of the STA, and

from the fare paying passengers. We have covered two of those areas. On the other side of the ledger, the Minister has said that this year the operating costs of the STA will increase by \$14 million to \$152.4 million. The only way that can be funded is from the three sources that I have mentioned.

The only area not spelt out by the Minister in that funding is the amount coming from fare paying passengers. The only answer is that there will be a totally unfunded \$14 million deficit for the STA, or that fares will be increased to raise the extra \$14 million. Obviously, the increase will come after the State election, if the Government is returned to office (but I do not believe that will be the case). Alternatively, there will be a smart move to transfer the capital side of the budget across to the revenue side to cover that extra \$14 million.

The Committee deserves to know the full details of how much revenue will be collected this financial year from fare paying passengers, and whether the Government has any intention whatsoever to increase fares. I seek a clear answer from the Minister: is there any intention to increase fares for fare paying passengers before 30 June 1986 and, if so, what is the projected increase in those fares before that date?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The honourable member is making the same accounting mistake that he was making between cash and non cash items when he raised a similar issue in Parliament recently, and he is focusing on the further Treasury appropriation of \$40 million. I will ask Mr Fitzgerald to explain to the Committee in accounting language the resolution of the problem the honourable member foresees.

Mr Fitzgerald: The accounting deficit for the STA is projected for 1985-86 to be in the order of \$97 million, which compares with the deficit in 1984-85 of something like \$83 million; that is a variation of \$14 million. The \$83 million figure is basically repeated in 1985-86, as it is the cash figure that the State Treasury will be providing to the authority on its recurrent account. That \$83 million makes allowance for an additional \$826 000 to be provided from fare paying passengers. The difference between the accounting deficit for the STA in 1985-86 of \$97 million and the cash allocation of \$83 million for 1985-86 are the non cash items which Treasury do not fund and they comprise depreciation, amortisation of our leased buses and rail cars, and also the capital portion of our lease commitments.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The other part of the question was: in working out the budget for the STA for this year is there any intention to increase fares before 30 June 1986? If so, when will that fare increase occur and what would be the size of it?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: There has been no allowance in the papers put before the Parliament for an increase in those fares in this financial year. Of course, that is normal practice. The honourable member is looking for an assurance from me that I have already given him twice.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the anticipated projected revenue for the State Transport Authority for 1985-86?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The expected revenue for this financial year is \$55 406 000, and that includes South Australian Government reimbursement.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is an increase of \$8.5 million.

Mr HAMILTON: I take a point of order, Mr Chairman. I believe that the Chair has been more than generous regarding the line of questioning adopted by the Opposition. There has been no request for supplementary questions. We have sat here and listened to at least half a dozen supplementary questions from the member for Davenport. I believe that you, Sir, have been more than fair as have members on this

side. I think that members on this side should be given the opportunity to ask questions.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I also take a point of order and point out that the honourable member took half an hour to ask his questions, but so far I have taken only 15 minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair will not take a point of order at this time. For the past fortnight the Chair has endeavoured to give some flexibility. Obviously, the honourable member has grabbed on to something that he thinks is important and the Chair is allowing him to pursue that line. I point out to members on both sides that the Chair is still very doubtful about whether the Sessional Orders envisaged that we would go into such a personal involvement, but nevertheless we will continue. I call on the member for Davenport.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I point out that, according to the Minister's figures, anticipated revenue from fare paying passengers this year will be \$8 million more than that received last year. The Minister has already said that concessional fares will not increase and he has given an undertaking that there will be no increase in fares. How does he anticipate collecting \$8 million extra in fare revenue? That is a very substantial increase in fare revenue. If the Minister has any doubts, I point out that it is an increase of 25 per cent to 30 per cent.

If the Minister suggests that that will be achieved by increasing the number of passengers, I cite the record for past years. In 1983-84, there were 69.6 million STA passengers, and the number decreased by 5 million in 1984-85 to 64.7 million. The Minister has cited figures that can only be interpreted as indicating that there must be either an increase in fares to achieve the extra \$8 million or a miraculous change in the number of fare paying passengers, because there has been a decline of 5 000 in the number of passengers from 1983-84 to 1984-85, or 17 per cent to 18 per cent. Even if the number of fare paying passengers remains the same as for last year, the Minister could only hope to collect the same revenue as last year—\$47.6 million—but he has come up with an extra \$8 million. I cannot work out where the extra \$8 million will come from.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: If the honourable member asked questions rather than jumping to conclusions, he would be provided with the information and he would not have to make long speeches and make himself look so incompetent in relation to his reading of the financial documents. The Chairman of the State Transport Authority will take the honourable member slowly through that \$55.6 million so that he can understand that he is completely on the wrong horse. If the honourable member had asked appropriate questions earlier, he would understand how the income is made up.

Mr Rump: In 1984-85 \$28.445 million was collected for traffic receipts. This year we are budgeting for \$29.271 million, an increase of only \$826 000 in traffic receipts. There will be a small increase in Roadliner income, and the Government reimbursement is \$19.848 million, an increase of \$718 000. In property and advertising there is an increase of just over \$500 000. With slight adjustments in transit rights and sundry receipts and interest on investments going down, we finish up this year with a total income budget of \$272 000 less than the total income last year.

In property and advertising there is an increase of just over \$500 000. With slight adjustments in transit rights and sundry receipts and interest on investments going down, we finish up this year with a total income budget of \$272 000 less than the total income last year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer the Minister to page 468 of the Auditor-General's Report, which says that total traffic receipts for the last financial year were \$47.6 million.

Mr Rump: That is the total of traffic receipts of \$28.45 million and Government reimbursements of \$19.13 million.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I understand that fully. However, you have said that traffic receipts this year will be \$55.5 million.

Mr Rump: No.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Where is the other \$8 million income coming from?

Mr Rump: There is \$2 million from property and advertising, \$773 000 from catering and trading, \$2.1 million from transit rights, \$271 000 of sundry receipts, \$280 000 for interest on investments, and \$852 000 for Roadliner.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can it be clearly spelt out to me (and I am willing to look at the figures in detail) where the \$8 million extra will come from. So far, you have indicated only \$700 000 of the \$8 million coming from fare concessions.

Mr Rump: It is coming from Treasury.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: With respect, it is not, because the Treasury figure is almost identical to what it was last year. I again refer you to the Auditor-General's Report. I have been given those figures from Treasury—figures that I have already read out to the Committee several times. If there is some extra payment from Treasury that has not been accounted for or mentioned so far, I accept that my calculations are wrong.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: On page 138 of the Estimates of Payments there is provision for an increase of \$7.3 million under the miscellaneous line.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can I clarify a point? The Auditor-General's Report shows (and perhaps he has included other figures that you have not included) a figure for last year of \$83.4 million. Is there an extra payment taken out of the lump sum payment for salaries that has not been included in the figure which you have covered and which will come from Consolidated Account? It may be that there is a further payment to come from Treasury from the lump sum payment provided for salary increases during the year.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: As the honourable member knows, having been a Minister, no provisions are made in the accounts for additional salaries, etc. that is all included in the round sum amount which is allocated by the Treasurer at the appropriate time. The answer to the honourable member's question is 'No', there is not in these figures a round sum allowance for salaries.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That might explain the difference because, when talking about how much is coming from Consolidated Account, you have given me a figure of \$83.8 million. Perhaps the \$7.3 million that we have not been able to account for is to come in the lump sum payments for salary increases. I still have not found where that extra payment is coming from.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: My officers cannot identify this shortfall that the member for Davenport feels that he has found in the figures. My officers have clearly indicated that the accounts are accurate and that they do balance: in fact, they match those in the Auditor-General's Report. The difficulty is that the honourable member is comparing apples with oranges rather than apples with apples. I am quite happy for the honourable member to talk to the State Transport Authority accounting people later—because we just do not have the time to do so here today. The honourable member can go through his concerns and have explained to him quite fully the import of these various figures that are included in our accounts. My officers cannot understand what the honourable member is trying to get at. They are not aware of this shortfall that he envisages.

The CHAIRMAN: At this stage I ought to point out that in my opinion the Chair has been very lenient with the

member for Davenport. The honourable member has repeated a question at least 10 times: at this point I do not believe that, even if he repeats it another 10 times, the officers at the table will be able to satisfy him. I suggest that we go on to another question. If the honourable member remains unsatisfied, I am sure that the services of the departmental officers can be made available to the member for Davenport, at which time the differences of opinion can be sorted out.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I accept that. I ask the Minister whether or not I can meet briefly with the departmental officers at 1 p.m. in order to clarify some of these points. The Auditor-General's Report has referred to a figure of \$83.5 million, which I understand has been increased to \$83.8 million this year. We can discuss this matter at 1 p.m.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I am quite happy for the honourable member to discuss this matter with the officers of the State Transport Authority.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair appreciates that. I realise that the member for Davenport is entitled to be satisfied in relation to questions asked in the Committee, although I do not think that we should become bogged down in the manner that has occurred. On that basis, following the luncheon adjournment I will call the member for Florey first.

[Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2 p.m.]

Membership:

Mr Trainer substituted for Mr Klunder.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe that the member for Davenport wants to clarify the position that arose before lunch.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: During the lunch adjournment I had the chance to meet with STA officers and I thank them for that. We were talking of a difference of \$8 million and I acknowledge that a small amount of that was taken up with other sorts of income. It appears the difference has been that a cash carryover of \$3.05 million in cash at the end of last financial year was not reflected and not shown in the budget papers presented to Parliament. Therefore, the situation was \$3.05 million better last year than anticipated and better than reported to Parliament.

That has been carried over into this financial year which has, therefore, an improved position of \$3.05 million, and this accounts for a \$6.1 million better financial position. Basically the same carryover from one year to the next has occurred with the Highways Fund as commented on by the Auditor-General at the beginning of his report this year. This tends to distort the accounts and, whilst I was assuming that we had been given a fair and accurate reflection of the operating costs of the STA for last year, in the Auditor-General's Report that was not the case. In fact, the operating costs were \$3 million less than that. If one puts together the two figures, one gets \$6.1 million, which largely accounts for the difference.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I assure the member that the \$3 million to which he refers was well known to the Auditor-General and that the Auditor-General has audited the accounts and has reported to Parliament. The member is now trying to sustain an argument that the STA did not produce to the Auditor-General or Parliament its full accounts. Somehow the member is trying to suggest that the Auditor-General either has had the wool pulled over his eyes or is not competent enough to be able accurately to audit STA accounts. I reject both of those propositions.

I am pleased that the member has had the opportunity to meet with STA officers during the lunch break and that this matter of a shortfall of \$8 million has been explained. The apparent shortfall (in the member's perception) has

been explained to his satisfaction—there is not such a shortfall and it is merely a misreading of the accounts on his part. I reject totally, in clarifying this matter, that the STA has not reported accurately to Parliament, that the STA has not reported fully to the Auditor-General or that the Auditor-General has not accurately audited the books.

Mr GREGORY: First, in passing, I point out that the member for Davenport had more than 34 minutes devoted to his last series of questions.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Estimates Committees are basically for the Opposition, as we are all aware.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr OSWALD: We can go after dinner.

Mr GREGORY: We will if you want to. That is all right. We will have you on and stay here. Do not go nicking off as you have in the past. There have been some problems with security and, at page 76, I note an allocation of almost \$800 000 for security. I suppose that is security for property as well as security of operators. How is that money being spent? What is the difference between the amount of money being spent on the security staff?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The STA employs a number of constables. The figure in the employment levels show that that is proposed to be 19 in 1985-86. The role of these constables is to maintain a security service for STA property, but also to ensure that staff and customers of the STA are protected; that they are not injured or attacked whilst on STA property either as passengers on one of the various services or in any other context.

Everyone would agree that the STA constables need the assistance of the civil police in ordinary circumstances where they need to be involved. There is very close cooperation between those two arms of the security forces. It is not always possible for the police to get to a situation as quickly as we would like. In those circumstances the STA has access to its own police constables. A committee has been established by the STA to look at security and how it can be better applied. We have a situation facing the Government that needs to be addressed in the fairly short term. The STA will continue to be the owner of the railway station. However, with the building of the casino, the international hotel and the convention centre there will be thousands and, hopefully, tens of thousands, of people moving around the area.

To date the civil police have not had a significant role to play. It is agreed between those people who constitute this committee that it is appropriate for the civil police to be involved at the Adelaide railway station complex to provide the policing necessary to maintain law and order. That does not mean that there is no role for the STA constables in assisting with property, and the protection of staff and passengers. That figure covers the protection of staff and passengers, as well as property. There are three responsibilities.

Mr GREGORY: What is the current bus replacement program? Has the MAN contract been finalised? How far is the STA into the contract for supply of Mercedes buses for O-Bahn? What is planned following those two contracts?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: As at 31 July 1985, 41 new rigid buses and one new articulated bus were delivered as part of a contract for the supply of 92 Mercedes Benz buses for use on the north-east busway. An additional 14 MAN articulated buses are on order to replace the older buses operated by the authority. The first will go into service late in 1986. The MAN buses, costing approximately \$10 million, have been financed under a grant from the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Trust Fund. The cost of the 92 Mercedes O-Bahn buses is \$23 million.

Mr GREGORY: What is the timetable for introduction of the O-Bahn service to Darley Road ford? What is the

anticipated running-in period and the cost of running in the system?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: It is anticipated that the official opening of the O-Bahn will be on 9 March. Construction work will be finished later this year. There will be a period of running in which will involve the community, so that we can build up appropriate customer demand by the official opening date.

Mr Wayte: The opening date is 9 March. We expect to have the civil works on the busway completed by the end of this year. We intend to use the intervening period for training, trial purposes and also for trial and demonstration runs for the public. That will give us a running-in period. Also, buses have been operating on normal streets since early this year as they come into service, giving a considerable amount of experience on those roads.

Mr GREGORY: What does the training program involve?

Mr Brown: It will take about 67 man days to cover all bus drivers. It will take a couple of months to train the different operators on that facility. I will work it out for the honourable member.

Mr GREGORY: That is about three months.

Mr Brown: It is an equivalent of that time, starting immediately after the Grand Prix weekend.

Mr GREGORY: Will all bus drivers be trained on the O-Bahn?

Mr Brown: All those who are likely to drive on the O-Bahn will be trained.

Mr ASHENDEN: I want to lay to rest a nonsense that the Minister was reported to have said in the *Leader Messenger* about the reason for delays in the construction of the O-Bahn. I make clear that the Government is very much at fault in respect of delays in construction. When it came into power it set in motion another review to determine what it would do about O-Bahn: took months and months. There was no necessity for it; it was a political exercise and only proved what we in Government had been able to tell the Opposition at the time: not only was it viable, but also it was one of the world's leading transport systems.

At long last the Government has recognised it. We now have the Premier and the Minister in the north-eastern suburbs saying it was their idea, their baby and, 'Aren't we clever?' The O-Bahn is there because of a Liberal Government initiative. It has been severely delayed because of actions of the Labor Government. I assure the Minister that residents of the north-eastern suburbs are well aware of problems since the change in Government. Where will the O-Bahn buses be entering North East Road? As the Minister would be aware, as far as the guide-way is concerned, the service will be terminating at Darley Road. I do not mean that that is where passengers have to get off, but the busway use will terminate at Darley Road. When buses enter Darley Road and go on to follow routes 540, 541, 542 and so on, they will have to somehow get from Darley Road on to North East Road. I have heard various rumours in that area and I have spoken to the council concerned. A number of options have either been considered, or have been put forward as to just where the O-Bahn buses will enter North East Road. Could the Minister tell me what the plans are?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will ask Mr Wayte to respond to the technical aspects of that question, but I want to respond to the political part. For some 12 months, and certainly as Minister for a couple of months, I have been listening to the rantings and the ravings of the honourable member in Parliament and on every other occasion he can find. I would like to tell this Committee that the man obviously is a fool or a knave. If he is a fool, I can understand that, because that is generally what people might regard him as.

The previous Government made a decision and he ought to know that. The decision was made on the basis of the report of the Budget Review Committee of which the member for Kavel, the member for Davenport and the Hon. Mr Griffin were part. Based on the financial advice that they received, in August 1982 they said they could not construct the O-Bahn before the end of 1986. That is quite clearly documented, and yet the honourable member goes to his electorate almost daily and tries to convince his electors that his Party in Government had a commitment to finish before 1986.

Mr ASHENDEN: In 1986—get your facts right.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The Budget Review Committee reported to the Liberal Government at the time that it was still in office in 1982 that the O-Bahn would not be finished before the end of 1986. That was as far as they were prepared to go at that time, but when we came to office later we discovered the reason why. The Minister of Transport at the time, the Hon. Michael Wilson, who sought to have it completed before the end of 1986, and in mid-1985 if he could, had programmed expenditure in 1982-83 of \$29.5 million. The Treasury allocation was \$12.5 million. In the one year that the honourable member's Party—

Mr ASHENDEN: That is absolute nonsense.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: In the one year that the honourable member's Party—

Mr ASHENDEN: That is typical of the mistruths that this Government has put forward about this matter. We said that it would be completed in 1986—never anything else.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The Liberal Party had to put into effect a funding program of considerable proportions to be able to build the O-Bahn in the four to five years that it had originally planned. In fact, the 1982-83 program that had been arranged by the honourable member's colleague, the member for Torrens, was \$29.5 million and the allocation was \$12.5 million. In the first year, the one year that it was in control of this program, it reduced the expenditure from what was expected to what was funded by \$17 million, which had to go on to previous funding years.

In fact, the documents available to me as Minister clearly indicate the reason for this is that the Budget Review Committee understood the very serious financial difficulties faced by the State in those years, because it said that, owing to the limitations on funding in 1982-83 and 1983-84, there was no expectation that the O-Bahn could be finished before the end of 1986. I have already pointed to the decrease in the funding provided in that one year.

My Party then came to office and we immediately reviewed the funding required, and also the program. Realistically, we extended it to 1988, because of the very difficult financial situation faced by the State. The member for Todd can say what he likes, but the fact is that we inherited a situation where the necessary funding could not be provided. In fact, the previous Government was not going to do that, because the budget review committee had already made that decision.

Mr ASHENDEN: Tell the truth for once.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The honourable member is quite hysterical about it. It is the old story where, if you give a person enough rope, he will hang himself. The honourable member has been running around saying these things for 12 months and assuming that no-one will rebut them, despite the fact that documentation from within the department (documentation of his own Minister when in Government) clearly shows that what he is saying is not the truth; but that does not worry him at all. I will deal with political

matters as much as he wants to raise them. As to the factual part of the question, I will ask Mr Wayte to respond to those matters.

Mr Ashenden interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Wayte: As to where buses will enter North-East Road after exiting the busway at Darley Road, the intention is that they will enter North-East Road at the Sudholz Road intersection. To facilitate that, the Highways Department will make adjustments to the Sudholz Road approach to provide a 'bus only' lane with suitable modifications to the signalling to provide a signal phase for buses to turn right.

Mr ASHENDEN: I am delighted to hear that, as it is easily the best of the solutions I had heard were being considered, and it overcomes the problem of one alternative being looked at, namely, to take it through a suburban street away from that intersection. I know the problems that are there but I am pleased that that decision has been taken because, certainly from my observations and from the way people have been talking out there, that solution will meet with the least disruption to traffic and to the people living out there. Before I take up the second question, I must respond to some of the comments made by the Minister. I challenge the Minister to find anywhere—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair is not going to put up much longer with this type of debate.

Mr ASHENDEN: It is on the lines.

The CHAIRMAN: The point is that this Committee is supposed to be asking questions of the Minister and seeking information of the Minister based on a line. The only time a member of the Committee is afforded the opportunity to make a statement such as the one the honourable member seeks to make is at the beginning of the proceedings, when the Chairman invariably asks the lead speaker for the Opposition if he wishes to make a statement. I would appreciate very much if the honourable member would get back to asking questions instead of making statements.

Mr ASHENDEN: Why does the Minister persist in telling untruths about statements that he alleges I have made? That is a question, Sir. I ask the Minister to find anywhere in *Hansard* or in any public statements that I have ever made anything indicating that we would not have completed the O-Bahn to Tea Tree Plaza by 1986. The Minister admitted in his diatribe that 1986 was the year that a Liberal Government would have completed O-Bahn through to Tea Tree Plaza. His Government is not completing it until 1988. I rest my case.

The Minister himself said many times that the plans of the Liberal Government were to complete the O-Bahn by the end of 1986. I ask the Minister to name anywhere in *Hansard* or on the public record where I have said anything but that completion to Tea Tree Plaza by 1986 was Liberal policy.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair points out that, if that is not an invitation for the Minister to give the honourable member the greatest broadside ever, the Chair does not know what it is. I have no intention of allowing this type of debate to go on. I ask the Minister to consider not replying, as it is not a question.

Mr ASHENDEN: Yes, it is: I want the Minister to name where I have said anything but 1986.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I can answer in this way: I did not say that the honourable member had said anything other than that Liberal policy was that the O-Bahn would be completed by 1986. That is certainly the public policy of the Liberal Party. I was telling the honourable member that in Government his Party had made decisions that would have ensured that it could not be finished before 1986.

In fact, the committee of which the member for Davenport was a member made the recommendation to Govern-

ment that, given the pressure on funds in 1982-83 and 1983-84, the construction of O-Bahn should proceed in the knowledge that it could not be completed before the end of 1986: that is clear.

I have also pointed out that in the only year in which the Liberal Party was in government, when it could provide the funding for O-Bahn, it reduced it from \$29.5 million, which was designed to complete the project before 1986, to \$12.5 million. That meant that there was a \$17 million shortfall in the first major year of construction in which the Liberal Party was in control of the Treasury so as to make that decision. I have not said that the member for Todd has ever suggested that it was his Party's policy to complete the O-Bahn in any year but 1986; I am telling the member for Todd that, despite the fact that that was his Party's policy, in practice, it had already made decisions in 1982 to extend the construction phase of the O-Bahn beyond the end of 1986: that is clear.

Mr ASHENDEN: Will the alteration to routes 541 and 542 still be taken at the same time as the commencement of the O-Bahn service? Officers from the STA visited the city of Tea Tree Gully some months ago to discuss planned changes to some bus routes. One of those planned changes was to terminate neither route 541 or route 542 in the true sense of the word, in that route 541 would continue on a return journey following route 542, and route 542 would continue its journey by coming through route 541, which would in effect double the number of services available to residents of Tea Tree Gully, Ridgehaven, Redwood Park, Surrey Downs, Fairview Park and Banksia Park. This was pushed by the then member for Newland (Dr Brian Billard) and me when we were in government. Will this still occur and will it be undertaken when O-Bahn commences? Will route 541 still be changed, in that it will follow Hancock Road down to Smart Road and then to Tea Tree Plaza?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I believe that that will still be the case. I ask Mr Wayte to respond more fully to the question.

Mr Wayte: I understand that the STA has completed the planning and scheduling of the routes in that area and that the linking of routes 541 and 542 to form a loop to Fairview Park is still part of that system.

Mr ASHENDEN: Will route 541 still be changed to go along Hancock Road and down Smart Road?

Mr Wayte: Yes.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to page 66 of the yellow book, relating to the resignalling of the metropolitan area within the 1985-86 specific targets and objectives. What progress has been made in relation to resignalling? How much has been spent this financial year on that project? What impact will it have on the services themselves? Will it mean, as I would envisage, that there will be greater safety? Will it contribute to a reduction in the timetable or in the time taken from point A to point B? What impact will it have on the signalling staff? What agreement has been reached with the Australian Railways Union in relation to the retraining or otherwise of those signalling staff who are surplus to requirements? How many employees will be displaced from that classification?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I would like to answer that question but I cannot because I think a lot of the detail will have to be taken on notice. Certainly, the General Manager can respond to some of the technical matters that have been raised by the member.

Mr Brown: During the 1985-86 financial year, \$11.78 million will be spent on the project. The reduction in timetables will have no effect on the timetables themselves. The improvements will relate to safety and reliability. The signalling staff will be housed in the new train control centre building in the Adelaide yards just west of the Morphett

Street bridge. Once the project is completed in 1987 or thereabouts, there will be about 20 to 22 signalmen (I cannot give the exact figure, because it is still subject to negotiations with the union involved) required to operate the new route signalling system.

I do not know how many signalmen will be displaced (I think that was the word used), but I will take that question on notice. Agreements with the unions and our dealings with them are being carried out in terms of the Government's guidelines for technological change. Many meetings have been held with the unions over the past couple of years, and agreement has really been reached on the equipment content of the new train control centre.

Mr HAMILTON: I know that negotiations with the unions is a very delicate area. I can understand the impact of alterations on the work force in the railway industry. Members know that I spent some 24½ years in that industry; naturally enough, I retain an interest in that area. Despite the ridicule from members opposite, it is very important to try and obtain as much information from the Government for the unions. That is certainly no reflection on the government of the day or the Minister because, quite clearly, the response that I have received from a number of the railway unions indicates that they hold the Minister in high esteem. In relation to the State Transport Authority, my concern and I believe that of my colleagues on this side of the House is in terms of privatisation. What impact does the Minister see in relation to privatisation of the STA Roadliners and other profitable parts—

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: A point of order, Mr Chairman. It is one thing to ask a question like that during Question Time. However, this is the Estimates Committee, and that matter has nothing to do with either present Government policy or budget Estimates.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair finds the point of order rather peculiar coming from the member for Davenport. Nevertheless, the Chair upholds the point of order. I point out to the member for Davenport that I hope Government members do not take a point of order on him directly, because I will also uphold that.

Mr HAMILTON: Perhaps I can rephrase the question. What would be the impact of the sale of the STA Roadliners, the Adelaide cake stall (and I find it rather surprising that some people would want to sell it off) and other profitable parts of the State Transport Authority to private enterprise? It is my belief that this would have a considerable impact on the community of South Australia. We hear a great deal from our political opponents in relation to State Transport Authority losses. The Liberal Party is prepared to allow the community to pick up the losses, while selling off the profitable parts of the State Transport Authority. What impact would the sale of these profitable parts of the State Transport Authority have on the budget?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Point of order, Mr Chairman. That is exactly the same question that you have just ruled out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order. The member is literally rephrasing the same question, but I point out that the member for Davenport may be the loser on this issue—I do not know.

Mr HAMILTON: In relation to the ticket validating equipment referred to on page 66 of the yellow book, how will that equipment be used and what progress has been made?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The State Transport Authority has entered into a contract with Crouzet of France to provide new ticketing equipment for the authority's trams, buses and trains. Our public transport system is probably one of very few in the world that has those three elements involved in the one authority. The new system will use

magnetic tickets, which are designed to reduce fare evasion and provide an opportunity to use a greater range of tickets.

Fare evasion was one of the factors that encouraged the STA to go into the new ticketing system; also, it reduces the potential for confrontation between authority staff and consumers. This innovation is going through the process of extensive discussion with the unions and sufficient agreement has been reached for us to enter into a contract; however, there are outstanding issues relating to the actual use of the equipment that must be discussed between the authority and the unions concerned. Everybody wants to come up with a system that provides for more effective ticketing and reduces or does away with the potential for confrontation between the authority officers and the customer but is readily understood by the community. The whole idea of the new ticketing system is to have a more efficient system that returns a better dividend to the State Transport Authority.

The specific answer is: whereas contracts have been entered into, the system will not be operational until about the end of 1987. At least 30 per cent of the new system will be made in South Australia, so there will be significant South Australian input. Again, the discussions between the authority, the unions and other bodies are in line with the Government's policy on the introduction of new technology. That is the basis for the discussions with the unions.

Mr HAMILTON: How many STA Roadliners are there in South Australia, and what contribution do they make to the STA budget, in terms of profitability? Will the Minister also advise what other profitable areas of the STA contribute to a reduction in the deficit of the STA? If the Minister does not have all that information, I would appreciate it before 18 October.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will have to take that question on notice. Twelve Roadliner buses currently operate in the service and there are a number of agencies at the Adelaide Railway Station. Lessees and concessions operate in the Adelaide Railway Station precincts, but at present they are under considerable stress because of the construction program that is taking place there. We intend to continue the current system and we have no intention of changing it. Those facilities that are owned and run by the STA will continue in that way and the concessions will also continue. It will be more appropriate to wait until the end of a full year's operations in the new precincts to obtain a better appreciation of the proceeds, but in the past those facilities have been very profitable and I expect that both the concessions and the licences at the Adelaide Railway Station will be more profitable in the future as there will be more people in the area and more competition.

Mr HAMILTON: How many shops will be situated in the tunnel?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Nine shops will be constructed in the underpass, and they will all be concession premises.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What work (and at what cost) has been carried out at the Hackney bus depot since the beginning of this year? What is the nature of that work in terms of capital improvements, even if it is of a minor nature?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The STA Chairman has informed me that, as the STA will occupy that site for another three years, essential works must be carried out, and about \$200 000 has been spent. The details are not available, but I will obtain them for the honourable member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I know that some work has been carried out: the underground work pit has been extended; the facility for washing articulated buses has been extended; and the car parking area for bicycles and motorbikes has been replaced—the bitumen surface has been replaced with concrete. That seems to be unusual, as the

STA is about to move out of those premises; perhaps you wanted to create jobs for the demolition industry. Those three jobs have been carried out this year. What other work has been carried out and what is the cost of each job?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will obtain that information for the honourable member. Only essential work has been done; until the Government made a decision as to where the new bus depot should be sited it was appropriate and responsible for the State Transport Authority to continue its practice of providing essential improvements. The Government having made the decision when it did, it is now imperative that the State Transport Authority look at what works are absolutely required for its proposed three year stay at Hackney.

Of course, it has to look at the new site as well, and the funding required there. I will get that information for the honourable member. If the implication in the question was that responsible expenditure should not have been undertaken by the STA prior to the decision of the Government (and the STA would not have been aware of when the decision would be made), then that expenditure was reasonable and responsible.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Hills State Transport Authority study was carried out in the Stirling/Algate/Bridgewater area. I attended a number of meetings in relation to this matter as one of the local members of Parliament. It was indicated at a public meeting that a proposal had been put to the unions by the State Transport Authority that there should be interchangeability of tickets between private bus operators in the area and the State Transport Authority, so that people would be able to travel, say, on Briscoes, which operates through to Mount Barker, and at Bridgewater or Aldgate transfer to an STA service.

What has been the union response to the request put to it by the STA to allow the interchangeability of STA tickets with private bus tickets and private bus tickets on STA services? Will the Minister indicate whether and when they are likely to accept or adopt that recommendation?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The STA has been reviewing public transport services in the Stirling hills since 1983 in conjunction with the licensed private operators in the area (Briscoes and Johnsons) and representatives of the local community—the committee that is representative of those interests. The review has included detailed surveys both of public transport vehicles and a random selection of households to assist in determining public transport demands.

I understand that my predecessor considered some recommendations, and that it was on the basis of those recommendations that he made the announcement that the Bridgewater rail service would continue. The authority is considering alternative bus services for the area now that that rail decision has been made. The unions which operate these services for the STA are concerned about the interchangeability of tickets. That subject is under discussion.

I have been Minister of Transport for only a short time and there is a whole host of matters that I am considering discussing: this is one of them. I have not had a formal meeting specifically on this issue, but it is one of a number of issues raised with me about which I will be seeking to have discussions with appropriate unions. At this stage I have had no formal advice from the unions as to their view: I know that they have expressed in general terms a concern and that they wish to initiate discussions with me on that subject.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: For the purposes of clarification, I point out that a request was put to the unions about eight or nine months ago, so I would hope that a response would have been received by now. If there has been no response, will the Minister let me know when there is a response from the unions?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I can certainly check with the unions. I would want to talk with the unions myself: the honourable member was formerly a Minister and he would understand that it is important that new Ministers sit down with the new unions and discuss matters that are sensitive or of concern. I want to do that. I am more concerned about discussions that I am able to have with unions as to discussions that may have gone on in the past. I will certainly have a look at what my predecessor was able to agree to or arrange with the unions. Frankly, I am unaware of the situation at the moment, but I will certainly look at the matter.

Mr ASHENDEN: I refer again to a matter pertaining to the commencement of the O-Bahn bus service. Has any consideration been given to the difficulty that buses following routes 550, 551 and 552 will experience in turning right from the Lower North East Road into Darley Road? At the moment there is no right-turn phase at the traffic lights, and even now when there are no buses making right-hand turns there can be a very long queue of vehicles at that intersection. I imagine that this would have a very serious effect on buses, unless a right-hand turn—

Mr GREGORY: This is not related to a line of expenditure.

Mr ASHENDEN: Of course this is related to a line of expenditure—I am referring to the STA lines.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr ASHENDEN: This will involve expenditure, and I am asking whether a right-hand turn phase will be introduced into traffic lights at the intersection and, if not, what arrangements are being made to ensure that buses can execute a right-hand turn easily.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: My advice is that currently there is no proposal to do what the honourable member has suggested.

Mr ASHENDEN: Is there any proposal in relation to enabling buses to execute a right-hand turn easily there? If the situation remains as it is at present, traffic at that intersection will be delayed by many minutes. Even now, cars waiting to turn right at that intersection are delayed for a considerable time.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I ask Mr Wayte to respond to that.

Mr Wayte: As the Minister has said, currently it is not intended to change the single phasing arrangement at that intersection. This is not considered to be as severe a problem as the one which the honourable member raised previously in relation to the North East Road. Our assessment at this stage is that, while there will be delays as vehicles come out to make a right-hand turn at that intersection, the delays will not be inordinate.

Mr ASHENDEN: When will the articulated buses be operating on the O-Bahn route? I notice that at the moment many busway buses are operating, but I have seen only one articulated bus. When will the articulated buses come into operation on the north-eastern routes?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The articulated buses are coming off the assembly line now. I am advised that they will be fed straight into the system.

Before the Committee moves off this line, I want to make a further response to a question asked by the member for Davenport earlier, in relation to which I suggested that it might be more appropriate to deal with it under the Highways Department lines, although I now find that this matter is not really a Highways Department matter at all and that it should be dealt with now. I am referring to the Wonggo Street, Hallett Cove, question. It is true that Cabinet took a decision back in December 1984 to support the construction of the Wonggo Street bridge over the railway crossing. Cabinet approval was based on an approach that would be

made to Marion council to negotiate some funding agreements.

My predecessor contacted Marion council and indicated that Cabinet had approved the concept of the construction of the overpass at Wonggo Street but suggested to the council action that it might contemplate in terms of its funding commitment. The Government was seeking input from the council. Cabinet approval was conditional on that and the council was so advised.

I understand that Marion council then had a survey undertaken of about 650 households and 435 returns were included in the report. I am advised that the council deliberately kept the type of responses as short as practicable to enable it to obtain the personal views of residents unaffected by group pressure. The result was that Mr Usher, Town Clerk, wrote as follows:

The council after consideration of the results of the survey and other relevant matters considers that there is quite strong support for the bridge and that it would be used by many of the residents and others, and it therefore supports in principle the construction of a bridge at Wonggo Street provided the State Government meets the total cost of its construction.

Cabinet approval was conditional upon a joint funding arrangement. The council has written saying that, whilst it supports the construction of the bridge in principle, it does not want to be involved in the funding. I am in the process of writing to the council and advising it that, in view of its reluctance to be involved in a joint funding program for the bridge, the Government will not be proceeding with it.

It is a local road. The bridge joins a local road with a local road. They are not arterials or Highway's roads—they are local roads, and it is not unreasonable, in view of that, for the council to be involved when it is seen by the council to be in its best interests. We have agreement in principle that if the council wants to be party to a funding program the State Government will support the building of the Wonggo Street bridge on that basis.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister referred to Cabinet approval on a joint funded basis. What portion did Cabinet agree to fund through the State Government and what portion was to be funded by local government? Has the Cabinet decision been conveyed to the local council?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The council was certainly advised of the Government's decision, but I do not think the advice included a proportion of the construction cost that was to be met by either the Government or the council. I do not think that that sort of split up was envisaged or conveyed to the council.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister read to the Committee the Cabinet recommendation?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will not read out the Cabinet recommendation. It was that we would support the construction of the bridge so long as acceptable funding arrangements could be made with the council.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Was the Cabinet recommendation that the council specifically had to contribute a certain amount?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The recommendation was made on the basis of an acceptable agreement being reached with the council as to the funding arrangements. That is where the matter is at the moment. If the Marion Council wishes to come back to the Government with a suggestion on funding, we will certainly look at it.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Department of Transport,
\$1 016 000—Examination declared completed.

Highways, \$27 319 000

The Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
Mr E.S. Ashenden
The Hon. D.C. Brown
Mr R.J. Gregory
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.K.G. Oswald
Mr J.P. Trainer

Witness:
The Hon. G.F. Keneally, Minister of Transport.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr D. Scrafton, Director-General, Department of Transport.
Mr M.J. Knight, Commissioner of Highways.
Mr C.J. McInnes, Deputy Commissioner of Highways.
Mr R.J. Payze, Assistant Commissioner (Project Design), Department of Highways.
Mr J. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner (Administration and Finance).
Mr B. Atwell, Chief Finance Officer.
Mr V. Wurm, Finance Officer.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: Yesterday during the examination of the marine and harbors lines, the Minister told us that he had, for the time being, assumed responsibility for the building of the *Troubridge* replacement and that, on its completion, the responsibility for the operation of that vessel would revert to the Highways Department.

What is the space rate charging policy? What are the manning levels of the ship? What schedules will be applied under the new shipping service? Has the fast depreciating trade in and out of Port Lincoln been considered in relation to whether the ferry service will continue? Will the Minister supply this information either now or before 18 October?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The *Troubridge* is, in a sense, still a responsibility of the Highways Department, but the Minister of Marine will build it as agent for the Highways Department or the Government, whichever way one wants to look at it. Mr Abraham is the Highways Department representative on the *Troubridge* Replacement Committee, and I ask him to respond to the honourable member's question.

Mr Abraham: It is true that the design of the replacement vessel is with the Minister of Marine, who has been charged with commissioning the vessel. When it is commissioned it will be handed over to the Highways Department to operate, as it operates the current *Troubridge*. As to the question of space rates, the former Minister of Transport indicated some months ago that, when the costs of operation of the new vessel were determined, the principles and formula for a cost recovery program will be discussed with interested parties. I assume that that will continue.

The question of the Port Lincoln trade has been examined on two or three occasions. It was the Government's view that the primary purpose of the vessel is to trade between Kangaroo Island and the mainland and that, if trade between Port Lincoln and Kingscote did not affect trade between

Kangaroo Island and the mainland, and if that leg of the run remained profitable, it would continue. However, if it interfered with services to be provided between Adelaide and Kangaroo Island, it would be terminated. Before the final design of the new vessel can be completed, the manning question needs to be determined: one needs to know what space is required on the vessel for the size of the crew.

The Hon. TED CHAPMAN: The Minister confirmed yesterday that tenders had already been let.

Mr Abraham: The tender has been let, based on the design currently in place. That provides for a certain number of crew. The final determination on the number of crew will be made by the managing agents in consultation with appropriate unions. Discussions are being held with interested managing agents who are currently putting forward a proposal for agreement with the Government in relation to managing the vessel.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister may recall that I asked a question concerning Windebanks Bridge, south of Mount Bold. The Minister promised to come back with a reply.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I took up this matter with the Highways Department officers and I have been advised that it is not for the Highways Department to consider; it is a matter for the City of Happy Valley (a local government matter). I will respond to the Happy Valley council and, in general terms, I will say something along the following lines—and I guess in a sense I am reporting to the Committee before reporting to the council; I hope it is not too distressed by that, but it will probably know all about it before getting the letter—the repair or upgrading of the Windebanks Bridge is essentially a matter for the council, as the bridge is situated on a local road for which council is responsible. Council is free to expend any or all of its 1985-86 local road funding on these works.

All the local road funds available for 1985-86 have been committed. In relation to 1986-87, should the council consider repair or upgrading of the bridge to be a special case, application may be made to the Local Roads Advisory Committee for a grant under the Special Local Roads Program at the appropriate time. There really are no funds available this year from the Highways Department to assist it in what is primarily a local government roads problem, but if it applied, then in 1986-87 that application could be considered under the Special Local Roads Program at that time.

There is still an opportunity for the council to apply for funding under the tourist road grants for this year. Such a submission would be best directed to the Minister of Tourism, who would make some recommendations in relation to those tourist roads. In short, it is a local government problem. No funds have been committed by the Government in this year's road funding program to the Windebanks bridge but, if the council wished to apply in 1986-87, it could do so. There is no guarantee that it would be successful, but it could apply. In the meantime, it could expend its own funds if it so wished, or it could apply for a tourist road grant and, by so doing, it would then have to prove its priority to the Minister of Tourism, who would then make recommendations to me as Minister of Transport.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister has said that no money is available this financial year, and therefore it will be put off until at least 1986-87. What happens when a major bushfire starts to burn through that area on one day of January next year? Do we suddenly tell the bushfire that there is no money available, and therefore people cannot escape because the gates are locked across the bridge, or that fire trucks cannot get across the bridge to fight the fire and to possibly save lives, because the money was not

available this year? That is the crisis that exists, and the local community is extremely concerned.

I notice that the letter written to the Government has been sent to three Ministers—the Minister of Tourism, the Minister of Emergency Services and the Minister of Transport. Frankly, I think it needs a more considered response from the Government because, whilst I can understand the point that the Minister makes (and we all understand that the funds have already been allocated for this year and the problem has been brought to his attention perhaps too late), I think that something should be done. The cost to at least repair the bridge is only \$40 000 and that is not an enormous amount.

More importantly, we cannot afford to go through a summer with fire appliances not being able to use that bridge and with the road closed off, preventing people from escaping from a potential bushfire. Perhaps the Minister does not fully understand the difficulties associated with this location, but for some people it may be the only road out of the area. People living at the back of the Mount Bold reservoir could well be caught, so that there would be no other road out, with a northerly wind blowing the fire down on top of them. I ask that there be further consideration, although I appreciate that it cannot possibly happen this afternoon. Unless some action is taken and the circumstances considered to ensure that those locked gates are removed, that there is access across that bridge, and that fire appliances can use that bridge this year, I have a grave fear that we could end up with a real disaster with people being trapped on the roads and not being able to get out of the area.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I can first give an undertaking to the honourable member that I will talk to the Minister of Tourism. I know that Government funding is Government funding, no matter from what pool it comes, so that if there is a need in an area that can be addressed from another area it can be done. The Department of Tourism would like to spend its limited funds on what are strictly classified as tourist roads, but I think that this could be classified as a tourist road. In the argument to the Tourism Department one would have to point out that not only are the factors to which the honourable member points apparent but also that there is great tourist benefit in such expenditure. I am prepared to take up the matter with the Minister of Tourism.

I make one point of which the honourable member is well aware. Every time that I as Minister, the Commissioner of Highways or his officers are approached to construct a bridge, upgrade a road, put in pedestrian lights, install a set of lights or arrange traffic management procedures, we are always faced with the emotional and quite genuinely held views that, if we do not do this, we could be responsible for accidents, tragedies, and so on. That is a responsibility that I as Minister and the Highways Department officers have to accept, and I guess we live with that.

If we were to provide for the needs of everyone in South Australia who expresses their request in the same way as the honourable member expressed his, we would need to have thousands of millions of dollars available and a construction program that would be impossible to carry out. Whilst I do not in any way suggest that the sentiments expressed by the honourable member are not genuinely held, in determining the priorities of road funding available, as Minister I have to make a number of very hard decisions to determine the priority of one against the other.

In making that decision I rely on the best advice available to me. That advice takes into account the safety record of the bridge, intersection, street, school or whatever. We have to balance that and, having regard to all the information, we have to make decisions. Sometimes they are not tre-

mendously well accepted, and we understand that. I do not believe that it is a reasonable proposition that the State Government should have to respond to such requests, particularly from experienced members of Parliament who themselves have held positions of responsibility and importance in South Australia on that level.

I do not want to take the issue further, as I am not suggesting that the honourable member does not genuinely hold the feelings he has. It is not appropriate to face the Minister and the department and say that, unless this is done, we will be responsible for an accident that might occur at some future date. The honourable member is not the only person who has said that, as many other members and also people outside have done so, too. I am not being critical but, from my viewpoint, I have to make decisions on the best information available to me and they are hard decisions. I will take up the matter with the Minister of Tourism and speak to my officers about the priority.

I am not sure, but the advice I have just received is that we do not think an application has as yet been made by the council. We will be prepared to look at the application if it was made, but it would need to be in the terms in which I am responding and according to the understanding I gave to the honourable member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I was not trying to suggest that the blame for any accident that occurred would rest on the shoulders of the Minister or officers of the Highways Department. I was highlighting the dangerous situation that exists. Sometimes people try to blame the Minister, but I was not trying to do that and certainly would not want to put the Minister in a position where, if an accident did occur, I could turn around and say, 'I told you so—you are to blame'. That is not a fair position in which to put the Minister or his officers.

I now refer to the sale of land in the north-south transport corridor. After the next election the corridor will proceed. I understand that the Government has sold over \$9 million worth of land. How much has been raised from the sale; how much of that has come back to the Highways Department for road construction and maintenance, and what has happened with the rest of the money?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will have to take that question on notice. It is in the order of \$9.7 million. The value that goes back into the Highways Department for continued road construction is the historical value of the land. I will get that information for the honourable member as quickly as possible.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer to the remarks of the Auditor-General on page 1 of his report—when one scores page 1 of the Auditor-General's Report it is a very significant item—relating to the \$7.7 million which should have been (but was not) paid from the Highways Fund into certain road safety programs of the police last year and which was therefore recorded as an increased burden on the State. I presume that the \$7.7 million is therefore held in the Highways Fund and will be paid over this year. Therefore, the accumulated deficit last year could have been \$7.7 million less than it was for the whole State, and this year the claims against the Highways Fund will be greater because we are paying off two years out of one. Can the Minister explain why that was done and why the \$7.7 million was not taken out of the fund last year?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The honourable member would be aware that a regulation is before Parliament at the moment seeking to transfer \$15.4 million to the police. It will not happen again: everybody can be assured of that. I understand that it had nothing at all to do with the Highways Department or the Department of Transport: we were not involved with it. The question more properly should be directed to the Treasurer, because the transfer was being

effected by the Treasury. To clarify the matter for us all, I ask Mr Abraham, who may have the detail that the Committee requires, to comment.

Mr Abraham: The procedure before 1 July this year was that Treasury automatically deducted from the Highways Fund an amount equivalent to one-twelfth of the estimated proceeds, to go to the police for road safety purposes. From 1 July this year the procedures have been changed whereby the Highways Department will draw the cheques and we will make sure that the proper appropriation will be put into place. So, the question of the regulations not being carried out will not apply in the future.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My question was: why did it not occur last year?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: That question should more properly be directed to the Treasurer. As Mr Abraham has pointed out, prior to the new regulation being introduced, the transfer of funds from the Highways Department to the police for road safety was at the discretion of the Treasurer.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am sure that the Minister would agree that this has had a profound impact on the State budget and on the size of the deficit: it affected the deficit last year by \$7.7 million.

The CHAIRMAN: I take it that the Minister is pointing out that there is no line as such for the question.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I do not think that the Minister is saying, that, but he is saying that the problem is now overcome, and I accept that. I want to know why the problem existed last year, so that the Auditor-General saw fit to put it on page 1 of his report as a fairly significant issue.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I read the Auditor-General's Report, and I am aware of it. I do not wish to comment on it any further.

Mr TRAINER: If time permitted I would have asked a whole series of questions based on the subject that has already been briefly touched on by the member opposite, and that is what the Opposition apparently looks upon as the election Eldorado of the north-south corridor, which I personally suspect, of being certainly in social and probably in electoral terms, what is better known as fool's gold. I seek some relatively precise information comparing the Government's proposals for expenditure on solving traffic problems in the southern suburbs with the expenditure involved in the more grandiose scheme promulgated by the Opposition spokesman on transport.

The Government is proposing what appears to be a coordinated expenditure of funds on several remedial measures involving public transport, the upgrading of the arterial road system and the construction of a third arterial road south from Darlington. The Opposition has proposed an alternative scheme, the details of which seem to be rather nebulous. To date, maps issued by the Opposition have been rather vague as to detail, but apparently the alternative scheme pins everything on a two stage freeway design. The southern section seems to be a copy of the Government's third arterial road proposal. The additional section appears to be the disinterred corpse of the old MATS route from Darlington through to Thebarton that was discarded by previous Governments as being hideously costly and socially disastrous.

As part of the Minister's answer, I would hope that he could advise the anticipated cost of the alternative proposal that has been put forward. Figures ranging from \$200 million to \$250 million have been mentioned by the Opposition spokesman on transport, but I suspect that those figures are probably a gross understatement, as estimates of that size were used by a previous Liberal transport spokesman some years ago. I suspect that inflation and other factors have probably rendered these way out of date.

I would appreciate it also, in relation to comments on expenditure in connection with the two alternative proposals, if the Minister or his officers could clarify the traffic predictions on which the two alternative proposals are based, since those used back in 1968 for the MATS proposal were gross over estimates. Indeed, had the original MATS Plan been pursued from 1968, when it was set up on an 18 year scheme for completion, that would have taken us through to a completion date just a few months from now. The inference is that, if we had used those inaccurate traffic predictions from that time, Adelaide would by now have been two-thirds covered with concrete and bitumen. Also in relation to that traffic data, could the Minister outline the timetables for the two alternative proposals?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: By the two alternative proposals, I understand that the the honourable member refers to the Government's proposal and the proposal that has been put around by the Opposition.

Mr TRAINER: The one that has been floated by the Opposition as an election stunt.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The third arterial road south of Sturt Road is not a great deal different. I do not think there is a great deal of difference between the proposals of the Government and the Opposition. That is no surprise, because they are the same.

The Hon. D.C. Brown interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: If the honourable member wishes to explain the differences, I am sure he will get an opportunity. There may be some change within the corridor as to exactly where the road might go. That is my advice, and any final decision that has been made by Government will rest heavily on the expert advice available to it from the Highways Department. I am not too sure where the expert advice comes from that enables the Opposition to make that sort of planning decision. I know that the shadow Minister is about as competent as I am to determine exactly where a road should be sited. His expertise is in agricultural science as mine is in purchasing. I do not think either of us is very good at building roads.

I would take the advice that was available to me. In terms of south of Sturt Road there is not a great deal of difference. The early planning and design work is under way, and probably it will be towards the end of this decade before road works start; I think that is acknowledged in relation to both the alternatives.

In terms of north of Sturt Road (the freeway concept in the north-south corridor), I do not know what the cost of building a freeway there would be—whether it be four lane, six lane or eight lane. The freeway started out as eight lanes and the previous Government under Transport Minister Wilson reduced it to six lanes and he said he doubted whether it would ever be built at all.

Mr TRAINER: He reduced it to four lanes, and this proposal pushes it up to six again.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: It was reduced to four as a concept; there was no commitment to its construction. I have no idea of the cost, but it would certainly be inflated. Here again, you would want to compare apples with apples and not apples with oranges. For the Government to determine an accurate cost would in itself cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions. It would certainly be more expensive today than when it was initially promoted, so there could not be any reasonable comparison of costs.

One of the problems with retaining the corridor is that, whilst the corridor is there, it is considered to be the panacea for all traffic problems that might occur within the next 20 or 30 years. That is unfortunate. We need to look at the range of options available to the Government. In fact, the previous Government was doing that when it agreed that the highest priority was the widening of South Road. We

will continue to pursue the options available to us, but the construction of a freeway is not one of those options.

The Opposition has never been prepared to advise the people of South Australia that their options north of Sturt Road cannot be addressed before the year 2000; so we are talking about solutions that were determined in 1968 for problems that might occur in the year 2000. On 27 February 1984 the *News* editorialised a comment of the honourable member for Davenport, as follows:

Politicians traffic in one commodity: words; frequently to the exclusion of realities and the evidence of their eyes. State Opposition transport spokesman, Mr Brown, is waxing indignant over scrapping of the north-south freeway plan, citing a leaked report. Even with projected population growth around Morphett Vale, the notion of such colossal expense, \$240 million, cannot be justified. Mr Brown may be looking to future problems, but he is proposing yesterday's solutions.

If serious decisions have to be made in the year 2000 to determine north-south traffic flow requirements, those decisions are best made having regard to the social and economic factors and the traffic problems that apply at that time rather than trying to apply 1968 solutions to the needs of the 21st century.

The Hon. D.C. Brown interjecting:

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Mr Chairman, will you consider asking the honourable member to withdraw the allegation that I was telling a pack of lies?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I was not referring to the Minister but to the honourable member opposite.

Mr TRAINER: The honourable member opposite seemed to be using a scattershot technique. I was not sure at whom it was directed; if it was directed at me, I ask for that word to be withdrawn. It is unparliamentary.

The CHAIRMAN: The word 'lie' must not be used in this Committee, and it would be better if the honourable member withdrew that word.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I do not think it was an official comment. I would like to clarify the position.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no need for clarification. The word 'lie'—in whichever way it was used and with whatever intention—is unparliamentary and it must be withdrawn.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I withdraw the word 'lie'. The statement made by the member for Ascot Park to the *News* the other day was a pack of rubbish and untruths. There was not a skerrick of truth in what he said—and he knows it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the member for Davenport continues in that vein, we will all be back here at 9.30 tomorrow morning. I am giving fair warning. I will not put up with that situation.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: We are presently examining the potential of roads north of Sturt Road and south and west of the city as part of the western regions study. The 1976 transport data base (and I believe that that is the information to which the honourable member referred) is to be updated in 1986 to provide new and realistic demand projections. The western regions study group is considering the whole matter of arterial roads and north-south and east-west traffic flow in the western region, and at the same time we are building up our data base as to increased usage of those roads. Relevant information is not available at present to respond to that question.

Mr TRAINER: I refer to the pattern of Highways Department landholdings along the Darlington to Thebarton route and their relevance to the cost of the proposed alternative. The shadow Minister of Transport is on record as having said that the majority of the land along the north-south corridor is already owned by the Government. I suspect that that may well be true south of Darlington in regard to the third arterial—the Darlington bypass. It is quite possible that the proportion of land owned there by the Government

is as high as 75 per cent. However, I believe that that is not true in relation to the impractical route proposed north of Darlington along the path of the old MATS plan, and I suspect that only a minority of the 700 or so houses on that route between Darlington and Thebarton are actually owned by the Highways Department. I suspect that the cost of rehousing those 700 families who would be forced out on to a fairly tight housing market (if such a proposal was carried out) would be extremely high.

There would also be the cost of acquisition of those properties not yet acquired; the moving costs involved in rehousing those people who had to move; and even costs in respect of those who are already Highways Department tenants because they would have to be rehoused at Government expense, presumably through the Housing Trust. Until now I would imagine that those acquisitions that have taken place would not have been compulsory ones but the relatively easy purchases and that the more difficult compulsory acquisitions are still to come.

In addition, there would be a need for some acquisition of properties other than private domestic ones. Apart from the social cost of loss of facilities and the cost of the community being split into two, separating people from their schools, kindergartens, clubs, shops, friends, relatives and so on, and dividing suburbs, there would be the cost to the Highways Department of purchasing and replacing various kindergartens, schools, churches, sporting bodies, club rooms, and other community facilities along the route.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: It is true, as the honourable member has said, that in any acquisition program it is easy in the first 12 months or so, when people may be anxious to move. I think that experience shows that 50 per cent of land acquisitions required are taken relatively easily, but the residual 50 per cent is much more difficult. A case in point is the north-east corridor, where there was a long and protracted process, for more than four years to acquire only 34 residential properties. When we translate that into attempting to acquire over 500 properties (four years for 34) we are talking about a long process indeed.

I think that that is acknowledged by proponents of the alternative. I can recall reading somewhere a letter issued by the member for Davenport in which he said that land acquisition would take in excess of 10 years to complete. In terms of land acquisition, the honourable member who talks about building a freeway says that very little compulsory acquisition would be needed in the first 10 years. That is the easier part of the matter. The difficult part involves those people who refuse to move for all the reasons that the member for Ascot Park has just mentioned to the Committee.

I think that it is right for the honourable member to make a distinction between what the Highways Department owns and what the Government owns because, if the Highways Department acquires land, it has to acquire Housing Trust properties or properties that belong to other Government departments, and then there is a requirement upon Government to find alternative accommodation. It is not a matter of the Highways Department saying, 'A Housing Trust property belongs to the Government so out you go, we want it, and we do not have a responsibility to house you elsewhere, and neither does the Government'. The Highways Department has to acquire land and, in its study of properties that may or may not be available to it, it has to take into account other Government properties.

From Anzac Highway to Seacombe Heights the Highways Department owns 32 per cent or 199 properties if a four-lane highway is proposed. It still has to acquire 427 properties, or 68 per cent. When the eight-lane proposal was rejected by the previous Government, provision was made for some of those properties to be sold off. In an eight-lane

proposal the Highways Department owns 291 properties or 33 per cent, but would need to acquire 598 additional properties, which is 67 per cent. Therefore, if it is a four lane proposal the Highways Department owns 32 per cent of the properties required and if it is an eight lane proposal it owns 33 per cent, so a massive acquisition program would be required. That program would be lengthy and expensive. I can get more detailed information about what those properties are and whether they are Education Department properties, clubs or houses, but I would need to check that out.

Mr TRAINER: The shadow Minister, in writing as well as at a public meeting, has implied that a six-lane road with median strip would not need very much land at all. In fact, a letter that he sent out stated:

The road with adjacent landscaping and sound barriers will only require land equivalent to the depth of one house block.

I am not quite sure whether that is too accurate—certainly, that information was received with a bit of a chortle at a recent public meeting. Nevertheless, it is significant that, along the corridor from Darlington through to Thebarton, there is a great deal of concern. Perhaps the Minister can confirm whether or not in his opinion, as well as the saving from the financial expenditure that would not occur, there would also have been a saving in human costs as a result of the cancellation of the MATS corridor, in the sense of that decision having removed a barrier to development in the western suburbs and easing the minds of those residents living along the route of the obsolete MATS plan.

I have received countless approaches from constituents, distressed by a proposal that many of them dismiss as being an election stunt but which nevertheless they feel they ought to treat seriously. A conversation that I had with a constituent who contacted me this week has particularly stuck in my mind. I received a telephone call from a woman constituent living in Ascot Park. She said that she had been a supporter of the Liberal Party all her life. She stated that she could perhaps understand the Liberal proposal if there was a genuine need for such a motorway and if details of a carefully thought out plan had been made available but that she had come to the conclusion that people in the western suburbs have been offhandedly treated as freeway fodder. As well as approaching me, this constituent approached the Premier's Office and the Highways Department, and she had been impressed with their attitude. However, she had not been so favourably impressed with a Liberal MP to whom she spoke on the telephone. I have a record of my notes of my telephone conversation with her.

Mr ASHENDEN: Which line does this refer to?

Mr TRAINER: The expenditure that may or may not be involved in the development of transport to the southern suburbs. My notes reveal that the Liberal member's response to this woman, who lives in my area, was just to tell her to sell out as fast as she could. She asked what it would do to the family character of her neighbourhood, where she was happy to live, to which this member replied that it was a lower class area and that she should move to a higher class suburb. That member was the Opposition spokesman on transport, who is sitting opposite.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is rubbish. That is a lie.

Mr TRAINER: That is not a lie, and I would ask for that comment to be withdrawn, Mr Chairman.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am not implying that the honourable member is a liar, but I am saying that it is a lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think that the Committee should come back to a little bit of sanity. Words are now being thrown around—whether intentionally or unintentionally, I do not know. I give both sides fair warning: the Chair is trying to be as lenient as possible, but if members of the Committee continue to carry on in the way that is

occurring at present, we will get ourselves into trouble. I do not know whether anyone really wants to be back here tomorrow morning, but that could be the outcome of it. I think that some thought should be given to that.

Mr TRAINER: In summation, I ask the Minister whether the Government, as well as giving due consideration to the economic costs of alternative proposals, has given consideration to the human and social costs.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I can assure the honourable member that that is a high priority of the Government, as it was, funnily enough, with the previous Government. I draw the Committee's attention to a Ministerial statement made by a former Minister of Transport (Hon. Michael Wilson) in the House of Assembly on 24 February 1982. In relation to the retention of the corridor, the former Minister stated:

I have indicated to Parliament on other occasions the problems that this Government inherited in regard to the corridor, with the uncertainty and lack of decision inherent in the idea of a moratorium on freeway development in the corridor.

This has led to quite serious planning blight in the areas affected, since both residents and business people have been left uncertain about the future of their areas, and have not known whether to develop their properties or not . . . On coming to office, this Government saw the vital importance of getting to grips with this issue and making decisions which remove the sense of uncertainty that prevails over the corridor at the moment. Therefore, the Government has decided the 40-kilometre tract of land formerly designated for a freeway from Dry Creek to Noarlunga will be cut by half in width and truncated south of Darlington.

In his statement the former Liberal Minister of Transport made a number of other pertinent comments. He concluded:

To the residents in the corridor, and particularly to the many people who live in the section between Darlington and Anzac Highway, I want to say that they should realise that, if a freeway was to be constructed eventually, that section would be the last to be built, and that would be many years from now.

In other statements the Minister at the time said that he frankly doubted that a freeway would ever be constructed in that corridor. Those were the comments of a Liberal Party in Government with access to all the information available—planning, highways, construction, etc. It is not the comment of someone in Opposition. I know that the present Opposition policy repudiates totally the statements and actions of the Minister while in government.

In government, people must act responsibly. Opposition shadow members who do not expect eventually to become a Minister can display a deal of irresponsibility, and this could apply to a shadow Transport Minister, who offered the world when the resources were not available. I would like to rely on the actions and statements of the Liberal Minister of Transport in office. Those statements are very much in line with the comments made by the member for Ascot Park. There is a similarity which I find quite remarkable. It is a similarity and an ethos to which I relate as Minister of Transport. There is great social cost and urban blight if one just leaves a corridor in the middle of a community for years—from 1968 to the year 2000—and then try in the year 2000 a solution which was determined in 1968 but which might not be at all relevant to the situation then applying.

Mr ASHENDEN: Can the Minister say what stage of planning has been reached for the Modbury-Salisbury connector? It should have been built long before now. The recent accident in which a home was totally demolished illustrates how urgent it is that the connector be built. A tremendous amount of traffic moves between Modbury and the Salisbury/Elizabeth area. This involves much car travel because the north-eastern suburbs tend very much to be dormitory suburbs. People move away to work, and many people work in the Salisbury/Elizabeth area. Also, many heavy vehicles use the area.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The Modbury-Salisbury connector road system was subject to a fair deal of controversy when I became Minister of Transport. I moved quickly to resolve that matter by making decisions that enabled the Highways Department to go on with its planning and design work. Work will start early next year on a three year timetable for stages 1 and 2 from Bridge Road through to the North East Road.

Mr ASHENDEN: My second question relates to one that I asked earlier during the presence of STA officers. In no way do I criticise the work of Mr Alan Wayte, because he can only be commended for the tremendous work that he has done on the development of the north-east busway. In no way am I being critical of that officer. However, I am, as the member for a large section of the north-eastern suburbs, extremely concerned about the problems that already exist at the junction of Lower North East Road and Darley Road. At present it is not uncommon for vehicles wishing to turn right from Lower North East Road into Darley Road to build up past the Paradise Hotel. Although the Minister might not know what that distance is, it must be close to a kilometre. When many buses on route 550, 551 and 552 are all required to do a right-hand turn at that intersection, the build-up will be extensive.

This will exacerbate the problem that already exists. If it is not planned that the intersection have a right-hand turn phase, will the Minister ask his officers to conduct an investigation to determine whether the criteria are such that that should be included?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I appreciate the honourable Minister's concern about this junction. I will ask the Highways Department to look at the matter and I will pass on the result of the investigation.

Mr ASHENDEN: I have always been concerned about a number of troublesome intersections in the metropolitan area, the one to which I just referred being a perfect example. That intersection has a six lane highway with one lane for vehicles turning left, one lane for those going ahead, and another lane for traffic going ahead or turning right. Many people travelling towards Adelaide get in the left-hand turn lane, and this completely blocks the lane for vehicles wishing to turn left. As soon as traffic moves off, there is chaos, because invariably just across the intersection vehicles are parked in the innermost lane. So, a three lane road immediately becomes a two lane road. Normally, people using that inner lane are those who are impatient and cause the problems. As soon as they take off they try to cut their way into the lane of traffic that has been patiently waiting to get through.

I suggest that the raised section which holds the traffic signals and which divides the lane for the left-hand turn be moved across to block the lane to through traffic. In this way the left-hand lane would always be open for a smooth traffic flow. This would prevent traffic moving forward through the intersection and would enable those dangerous problems to be avoided. I have seen collisions because people have patiently lined up for two or three minutes in the centre lane and do not want to give way to the people who cut in on them from the left-hand lane. This happens in other areas, Hancock and North East Road intersection being another example. On crossing that intersection, it immediately forms a two lane carriageway, whether or not there is traffic in the third lane. Will the department look at this problem and see whether the traffic flow can be improved by making this simple modification?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I refer this question to Mr Payze, the Assistant Highways Commissioner. I am as anxious as the honourable member to hear what he says.

Mr Payze: Without wishing to make specific comments about the intersection of Lower North East Road and Darley

Road, I will make some general comments about lane determinations. Each intersection is different from the next, and the determination of lane configuration in respect of the approach and exit to intersections is clearly determined by the percentage of traffic wishing to either travel straight through, turn left or turn right. Traffic conditions are dynamic and it is very much accepted that there could be changes in the volumes of traffic that would require modifications to an intersection.

The department has a very extensive program in terms of changing the configuration of intersections and traffic light phasing to accommodate changes in traffic movements. In respect of the specific issue of whether we should bring out the island to make it a free 'left turn' lane as distinct from a 'left turn and share straight through' lane, because of difficulties that exist on the exit side of the intersection, it is an issue of whether or not one bans parking and imposes clearway conditions and whether or not the proportion of through vehicles is significantly higher than the proportion of left turning vehicles.

It would be wrong for me or the Minister to determine a policy in respect of lane configurations, because it will be different for every intersection in the State. I suggest, in terms of Lower North East Road and Darley Road, that the problem is with parking restrictions—impositions imposed by local government. Perhaps there is a need to examine the warrant for clearway conditions during peak periods.

Mr ASHENDEN: It is a bad intersection at the moment with some of those problems. Perhaps when looking at traffic light sequencing, the officers could examine the matter of whether the present clearway, which does not extend back that far, should be extended one or two kilometres back to that area.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: We will advise the honourable member.

Mr GREGORY: My questions relate to the north-east connector, referred to by the member for Todd. The officer's response was that the road would be commenced in 1986 and that it would take about three years to build. I understand that the proposal is for this road to be built in two stages: from Bridge Road to Milne Road and from Milne Road to North East Road. I would be interested to know the cost of the first stage and when that is due for completion, and also the cost of the second stage.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I ask the Commissioner of Highways to give that detailed information to the Committee.

Mr Knight: As we said, the road will be built in two stages, each of which will take approximately 18 months. The estimated construction cost of the first stage is \$4.7 million and for the second stage it is \$3 million.

Mr GREGORY: That is 18 months; you are looking at June 1987?

Mr Knight: Yes.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Completion of the first section—Bridge Road to Milne Road—will occur in June 1987.

Mr GREGORY: Another more vexing question that seems to annoy more people than enough is the lack of lights on Montague Road at the intersection of Ladywood and Reservoir Roads. In July this year Montague Road came within the compass of the Highways Department. I understand that Ladywood and Reservoir Roads are local roads under the control of the corporation. I have heard that the corporation has agreed that lights should be put at that intersection but, because of its configuration, considerable roadworks need to be undertaken. Can the Minister advise whether the Highways Department has reached finality with the corporation as to cost sharing? If so, when will work commence to provide lights at that intersection?

Mr Payze: Over the past three months the department has been negotiating with the Tea Tree Gully council in relation to the design aspects. As yet, that has not been finalised. However, the first initial decision was one of determining land requirements on the south-western corner. That has been finalised and the council is proceeding with that work. When the design aspects are completed (and I expect that that will be within the next fortnight or so) discussions will be then held with the council in terms of cost sharing. Action has been taken to transfer the maintenance responsibility from council to the Highways Department for both Montague Road and Reservoir Road.

Mr GREGORY: Following the announcement of the Government's approval to proceed with the upgrading of Reservoir Drive, Aberfoyle Park (and I have been given to understand that the decision to do that work was subject to considerable community involvement) that construction work has now commenced. Could the Minister provide the Committee with the relevant details of the activities to this date?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Construction work commenced on that section of Reservoir Drive between Blacks Road and Manning Road in April 1985. At the end of the current financial year it is expected that 90 per cent of the required earthworks and 80 per cent of the required drainage works will have been completed. To date the status of the project is that 45 per cent of the earthworks and 30 per cent of the drainage works have been completed. As the honourable member would appreciate, completion of this section of Reservoir Drive will have a beneficial effect on the movement of traffic in the Aberfoyle Park area, particularly when travelling to the city. The State Government has placed considerable importance on this project and to that end it has been jointly funded through the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Program, local roads allocation, which was \$3.1 million, and State road funds of \$2 million. To date \$750 000 has been expended on that project.

Mr OSWALD: I have three questions, two of which I suppose could be taken on notice. Could you advise the commencement date of the installation of traffic lights that have already been approved and are to be constructed at the corner of Warren Avenue and Tapleys Hill Road, Glenelg North?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Our current scheduling—and I have to emphasise that it is our current scheduling—has that work commencing in March 1986. I do not want to be tied to March 1986, because there may be some variation in that, but that is the program.

Mr OSWALD: Could the department provide the Committee with a list of the properties that the department has purchased on the eastern side of Tapleys Hill Road between Warren Avenue and Anzac Highway, and also a list of those on what we call the S bend, the new corridor that links Anzac Highway and Tapleys Hill Road? Could the number of any properties that are currently under negotiation be provided? I would expect that to be taken on notice.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The answer to both those questions is 'Yes' and we will provide that information to the honourable member.

Mr OSWALD: My next question relates indirectly to the Jubilee Point project and its impact on traffic patterns in the Glenelg district. I think that honourable members would be familiar with Jubilee Point. It is proposed to put some 330 units into the development offshore. Also, there will be the Glenelg Sailing Club, the Sea Rescue Squadron radio base, a public launching ramp, and the inevitable sightseers who will tour on that peninsula. One of the strong selling points that the developers have made is their consultation with the Government to ensure that traffic that travels down Military Road will in fact be diverted off what we call the

Glenelg North peninsula and over on to Tapleys Hill Road. The firm Kinhill Stearns did a study of the redevelopment of the West Beach Trust land and proposed rerouting Military Road around on to Tapleys Hill Road to a point probably no more than 100 or 200 metres north of the Warren Avenue intersection and to put traffic lights in there. With the Government's support thus far for the Jubilee Point project and support for a sports complex to go on the waterworks E&WS plan, enormous volumes of traffic will be generated. Is the Government considering bringing forward the date for the commencement of the project for redevelopment of Tapleys Hill Road?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will ask the Commissioner of Highways to respond to the points raised by the honourable member. From the Government's viewpoint the Jubilee Point development is exciting and without doubt, with the development going on in that area, it is fast becoming one of the premier destinations in South Australia, as I firmly think it ought to be. In any development of this nature—and we are having the same problems down at Morphett Vale East and in the developments north—considerable road funding needs impact fairly heavily on resources. I ask the Commissioner of Highways to respond to those specific points.

Mr Knight: I cannot go into any detail except to say that the department has had a look at the Jubilee Point proposal. We have made comments to the Department of Environment and Planning with regard to the traffic implications of that project. Those comments are there for inclusion in the environmental impact statement. With regard to the other proposals and possibility of bringing forward the works on Tapleys Hill Road, it is not possible to bring forward such works because of the preconstruction constraints upon us. The Tapleys Hill Road widening project from the Sturt River to Anzac Highway is currently scheduled from 1988 to 1990.

Mr HAMILTON: I wish to raise a rather vexed question of a problem of some five years standing in my electorate. I refer to the proposed installation of a solid median strip on Findon Road between Port and Crittenden Roads. I have corresponded with successive Ministers of Transport under successive Governments. On 12 June 1984, after corresponding with the Minister's predecessor, I received the following information. I ask the Committee to bear with me, as it is important to have it on the record. The Minister states, in part:

It is Highways Department procedure to seek council's view on any installation of medians at the planning stage, prior to the preparation of detailed plans. In the case of Findon Road, the Corporation of the City of Woodville were written to on 20 May 1983. On 5 July 1983, council forwarded to the Commissioner of Highways a copy of a report by its engineering staff which endorsed the concept of the proposal and recommended that a detailed plan be prepared for consideration by council.

My predecessor wrote to you on 12 May 1981 advising that it was not anticipated that a solid median would be installed within three years. However, a routine examination of road accident characteristics carried out in April 1983, revealed that the number of accidents which may occur on this section of road could be substantially reduced by the installation of a raised median strip.

In the four year period, 1978-81 inclusive, 131 accidents were reported on this section of Findon Road, 19 of them resulting in personal injury. A close analysis of these accidents indicated that some 49, including eight involving injury, could have been avoided had a median been present.

It goes on to talk about the responsibility of the council to advise its ratepayers of this proposal. On the second page, that letter states:

Experience has shown that traffic accident rates have dropped by about 30 per cent when similar median strips have been installed on other roads in metropolitan Adelaide and it is anticipated that a similar benefit would be derived from installation of a median on Findon Road between Port Road and Crittenden Road. The local government body affected by the proposal, in

this instance the Corporation of the City of Woodville, is responsible for imposing any parking restrictions deemed necessary.

Then, it talks of the fact that the Highways Department was assessing objections to this proposal. On 17 May of that year, I raised in this place the strong opposition expressed by local business people and residents about this proposal. It has dragged on, and I am not critical of the Highways Department, nor am I critical of the council in this matter because there were alterations to the proposal and subsequent to-ing and fro-ing between the council and the Highways Department.

This matter was again raised. I will not go into all the detail of it, but I received a petition from local residents on this matter, expressing again strong opposition to it. This was clearly enunciated in the *Weekly Times Messenger* of 25 September, as follows:

Woodville council has sided with local residents and businesses in the fight to stop a median strip being built on Findon Road. At its last meeting council unanimously opposed the development of a raised median on Findon Road from Port to Crittenden Roads by the Highways Department.

But council's decision does not mean the median strip fight is over since the Highways Department, which 'owns' Findon Road, can overrule council's decisions and go ahead with it regardless.

It goes on to talk about the original proposal and about the submission of the petition to the Minister of Transport, and then—and this is the matter that concerns me—it says:

Highways Department experience indicates that the public soon adjust to this, changing their preferred routes of travel as necessary. The report also disputed objections from residents that the median would force traffic from Findon Road into nearby residential streets. The only traffic that could be expected reasonably to do this would be generated by mid-block residents who chose to travel around the block rather than execute a U-turn or alter their travel patterns, the report said.

The report goes on:

Woodville Mayor John Dyer said he was strongly opposed to the median and that it would cause more problems than it would solve. Mr Dyer said median strips encouraged motorists to drive faster as they felt 'sheltered'. He said the Highways Department would serve Woodville better by installing medians where they were really needed, as in Acacia Street for example.

This is the point that concerns me:

'They are obviously not willing to listen to us', the Mayor said.

He was talking, as I understand it, about the Highways Department. That matter concerns me. There has been considerable consternation and agitation over five years on this matter. I have written to the Minister on the matter, asking that it be indefinitely deferred or rejected because of the strong opposition by business people in that area and the strong representation being made to my office, in conjunction with the decision of the local council.

I am seriously concerned about this matter. I am equally concerned about the number of accidents and injuries that have occurred on this road. It is not a matter that I believe will be quickly resolved but I do believe that it is one that has to be addressed. After looking at this matter, would the Minister meet with a deputation of local residents and businessmen in an effort to try to resolve it? It is a complex matter but one in which I hope I can be of some assistance in trying to resolve the difficulties that business people and local residents are experiencing in this area. I apologise to the Committee for taking up its time, but the matter is of some import to me. As I said, it has been dragging on for five years and I would hope to see the matter resolved in the very near future.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: This is a vexed question, as the honourable member describes it, and it has been going on for some time. To my knowledge, the Highways Department has put two proposals to the Woodville council, and that council has circulated those proposals seeking community input. As a result of that input, the council has advised the Highways Department, or the Government, that it opposed

the implementation of the median strips. The decision of the Highways Department to construct the median strips was based on road safety factors, and the comments that the honourable member has referred to about median strips are based on very wide experience of implementing similar schemes throughout the metropolitan area. The Highways Department is skilled and well informed on traffic movements that result from the implementation of median strips on our major arterials.

The bind is that we have a community that does not want median strips but, on the other hand, I have evidence and advice available to me which states that the construction of a median strip at the location in question would result in a considerable reduction of traffic accidents and, of course, the saving of life and limb. This is a serious matter. I am aware of the honourable member's representations, and I am aware of the council's view. Normally I think it is reasonable that, when we have such strong council objection to design plans the Highways Department is seeking to implement, the council's wish can be met. As I said earlier today, I am very concerned that local community views be listened to. The difficulty here is that the matter involves road safety and the protection of lives not only of local residents but of those who might be using that major arterial.

I have taken note of the honourable member's representations, and I have asked the Commissioner of Highways to provide me with a report on the implications of the Woodville council's decision. I am certain that it is going to require further discussion between the Highways Department, the Woodville council and the community, and I would be only too happy to use whatever support the honourable member is able to provide in trying to find the remedy to this vexed problem. I am well aware of the influence that he has in that area, and whilst I do not want to push him into a corner on this matter, because I think the decision that is made has to be the right one, at least we would hopefully use his good offices in trying to obtain that resolution.

Mr HAMILTON: Would you be happy to meet a deputation from local residents, and if necessary council, in an endeavour to try to resolve this problem after receiving the report from the Highways Department?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I have been doing quite a lot of that in the last couple of months, and I am certainly prepared to do it again and have my officers with me. If the honourable member keeps in touch with me, I can let him know when the report from the Commissioner of Highways is available to me and when we are in a position to see the council and the community representatives.

Mr HAMILTON: I am not trying to put pressure on the Minister, but I would appreciate it if that could be done as quickly as the Highways Department can manage. I know they are busy people, but given the agitation that is taking place, I would hope that we could get a report as quickly as possible and distribute it. I am prepared to distribute the Minister's letter to all those constituents affected so that they can peruse it and, if they desire, meet with the Minister and the council. I will certainly arrange that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Has any decision been made by the Government as to whether it is going to adopt the recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee and abolish the Highways Fund, or has the Government decided to retain the Highways Fund for the foreseeable future?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The Government has made no such decision; it is a serious decision that would have to be made by the Cabinet in due course. The Public Accounts Committee report has been the subject of almost weekly meetings of the Highways Department. I have an interim report from the Highways Department; I have a report from

the Director-General of Transport and I also have a report from the Public Service Board. There is more detailed information on the numbers of recommendations being made by the Public Accounts Committee.

Next year I hope to introduce into Parliament a Bill for a new Highways Act, which will almost certainly contain components of the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee. In fact, some of the recommendations have already been implemented; for instance, the change in the arterial local roads system. The major recommendations, such as the abolition of the Highways Fund, are matters for Government decision. I am not in a position as yet to take to Cabinet the considered response of my officers to the Public Accounts Committee report.

The appropriate response will be made as soon as possible and those matters to be addressed by the Public Accounts Committee will be taken to Cabinet. That does not mean to say that I am indicating to the Committee what the Government's response will be: it is too early to indicate that. However, I can assure the Committee that we are working towards a Cabinet submission; we have implemented some recommendations; there will be changes to the Highways Act, which will include some of the further recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee, and there are still some that require Government decision.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I have received correspondence from the Minister indicating that the Old Belair Road should be finished by Christmas, but I understand he has now indicated it might be March. Certainly, the work on resurfacing the Old Belair Road can be expected to be done over the next four to five months. Is that still the intention, and will it definitely be finished by March next year?

In resurfacing the Old Belair Road, putting in drainage, in certain places removing dangerous hazards, and slightly widening the road, is it proposed to shut off the Old Belair Road? If so, has any consideration been given to the same problem that arose last summer when, in laying the gas main down the centre of that road, little or no thought was given to the fire threat that that would pose? There is very limited access to Belair Road, which is in the worst fire hazard area in the hills face zone, and a fire could cut off the new Belair Road, which would mean that there would be no access to Belair whatsoever.

Last year we reached an agreement with the Gas Company that the Old Belair Road would not be shut on red alert days and that, should an emergency occur, almost immediately the Old Belair Road would be opened up. My concern is that, if major construction is taking place, it may not be that easy to open up the Old Belair Road immediately there is a major fire risk. If fire hit the new Belair Road, we would have no hope of getting fire trucks and so on to the fire by an alternative route.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I certainly appreciate the points made by the honourable member and I will ask the Commissioner of Highways to say what the department intends during the construction phase. As the honourable member points out, the public utility services (that is, the Gas Company, ETSA and the E&WS Department) have completed their work on Belair Road between Brighton Road and Sheoak Road, Belair. It is true that we anticipated that construction would be completed by the end of this year. I am fairly certain that that commitment was given by my predecessor. Work will start in December. The delay has been occasioned by concern about differential settlement which would adversely affect the surface and the expected life of the refurbished pavement.

We will start in November or December and we hope to be finished in March or April. I would not want to be tied down to a March completion date just in case the work goes into April. Certainly it will commence in November

or December and it is anticipated that it will take three or four months. The honourable member raised important matters about whether or not the Old Belair Road can be kept open on red alert days and at times of need in the bushfire season. I am not aware of the situation, but the Commissioner of Highways will respond to those very serious matters.

Mr Knight: The work on this road is not a major construction job. There will be minor easing of curves and that sort of thing, but the major task is bituminous resurfacing, so we will close the road as and when we are surfacing. It would be available in the evenings, during the night and in the early mornings. Certainly, if there were any problems or any emergencies during the day, the road could be opened up for emergency vehicles. I see no problem at all in that regard.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister has released the Coromandel Valley road corridor study which gives three options. The Minister knows that the residents of Coromandel Valley are considering those three options, trying to decide which, if any, should be adopted. When does the Minister anticipate that funds will be made available to undertake one of those three options if and when a decision is made by the Coromandel Valley residents?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: There has been no decision as to a forward funding program for the Coromandel Valley road system. At this stage we have only issued a discussion paper so that the residents in the area can note the three alternatives proposed by the Highways Department merely as discussion alternatives. As a result of responses, other alternatives may have to be proposed. At this stage we are merely in the discussion phase and no funding has been put in place. I cannot give the honourable member any idea about when roadworks might take place, because we do not know about the timing or what roadworks will come out of the study.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I appreciate that funds have not been allocated, but are we looking at a program in five, 10 or 15 years?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Here again I would not want this Government, or any Government, held to what I am saying now. There will be a staged program of construction works. It will be five to 10 years before work is started on the first stage. It will then depend upon decisions made at the time. I think the important thing at this stage is that we do not contemplate work commencing until we reach that five to 10 year period, so I cannot really give a commencement date. That is about as near as I can estimate for the honourable member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the anticipated cash flow to pay for the *Troubridge* replacement in 1985-86, 1986-87 and 1987-88? I am quite happy for the information to be provided at a later date.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: We can give the 1985-86 figure, but not the 1986-87 or 1987-88 cash flow figures. Those figures will be supplied to the honourable member.

Mr Abraham: An amount of \$3 million has been provided in 1985-86 for construction of the replacement vessel. The estimated cost is \$11.7 million. It is anticipated that the vessel will be commissioned some time in 1987, probably in March. It will probably be \$8 million in 1986-87.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Highways Department, \$18 150 000—
Examination declared completed.

Services and Supply, \$10 597 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. D.C. Brown
The Hon. B.C. Eastick
Mr R.J. Gregory
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.K.G. Oswald
Mr J.P. Trainer

Witness:
The Hon. G.F. Keneally, Minister of Transport.

Departmental Advisers:
Mr H.E. Roeger, Director-General, Department of Services and Supply.
Mr P.J. Bridge, Director, State Supply Division and Chief Executive Officer, State Supply Board.
Mr D.R. Patriarca, Acting Director, Services Division.
Dr W.J. Tilstone, Director, Forensic Science Division.
Dr I. Dainis, Director, Chemistry Division.
Mr D.J. Woolman, Director and Government Printer, Government Printing Division.
Mr M.E. Jones, Director, Government Computing Centre.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the vote open for examination.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Before the examination of the Estimates commences, I would like to provide the Committee with some background information on the operations of the Department of Services and Supply. The members of the Committee will be aware that the role of the department is to provide a range of common services, primarily to Government agencies. During the last 12 months the portfolio of services has been expanded by the addition of the Government Motor Garage, the development of the South Australian Centre for Remote Sensing (which was formerly with the Department of Environment and Planning), and the extension of services provided by the Forensic Science Division (questioned documents, searching and sorting functions, forensic botany).

The financial performance of the recurrent funded operations of the department was within budget for the previous financial year, even though the estimates papers indicate that the department exceeded appropriation voted 12 months earlier by \$65 000. However, in looking at the department's performance it must be borne in mind that the department also made savings which funded \$180 000 of expenditure not provided in the original budget for items, such as additional chemical analysis valued at \$100 000. A number of the operations of the department are funded through deposit accounts. These include the Government Printing Division, Government Computing Centre, State Supply Division, and the Transport Services Car Pool. Each of these operations traded with operating surpluses in 1984-85. Turning to the capital account, the department in 1984-85 underspent its capital allocation of \$4.22 million by \$1.5 million. This is accounted for by the fact that, whereas capital funds were provided for the replacement of vehicles for the car pool, the fleet replacement program is now being funded from a

deposit account and only fleet expansion is funded from the capital account.

During 1985-86 the Government has committed additional funds for the implementation of the Cramond Working Party recommendations for the development of forensic services, and the implementation of the Common Automated Procurement System; a number of new developments also to be actioned by the department include the establishment and operation of the Adelaide Open College Document Reproduction Centre; the development of a fleet management system for the car pool operation, and a marketing study to assess the potential customer and service base for remote sensing techniques.

I would also bring to the Committee's attention that the department provides administrative support to the new State Supply Board which was established recently as a result of changes in legislation. As members know, the new board replaces the former Supply and Tender Board.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Because there has been a restructuring I do not intend to go into in-depth questioning about particular programs and my questioning will be more to do with the general structure. I hope we can finish by 6 p.m. I refer to the yellow book at pages 80 and 81 under the general heading 'Agency overview', which relates to the administration and general aspects of the whole area of supply. Under 'Corporate/Management Objectives' it states:

To maintain an efficient, effective, economic and responsive organisation to provide designated scientific, communication/information, and administrative support services including analytical chemistry, forensic science, computing reprographics, printing, supply, transport, remote sensing and information services and assist clients with their utilisation.

I do not look upon that as just a motherhood statement, but as a clear indication of the breadth of what is necessary, although one would have to question whether it is necessary to say that a government organisation is going to be an efficient, effective, economic and responsive organisation. I would have believed that that was an expectation built into its charter. A little further down we find the statement relative to cost effective services and ensuring that there is not a proliferation of in-house services, that there is a constraint placed on the budget of clients to encourage them to choose carefully the quantity and quality of services required from the department.

This almost suggests that the department is prepared to oversupply them if they want to become clients requesting oversupplying. That is a simplistic way to put it but, on reading the agency overview, there is a suggestion that the department has seen an over-use of its services in the past, and that it is now fine tuning its activities to guarantee a more efficient service in the future. Can the Minister or his officers indicate how they view that charter or approach to the new task?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I would like to respond and perhaps the Director-General will comment. The member has put his finger on an important charter of the Department of Services and Supply. This statement in the agency overview under 'Objectives/Issues/Strategies' is not designed to suggest that previously there may have been an over-demand or oversupply of services of the various agencies. The statement indicates clearly the heavy responsibility resting upon the various agencies to provide the best service at the most economic cost. As the majority of them are deposit funded they are competing in a sense with agencies outside government: for example, the Chemistry Division competes for work within the various Government departments and must be able to provide the quality of service at a cost comparable to, or better than, what can be provided within the department or agency itself, or from outside.

The same applies with the Government Computing Centre, etc. The Department of Forensic Science, for instance, has a heavy responsibility, and we are very fortunate to have with us Professor Tilstone, whose contract with us is coming to an end (which worries us a little). A heavy requirement is placed on various departments in the Department of Services and Supply to be able to justify their existence in a commercial way and not to say that they are an arm of Government, that they do work for the Government and that they do not care whether or not they are efficient.

As a supporter of the Public Service, I suspect that that sort of attitude, if it prevails at all in Government departments, is prevailing less and less than it may have in the past. There is this constraint on these various agencies to perform in a most cost effective and efficient way in providing the level and quality of service that the Government demands. I will ask Mr Roeger to reply more fully concerning the directives that these agencies have been given.

Mr Roeger: I cannot add much to what the Minister has said. Our business is to sell things. We have to be competitive in price in order to sell. Having to try to sell our services, we might be encouraging other Government agencies to use too many of our services. However, there are sufficient constraints on the system to ensure that agencies are not overserved. Evidence suggests that the system on which we work of cross-charging agencies for the services provided makes them think about buying our services. There is evidence that perhaps we have reduced some overservicing.

This agency has been free, in most cases, to either use our services or not. It puts great demands on us to provide at a competitive price services that other agencies are prepared to buy.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: To what degree does the 'user pay' philosophy apply now, and is intended to apply more in the future, relative to the services provided to client bodies?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: We are moving towards a 'user pay' system. For obvious reasons, I think that this has progressed further in some of our constituent departments than it has in others. Certainly, that is the intention of the department. It is fair to say that all departments are moving that way. Two classic examples are the Government Printer and the Government Computing Centre, both which provide services to other departments and authorities in Government, and cross-charging takes place.

We are talking about our agencies competing on price with private agencies. There is much work that the Government Printer is required to do that we could not get people within the private field to do, as the honourable member is aware. Even so, a constraint is imposed on the Government Printer to do that work at an economic price for the agency that requests it, because all our agencies want to retain as much work as they can. They have employment constraints to meet and they want to be seen as effective and economic producers. We are moving towards the 'user pays' principle. That has certainly been met in the Department of Services and Supply.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In the pricing structure leading to that end, what guarantee is there that correct overheads are being applied to charges made against the client organisation? It is an age old problem associated with Government services, of which the Minister will be aware. If one takes the salary of staff and a few pieces of equipment that are used, but does not look at the cost of housing, and so on, one comes up with a very jaundiced figure. How effective is this pricing becoming in relation to the amount being extracted from the client?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will ask Mr Patriarca to respond. I think that full overheads are recovered.

Mr Patriarca: The Department has a policy of recovering full cost of its operations. That includes all overheads and some of our more commercial operations. We provide for long service leave and superannuation. We are adopting very much a commercial accounting practice in the sense of bringing forward commitments and liabilities.

The departmental policy is to recover its full cost of operation. However, two areas in which we do not recover costs are principally the State Information Centre, which is a purely recurrent funded operation for the provision of information to Government, and the Supply and Tender Board, where we provide secretarial services to the new State Supply Board. We have no obligation in relation to other departments for all the costs that they bring to account compared with our costs.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: A statement was made about competition with the private sector. I notice in the first column on page 80 the direct statement that in some areas the department faces competition from the private sector. Is that beneficial to Government? Does it use the experience of being competitive with the private sector to look at its costing arrangements or to fine tune its service to be truly competitive?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I suggest that merely being in the competitive field with the private sector encourages various departments to be competitive. If one understands that we take into account in our charging structure full overheads—including long service leave, superannuation, and other costs—it would show that, by acting in this commercial way, we are competing on a comparable basis. As I said earlier, we are comparing apples with apples when our departments are seeking work from clients in competition with private industry. If any directors would like to respond as to their contact with their competitors in the private sector when forming costing comparisons, I am happy to allow them to do so. Perhaps the Government Printer might be the appropriate person to advise the Committee as to how this division relates to the private sector in terms of charging, etc.

Mr Woolman: The Printing Division does not only supply the Government from its own resources: since 1977 the division has looked at the product mix and has compared the economic products that we produce with those of the private sector. When one of those products becomes uneconomic, that product is then let to the private sector and the private sector specialist picks up those particular products. Since 1977 we have let to the private sector envelopes, cheque printing, cheque encoding, tag manufacture, continuous stationery and there is a list of the other products.

The other advantage in buying large amounts of printing from the private sector is that we can monitor the market prices for printing and we compare those market prices against the cost of producing work inside. As I said earlier, when those prices become uneconomic as far as we are concerned, and we are losing money on those products, those products are then offered for tender to the private sector. Monitoring those costs also gives us a very distinct vantage point for noting what the private sector is doing with the technology available and, also, the capacity of the private sector to be able to handle the work that is overflowing out of the Printing Division.

Since 1977 we have been working on a consolidation program and any overflow or market growth from the Government sector has gone to the private sector and that is the non-secure work and work that can be let to the private sector that does not involve confidentiality. We keep those specific benchmarks of market prices in the private sector and ourselves. We are one of the few divisions within Government that can be compared directly against the private sector. A Government department can ask us for a

quotation on a certain job and that same Government department can then ring the private sector, compare the specifications and get a price from them. On occasions, where the prices from the private sector are to the advantage of the department, we will then let that work through our print procurement section and purchase from the private sector. Our aim is to give the Government the best value for its printing dollar.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I wonder whether Dr Dainis, from the Chemistry Division, might advise the Committee also as to how his department keeps account of the comparable cost with the private sector?

Dr Dainis: I would like to delineate some points about the Chemistry Division that have some relevance to costing and pricing. A certain proportion of our work in the Chemistry Division can be equated with the private sector, but it is done for departments like Agriculture and Environment and Planning. In a sense, we maintain some parity in terms of monitoring the private sector prices, but in the main we maintain the work rather than suggesting that it be handed over to the private sector, because it maintains a capability in our division for Government purposes. In this case I refer specifically to the Port Adelaide spillage where we are doing monitoring work for the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Environment and Planning. That is a very good example, I think, of where we need the capability. The cost of that operation, in terms of analysis, can be reckoned to be very high. It is certainly an addition to our budget and Treasury budgets, but in effect the fact that we do work for other departments that could, on the face of it, be let out to the private sector means that the actual cost to the Government of maintaining that capability is defrayed over the year.

In effect, I suggest that it is a fairly complex issue when one starts to look at the work load of a division like the Chemistry Division. I am not apologising for the fact that we do not compete directly with the private sector, but I am just saying that it is a fairly complex matter where one has to judge the overall cost of the service to the Government and the maintenance of that service.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: That is an indicative response of the various departments, rather than getting each individual director to advise the Committee as to how they respond to comparable prices in the private sector. I hope that that gives a picture to the honourable member so that he does understand the constraints placed on the department to ensure the best services at the best price.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I thank the Minister and his officer for the completeness of that answer, which does indicate that a positive monetary management role is taking place. Does it extend to cross-fertilisation of allowing officers from the department out into the private sector or taking people from the private sector in for specific projects? The Minister may recall that probably some 10 years ago the issue was raised by the Premier of that time who was proposing, on behalf of the Public Service generally but for the benefit of the State in the longer term, that opportunity be made available for outside personnel to come in for periods of time and inside personnel to go out into the private sector to gain additional training.

In educational jargon it may be called a PEP program to the advantage of the client department when that person comes back into the system. There are times when the private sector could better understand the public sector if there was cross-fertilisation of public sector requirements in an overall Government service. It is tending to get philosophical in one sense, but there is a lot of value in the philosophy of that attitude. Is it under contemplation within the managerial structure of the newly-developed Department of Services and Supply?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I could throw the question over to the Director-General as I know that at least one of his Directors is involved in an exchange with the private sector to which the honourable member refers. In a sense a joint operation is taking place between the public and private sectors. The Director-General may wish to have one of his officers come to the table to further advise the Committee. Both private and public sectors do benefit from an exchange at senior level of individuals who can make that contribution. I do not know whether Mr Roeger or one of his officers will respond.

Mr Roeger: I will make a response and then ask the Government Printer to comment further. We have not gone into exchange as such in a serious way. One of the Directors of the department, currently seconded to the Public Service Board did have an exchange in Canada with the Public Service there. We find that staff in the department change fairly frequently. The Government Printer came in from outside seven or eight years ago, the Director of State Supply came from the Army within the last two years, the Director of Chemistry came in from outside about two years ago, Professor Tilstone came from a university in Scotland less than two years ago and Malcolm James played for Sturt. We have normal management training. We send people to Mount Elisa and Harvard University on development courses. There is much interchange between the public and private sectors. We participate fairly widely in management training. The Government Printer has an exchange program, which may be of interest to the Committee.

Mr Woolman: We have a program that commenced in 1977 when the Printing Division was restructured and we entered into an agreement with the Advertiser group. The chairman of that committee was Mr Brian Price, who was Managing Director of the Griffin Press at that time. Since that time, we have senior and middle management people who have spent time within the Advertiser group. Also, we have had people go into the department to larger printing companies, either in this State or interstate. If we need consultants to come in, rather than go to a management consultant we also use the facilities of the private sector to get a specialist in. This has happened in costing and planning in our place. A number of overseas people have trained within the Printing Division: one of these programs was for two years for a person from Fiji; we have had a number from Fiji and New Guinea and one from Zambia. This is done through ADAPS, of the Commonwealth Government.

We also have an offer with the private sector on training of apprentices. An apprentice who is apprenticed with a small employer and cannot have the use of a wide range of equipment such as we have within the division can come in and train within the division to round off an apprenticeship. That is a current offer standing with the Printing and Allied Trades Federation. It is not taken up to the extent that we consider it should be, but the offer is there and we have had a number of apprentices through in the past four years. So, we have training at the senior management level and at the lower end of the scale with apprentices, and also with the Commonwealth department for developing countries overseas for training their management.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Mr Patriarca may want to refer to what happens with remote sensing in the joint operations between the Government and the private agencies that it is working with.

Mr Patriarca: The officers of the remote sensing centre have an opportunity to participate in joint ventures with the private sector in terms of the development of remote sensing technology. I refer to such companies as British Aerospace. That opportunity allows them to work closely with and learn from their private sector counterparts. Other exposures relate, for example, to the Hercules C130, which

is in Adelaide, flown and operated by NASA, where a group of 17 co-investigators participated in the trial of the new remote sensing technology. That also enables them to cross-fertilise in skills and developing the capabilities of our officers and staff.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I notice that the fifth corporate management objective stated is to develop and implement personnel practices. I would have thought that, basically, in the system existing at present, that would have been in the province of the Public Service Board, albeit that the new management structure will give a greater individual role to the various departments. What degree of interrelationship or individuality is directly associated with personnel practices?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will ask the Director-General to respond, but I understand that despite having a Public Service Board that has the responsibilities to which the honourable member referred, it does not derogate from the responsibilities of the departmental heads of the various departments to implement or develop personnel practices. They may do this themselves or in cooperation with or under the guidance of the Public Service Board. The honourable member knows that considerable changes have been mooted and that legislative changes will take place. Perhaps Mr Roeger will fill out that comment.

Mr Roeger: The Minister started it and just about finished it quite correctly. There is a responsibility on the department quite irrespective of what the responsibility is of the Public Service Board. Naturally these responsibilities must be passed down. To some extent that is the Minister's responsibility also. Of course, he expects me to do it. Even though it may appear in the agency overview as a new kind of project, it is actually a continuing responsibility to develop the people and the organisation, not only so that they get satisfaction from the work they do themselves, but it also aids the efficiency and effectiveness of the department.

The Department of Services and Supply is perhaps a little different from the normal department in that we were one of the first departments to receive quite substantial delegations from the Public Service Board, giving us formal delegation to do things in-house. That formal delegation of course gave us the direct responsibility to do things and not to hide behind what perhaps the Public Service Board did or did not do. We were one of the trial departments, and the new Government Employment Bill currently being managed explains a greater devolution of responsibility to operating departments.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I referred earlier to the proliferation of in-house services. I am somewhat concerned from information coming from the general public, directed to Government departments generally, about a proliferation of persons designated to undertake particular tasks within a department and then not be subject to the normal restraints that are imposed on the agencies, mainly private agencies that have been undertaking the work in the past. A classic example is that of pest exterminators, where pest exterminators in the private sector are responsible to the South Australian Health Commission and a series of other directives basically associated with the Department of Agriculture and the registration of the materials that they use.

However, a number of client bodies within the Government have been placing a member of staff in the position of being a pest exterminator within the department but not subject to the normal constraints of the Health Commission or any others. I know that the matter has been brought to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Health by the Pest Exterminators Association. I wonder whether the fact that it was found necessary to indicate a concern by management that by charging in essence the cross-charging between departments has brought about the

in-house service which might not necessarily be fulfilling its full role or full responsibility to the Government organisation that ought to be monitoring its activities. Is that the basis for this comment being in the document?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: The Director-General will once again respond in some detail. I believe that all of the departments within the Department of Services and Supply are meeting their charter completely. They are pretty lean and hungry organisations. In fact, all the Directors would tell the Director-General, who tells me, that certainly they are not in any way suffering from an excess of fat, because they are required to compete with all overheads taken into account. These in-house services are most effective. I might not be getting quite to the point that the honourable member is addressing, so I wonder if Mr Roeger might continue.

Mr Roeger: I do not know anything about pest exterminators. You will note at the bottom the words 'which compete with Services and Supply . . . cost effective to the Government as a whole'. The honourable member earlier questioned the costing policy of the department, asking whether all costs were recovered. It is mentioned under the issues that, at times of budget constraint and if cross charging is in vogue and another Government agency must pay for the service supplied by the Department of Services and Supply, the other agency might be inclined to perform that service in-house by putting on its own staff, perhaps buying a computer and forgetting about all the associated costs, such as accommodation and overheads, involved with building their own in-house resources.

Consequently, they can cost their own in-house resources below actual cost and below a price at which we could compete. Proliferation of in-house facilities is not always in the best economic interests of Government if, in fact, the Department of Services and Supply is there to provide those common services for agencies.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: There are various facets of in-house activity, and the Director has picked up one aspect of it, involving the true costing. I would mention the other aspect where you have people doing things for which they are not trained and not fulfilling their legislative obligations. This may be an area where the forensic service would like to comment.

Dr Dainis: This is an issue in which the chemistry division has some interest because since the introduction of cross charging by that division there has been an increase in the resources put into in-house laboratories. We are concerned about this because of the Government's overall interest in occupational health and safety. To a large extent laboratories are expensive places to maintain, and maintaining appropriate staff, not only for the job but for safety purposes, becomes a fairly expensive exercise.

We feel that in many cases we are being disadvantaged because we are following the letter of the law and professional standards and in-house laboratories that may be looking at purely comparing costs of analysis are not looking at this hidden aspect of the total concept of what it takes to maintain a service in a safe and economic manner.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The forensic service has been a matter of some contention as to where it should lie in relation to other Government departments, particularly the police. Have all the criticisms of the forensic service, relative to who its master should be, been adequately covered by the new arrangement? I am not being critical. I am totally supportive of the forensic service's efforts.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Professor Tilstone will give a more complete picture of the forensic science service. I take the honourable member's point that forensic science has become most relevant not only for crime detection in South Australia for obvious reasons (and there have been some notorious cases recently) but also for a number of other

essential needs that must be met. Professor Tilstone, who is from Glasgow, has been given the charter of introducing to South Australia an up to date, world standard service in forensic science. I am pleased to say that he has been able to achieve that, and he will comment on the cooperation and the relationships between his department and the major department that he services, the Police Department. Of course, these days forensic science has a wider responsibility to the courts and the community than just providing forensic evidence for the Police Department. There has been a very good acceptance of the role of forensic science.

Prof. Tilstone: The Forensic Science Division was established in 1982 under the IMVS legislation. The division was created because it was felt to be in the public interest, for the maintenance of confidence in forensic science services, that such services were provided by an agency other than the police, free of control of any legal service agency. This was effected by making the division a part of the Department of Services and Supply, and that occurred before I was appointed. It is something that I regard with considerable enthusiasm. I believe that that is an excellent charter, and that the Department of Services and Supply is an excellent place in which the forensic science services should reside.

The essential element is the question of confidence of the community at large that the services are being provided to the best possible quality available, free from any overtones of direction by those who might have an interest in the outcome of investigations.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The yellow book, at page 78, sets out the staffing of the department: at 30 June 1986 there will be 860 staff; at 30 June 1985 there were 829.1, and that figure had escalated from 733.9 at 30 June 1984. From page 81, I note that major funding increases this year relate to the transport service and centralised printing and related services. There is an increase of \$606 000 for transport because the fleet size has been increased. Transport services have received an injection of \$616 000 of capital funds. Further information in that regard is spelt out at page 94 of the yellow book. There has been an increase of 29 full-time positions for the centralised printing and related services.

There is also an increase of \$1.78 million. In 1981 capital expenditure amounted to \$685 000. This information in relation to the centralised printing service is more fully developed at pages 104 to 111 of the yellow book. I raise this matter recognising that other departments have been added, bringing personnel with them. Having highlighted the two major areas of transport and centralised services, what other areas will contribute significantly, and what areas have been allowed by attrition to keep that number within a reasonable limit?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: An increase of 29 full-time equivalents is shown on page 81. Page 78 shows a total overall increase in staffing of 31, of which 23 are transfers from the TAFE open college and document reproduction service to the Government Printer. Nine people are involved in the Crammond Working Party Forensic Science Report, so the total is really 32.

There has to be a wastage (a word I do not much like) in terms of other positions. By and large, that accounts for the increase in staffing. The individual programs that account for that increase are itemised on page 82, as the honourable member is aware. Of the \$616 000 mentioned, \$250 000 is for the ministerial fleet: \$200 000 for the vehicle car pool; and \$159 000 for a fleet management system.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The figure for the centralised printing and related services provides 29 of the 31 positions mentioned. What attrition has there been in other areas because I notice at page 82 that the laboratory service is

due to lose 2.3 full-time equivalents? The Government Management Administrative Service will lose 1.3 full-time equivalents. This information cannot be totally specific, so I am asking whether there are any other major changes in personnel or redeployments that are not readily apparent from the simple information on page 81.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I will ask the Director-General to respond, because he has pointed to a matter of some concern.

Mr Roeger: The table on page 78 of the yellow book shows actual figures as at 30 June, or a pay period close to that time. It is a snapshot of the position in the department at that time. An increase in actual full-time equivalent staff will occur in the current financial year—the number increasing from 829.1 to 860. As the Minister has said, that will occur mainly because of the transfer of TAFE employees to the Government Printing Division, the implementation of the Cramond Report recommendations on forensic science, as well as some expansion in the Government Computing Centre and the Government Printing Division.

Details of the ups and downs which make up the total increase are shown on pages 82 and 84 of the yellow book. These are average employment figures throughout the year. The table on page 82 indicates that seven full-time equivalents are proposed in 1985-86 for 'Information and referral services', compared with an average of 6.5; for 'Regulation and improvement of supply procedures', the number proposed is 6.5, as against 7.8 last year (so, they are 1.3 down); for the provision of computing services some expansion of the numbers is provided for because of the reorganisation which occurred and the need to fill some positions; for 'Provision of transport services' the number has increased from 76.6 to 76.4; for provision of advisory and analytical chemistry services the number for 1984-85 was 48.1, with 45.8 proposed for the current year (and I point out that casuals are used in the provision of analytical chemistry services to meet short term peak requirements).

Page 84 of the yellow book indicates that the average level of full-time requirements for 'Provision of forensic science services' will increase from 32.5 to 39.8, as a result of implementation of the Cramond Report recommendations. The number of full-time equivalents for the Government Printer will increase from 353.1 to 382.1. For 'Provision of supply and supply support services', the number will increase from 122.8 to 130.9. The list continues, and the total figures are provided at the bottom of the table. Explanations for all these individual programs are provided in those parts of the yellow book dealing with the specific programs.

I point out that the Government Printer uses casuals for short term requirements; the Government Computing Centre uses some contractors to make up effort; and the Chemistry Division uses some staff employed under trust funds for specific analysis. Further, the State Supply Division, in the warehouse particularly, also uses casuals for short term work. The summation of the use of all employees—casual and permanent—over the years is provided in the figures relating to average employment levels set out on pages 83 and 84 of the yellow book.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Advice has been provided that the movement of the Government Motor Garage into the Department of Services and Supply (together with the effects of various criteria that will apply in relation to the purchase and sale of vehicles) arises from the decision of the Public Accounts Committee and its recommendations, to which the Government is responding. One might assume that there will be an increase in the size of the Department of Services and Supply fleet due to the introduction of the Government Motor Garage.

Does this mean an increase in the size of the fleet, apart from the increase due to the transfer of the Government Motor Garage? This matter is a little ambiguous in the way that it is presented. I am keen to know whether we are to be more efficient in getting vehicles on stock and off stock and that we will not increase the size of the fleet at a time when for a variety of reasons the use of vehicles is becoming less popular.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I ask Mr Patriarca to explain to the Committee the new procedures in relation to the Government Motor Garage. Matters pertaining to vehicle accounting, purchase and sale could also be addressed by Mr Bridge from the State Supply Board. First, I ask Mr Patriarca to respond.

Mr Patriarca: As to the size of the fleet, the Committee would be aware that, with the establishment of the State Centre car park and car pool operations, and the transfer of vehicles residing in the central business district to the car pool, we have reduced the size of the city based fleet from 612 vehicles to 500 in a period of 12 months. That includes within it the transfer of the ministerial chauffeur fleet. We have achieved significant savings in relation to the size of the fleet being operated in the city area.

As to the accountability of vehicles, within the price we charge for hire we cover the full cost of replacing vehicles, being the cost of inflation that erodes the resale value of the vehicle. In terms of developing accountability in our pricing mechanism, we foster full recovery of the cost of that vehicle and we finance the repurchasing or replacement vehicle out of the income generated by providing a transport service to the public sector.

As to expansion of the city based fleet, we fund expansion of the fleet out of capital programs. We would take up additional loan funds to fund that expansion. The Committee will note under the capital line this year about \$200 000 set aside for transfer of vehicles that has not taken place to date but will take place in the next 12 months.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Perhaps Mr Bridge should respond as to purchase and disposal of vehicles.

Mr Bridge: First, as to disposal, as the member knows a salvage arrangement was set up recently at our Seaton warehouse for disposing of all motor vehicles for Government departments and a number of agencies. Vehicles are sold by tender, but generally they are handled at auction by our own staff who do the auction work. We do all the preparation using a contractor at Seaton so that vehicles are presented well, and they are sold. Usually every second week an auction is arranged, (in accordance with the cross-charging arrangements) in turn, we charge a commission for providing that service to the department sending the vehicle to us and it gets the net or rebate or whatever is left over. That operation presently processes about \$14 million in sales each year.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Has there been, with the change of responsibility, any new direction as to the use of the ministerial fleet, or do the general arrangements that previously applied still apply? If so, what are those current arrangements? If they are not available now, perhaps they can be provided for the *Hansard* record.

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: Arrangements have not changed. I was somewhat nervous and wondered whether the member was talking of the new ministerial responsibility, the new structure of the department, or the fact that vehicles are now included with Services and Supply. There are no changes to the rules controlling the vehicle pool. It is appropriate that we provide that information to the Committee through *Hansard*, and we will provide it within the terms of the deadline.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Auditor-General's Report highlights dramatic changes; for example, in the Government

Computing Centre there was a surplus in operations in 1984-85 of \$905 000, which was a turnaround of \$1.259 million. There was also a turnaround of \$144 000 in the State Supply Division to a profit of \$110 000. There are other examples. This obviously has come about from a managerial change or from improved efficiency overall. Is it expected that those improvements will be maintained in the future? Are there any early signs of difficulties in any one of the departments this financial year?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: To some extent we are subject to the vagaries of the market in the department's operations. Mr Jones can respond in relation to the turnaround that occurred, and how he sees the prospects for his department this year and in its future activities.

Mr Jones: The results that the Government Computing Centre achieved last year involve two main points. First, business was a lot higher than we expected in our original budgeting; and, secondly, there was a change in our accounting procedures which accounted for a \$370 000 increase in profit. As far as the future goes, in 1985-86 so far business is keeping up. Our pricing increases are kept to a minimum. We are not a profit-making organisation. We attempt to break even and finance our own operations. We do not aim to make a large profit. We have not increased our prices this year to the extent of CPI.

In future it will depend on whether we can retain the business of some of our larger clients. Probably \$3 million or \$4 million worth of our revenue comes from four or five departments. We need to retain that business to continue that result because of our limited marketplace.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the Centre for Remote Sensing, is there likely to be an aggressive selling approach to make use of this facility to the community generally or, more particularly, to the Police Department, the Commonwealth or others who can make use of the benefits of the group?

The Hon. G.F. Keneally: I certainly hope so. I am enthusiastic about the potential of this new technology, although I do not profess to understand too much about it. It looks pretty impressive and I am aware of its potential. Mr Patriarca can inform the Committee about how the Remote Sensing Centre is planning its future programs in coordination with the private sector, and what its marketing strategies are.

Mr Patriarca: We currently have a registration of interests to recruit marketing consultants to do the very thing that the honourable member suggested in relation to the marketing of the Centre for Remote Sensing. Those consultants will be endeavouring to establish for us the extent of the

market that is capable of being tapped by the Centre for Remote Sensing and also establish what services and product lines we need to develop to best explore the potential of remote sensing technology.

That consultancy is expected to be completed by January 1986. Hopefully, that will give us a sound basis on which to promote that technology. In relation to the current financial year, the Centre for Remote Sensing last year recovered 10 per cent of its cost of operation. We are currently budgeting for a 24 per cent cost recovery. That obviously implies that we are endeavouring to be aggressive in terms of promoting particularly joint venture arrangements with companies in the space industry, to increase awareness and also the revenue for the South Australian Centre for Remote Sensing.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Department of Services and Supply,
\$5 864 000—Examination declared completed.

Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous, \$84 727 000—
Examination declared completed.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee is obliged to report on Tuesday.

Mr HAMILTON: I move:

That the draft report be the report of the Committee.

Motion carried.

The CHAIRMAN: Before concluding, I should like, on behalf of the Committee, again to thank the officers, not only those at the table now but also those who were here previously, for their cooperation.

Mr HAMILTON: It is worth recording that this will be the last budget Estimates Committees on which you, Sir, and Mr Whitten will serve. I think both sides share my appreciation of your impartiality and good nature. We also appreciate your efforts, Sir, in trying to guide us. Personally, I thank you for your guidance over the years.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair thanks the honourable member, but there was a moment today when I had some reasonable doubts as to whether that resolution would have been moved!

At 5.58 p.m. the Committee concluded.