

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 28 September 1983

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

**Chairman:**

Mr G.T. Whitten

**Members:**

Mrs J.E. Appleby  
 Mr E.S. Ashenden  
 The Hon. D.C. Brown  
 Mr K.C. Hamilton  
 Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
 Mr J.K.G. Oswald  
 Mr J.P. Trainer  
 The Hon. Michael Wilson

*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

**The CHAIRMAN:** In regard to the membership of the Committee, the required notice of discharge and substitution of members has been given as follows: Mr Trainer in place of Mr Mayes, Mrs Appleby in place of Mr Gregory, Mr Hamilton in place of Mr Plunkett, the Hon. D.C. Brown in place of the Hon. Jennifer Adamson, the Hon. Michael Wilson in place of Mr Ingerson, and Mr Oswald in place of Mr Becker. Changes or substitutions to the Committee will be made only at a vote or at 1 o'clock and 6 o'clock. All questions will be directed to the Minister; they will not be directed to the advisers or officers, although the Minister may at any time ask the officers to answer the question or supplement his answers. The questions should relate to the vote and should not be on matters of policy.

I will allow the Hon. D.C. Brown the opportunity to make a short statement prior to the questioning; that time will be around 15 minutes, which should be ample. Then I will allow the Minister to make a similar type of statement, and the same time restraints will apply. We have nine votes before this Committee today. I suggest that at the earliest opportunity—maybe at about 1 o'clock—the Minister consult with the lead speakers from the Opposition and from the Government and with me to endeavour to allocate times for each vote. The quorum, as all will be aware, is four.

Members who are not members of this Committee may be seen by me to be able to ask questions. In relation to that, a member who is not a member of the Committee and who wants to ask a question should consult with the lead speaker from the Opposition because I will not see those members who are not members of the Committee unless there is agreement of the Committee itself. I can assure you that questioning of that type will not be encouraged. If any members who are not members of this Committee wish to ask questions they should advise the Chairman.

The order of the votes will be: Transport, Department of Transport, State Transport Authority, Minister of Transport (Miscellaneous), Highways, Highways Department, Marine and Harbors, Department of Marine and Harbors, Minister of Marine. As you see, there are nine votes. At this stage, I invite the Hon. D.C. Brown to make opening remarks.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** My comments will be extremely brief. It is the Opposition's view that Committees like this are here to obtain information from the Minister and his advisers. Certainly, we do not wish to make long protracted speeches and the answers that we would be looking for will be brief and concise. This system worked extremely well yesterday in Committee A but I understand it was a complete fiasco in Committee B where the Minister and his advisers

gave unbelievably long political statements in responding to the questions asked. In fact, I understand that they did not get beyond the first lead question of the Opposition in the two hours between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Certainly, we do not wish to see a repeat of that in this Committee today.

I note your comments that policy matters are not to be discussed, Mr Chairman, but it is appropriate to raise the point that policy does impact upon where funds are expended, and money can be spent in other areas if the Government changed some of its policies. Basically, we will be dealing with the priorities on expenditure and not with policies. At the outset, I say that the Liberal Party disagrees with some of the priorities on expenditure and therefore some of the policies laid down by the present Minister.

It is our view that the past nine months have been a fairly grim period for people who wish to travel, whether in their own cars or on public transport, for a number of reasons. The 47 per cent increase in public transport fares, the 1 per cent tax on fuel, the fact that for the first time the 1 per cent tax on fuel will not go towards improving the road system but will go to general revenue as passed in recent legislation, the decision of the present Government to scrap the north-south transport corridor without consultation with the people affected, particularly local government bodies, the reduced State funding for roads, particularly road construction and maintenance, the increase in on-the-spot fines, the fact that there is no commitment yet from the Government for the second half of the O-Bahn busway to the north-east suburbs (we will certainly be taking up that matter), and the numerous broken election promises are all areas in which the Opposition strongly disagrees on policy matters and, therefore, on the spending priorities of the present Government.

We will be taking up some of those expenditures. I highlight that there are strong areas of disagreement, especially as the travelling public, whether private or public, has certainly suffered and will suffer more because of those policy matters. I will leave it there before we go into questions.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Mr Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Despite the difficult budgetary situation, the Government has managed to sustain the transport portfolio in 1983-84. The main change in the Department of Transport for this year is the separation of the Department of Sport and Recreation, which took effect for budgetary purposes on 1 July 1982. For policy and programmes the Minister of Recreation and Sport took executive control in November 1982; thus although the \$14 million vote in 1982-83 included some recreation and sport items, the actual payments lines are included in the Minister of Recreation and Sport details at page 125. There is an overall increase in the Miscellaneous lines in the proposed Budget for 1983-84, and these are mainly due to revised arrangements for reimbursement of pensioners' and children's concession fares, which became effective during 1982-83.

However, substantial improvement will still be possible in South Australia's transport network under the allocations made available in the 1983-84 State Budget. Although there are obvious financial constraints that make it a very tight operating budget, major projects are proceeding as planned. Work on the north-east busway between O.G. Road and the city will proceed with the construction of two overbridges and seven river bridges and track laying between O.G. Road and Landsdown Terrace in this financial year. It is not necessary for the Government to make a decision until next year on the outer section of the busway from Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza. However, the Government has given a commitment that it intends to proceed as planned with that outer section. We will give consideration to the timing, but

a lot will depend on the finances available at the time a decision is to be taken.

Over \$180 million of Commonwealth and State funds will be available for road construction in South Australia in 1983-84. Continued extension, improvement and rehabilitation of the arterial network is planned including: continued upgrading of the north-south urban network with work on Ocean Boulevard, Dyson Road and Tapleys Hill Road; continued work on the Emerson crossing; commencement on upgrading of Golden Grove Road; and construction of Grand Junction Road extension to bypass Port Adelaide.

The upgrading of the national network will continue with work on the Stuart and Dukes Highways as will work on the Lincoln Highway, Mount Gambier to Keith Road and Moonta to Wallaroo Road. The Adelaide co-ordinated traffic signal programme is being accelerated as part of a number of traffic improvement measures. The State Transport Authority will commence the resignalling of the Adelaide Railway Station yards. Work will be undertaken to upgrade the Hackney and St Agnes depot in preparation for the north-east busway operations. The last 40 M.A.N. buses will be delivered as part of the current contract and further contracts will be let for 40 rigid and 50 articulated buses. The Government is also purchasing six M.A.N. buses fitted with liquid petroleum gas engines to continue operational evaluation of alternative fuels.

The planned rationalisation of transport services in the Mitcham Hills area will be implemented during this year and a full assessment of transport needs and services in the Bridgewater to Belair area of the hills will be undertaken. Preparation is being made for on-line computer facilities for the Motor Registration Division. Budget allocations have been made for the Road Safety Council of S.A. to allow that organisation to resume effective involvement in the operations of road safety centres. Provision has also been made for upgrading the research effort in the road safety area. The Department of Marine and Harbors will complete the deepening and expansion of the port facilities at Port Pirie and provide new slipway facilities at Robe for the fishing industry in the South-East. This Department will also commence preliminary work on the acquisition of a second container crane for the Port of Adelaide.

We also have a programme for the deepening of the Thevenard Harbour. I think that members of this committee would have heard my response about this matter in this House last week. These are my opening remarks and I am prepared now to answer any questions that might be asked. It is not my intention to make long, political policy speeches during this Committee debate. I will endeavour to answer questions to the best of my ability and that of my officers as members ask them.

**The CHAIRMAN:** In relation to the member for Davenport's opening remarks, I must say that what I am trying to impart to the Committee is that I realise that it is sometimes necessary to relate to policy matters but I am endeavouring to dispense with second reading or grievance debate type speeches during this Committee procedure. I make this point in the same way as I made it yesterday. I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

Transport, \$13 597 000

**Witness:**

The Hon. R. K. Abbott, Minister of Transport.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Dr D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr P.T. Tregoweth, Senior Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr K.J. Collett, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Transport.

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

Mr J.V. Brown, General Manager, State Transport Authority.

Mr J.W. Hutchinson, Director, Transport Policy Research, Department of Transport.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I intend to allow the member for Davenport to ask the first question. He will have the opportunity to ask three questions, and then the member for Albert Park will be given the opportunity to ask three questions. Questions will be asked alternately by Opposition and Government members, each member having the opportunity to ask three questions in succession.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Before we formally start questioning, I have just received an indication from you, Mr Chairman, of the order in which the lines will be considered and, as that order differs from the programme, it is fair to briefly raise this point so that there is no misunderstanding. I am quite happy to facilitate the Minister and his officers in every way possible. According to my list, the transport line will be considered first, followed by the Department of Transport capital area, the State Transport Authority, the Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous, dealing with the allocations for the State Transport Authority, the Highways Department, and the Highways Department capital line. The Department of Marine and Harbors and the Minister of Marine will then be considered.

According to that programme, I should think (and the Opposition has already discussed this matter) that we would be considering the transport line and the Department of Transport until the lunch break, or shortly after that, taking about two hours. The State Transport Authority and the Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous lines should take a further two hours, taking us to 4 o'clock, and then the Highways line and the Highways Department capital line will be considered from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Because there is some difficulty in terms of the transfer of Committee members in that I must attend Committee A by 7.30 this evening to question the Minister of Public Works on his lines, we would appreciate it if that sort of programme could be adhered to. Certainly, there can be flexibility between now and 6 p.m. in allocating times. I also raise that matter because I know that some members who are not members of the Committee would like to ask questions on specific lines. I will notify Opposition members who wish to ask questions when they may do so.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I asked that we come to some sort of agreement and we can certainly be rather flexible. According to the advice I have received from the member for Davenport, I believe we could say that representatives of the Department of Marine and Harbors will not be required until 7.30 p.m.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** The Highways Department advisers will not be called upon until 3 p.m.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I appreciate that co-operation, and I am sure that this Committee will be able to work efficiently and without any problems.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** First, I refer to the Motor Registration Division. I understand that the Division is currently going to an on-line computer facility. Can the Minister indicate to what extent that facility has now been adopted? What staff savings are likely to occur as a result of adopting an on-line computer? What cost savings are likely to occur? When will the overall implementation of the programme be completed?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** No finance is provided in the 1983-84 Budget for the on-line system, other than for two staff who will commence work on the on-line computer. The Director-General will provide further details.

**Dr Scrafton:** The situation in relation to the on-line computer has not changed greatly since last year. We have been working on the development of the programme. The project officer was recruited this year and he has been going through an analysis in relation to previous years. It was estimated earlier that staff savings would amount to 114, based on an overall staffing level of around 500. Those figures have not changed greatly. However, quite a few of the benefits that accrue from moving towards an on-line facility have already been achieved in terms of staff savings.

We expect the cost to be around the same level—something of the order of \$3 million. However, that figure is liable to some adjustment. At the present time we are working with the justice information system, which is being developed for justice information groups such as the police, the courts, and so on. At the same time, we are holding discussions with the Government Computing Centre about potential savings by using the Government's own main frame computers rather than our own. At the present time we have made no progress towards a tender call. Our present programme is to resubmit to Cabinet a proposal to call for tenders probably by the end of the year. We had hoped to do that by June this year, but that has not proved possible because of additional complications.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** After talking to a number of people about data processing, I understand that it would be possible to quickly adapt some of the schemes already operating in Australia. Although they perhaps would not match 100 per cent exactly what is required here, they would probably meet 98 per cent of our requirements. I also understand that such a scheme could be implemented using existing software and, therefore, could be done quickly and cheaply compared to trying to construct an entirely new system to operate only here in South Australia. Has the Department looked at that suggestion?

I certainly support Dr Scrafton's final remark, in that I also understand that considerable cost savings and speed can be achieved by going through the Data Processing Board and the Government Computing Centre rather than trying to set up the Department's own facility. Frankly, I think the Government needs to reassess the situation, not only in this area but also in other areas: I refer to the whole procedure that the Government tends to go through in trying to adopt new computer systems to whatever application is required.

**Dr Scrafton:** I appreciate the honourable member's comments. That is the reason for the delay. In the earlier evaluations we went through the exercise of looking at developments in other States. Once he was appointed, the project officer felt that there was a need to check through that material. That accounts for the delay that I mentioned earlier. The project officer has already visited the Northern Territory, Queensland, and Tasmania.

The feeling is that we have learnt a lot from Queensland and from the Northern Territory. The Northern Territory system has some potential for us, but it is too small, apparently; its numbers are not directly transferable to us. The one system that he still has to investigate is the Western Australian one. The Western Australians had an independent organisation handling vehicle registration and authority, and they got quite a way down the track with their on-line computer. Then, there was a change of organisation and I think that the responsibility for registration reverted to the Police Department. It is believed that there is quite a bit of residual work in that Western Australian experience which could be directly applicable to us. The only thing that I can do is reassure the honourable member through the Minister

that the comments that he has made are in line with the work that is going on.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Thank you for that reassurance. Certainly, from the information that I have been given in talking to a number of people on this, I concur with that. I think that the Western Australian system probably could be adapted here very quickly and would provide most of what the Department is after.

I wish to take up the issue of the north-south transport corridor. The policy document that the Minister put out at the last election was very brief; it simply said, 'North-south freeway will be investigated with public participation'. The Government since then has announced that that freeway, or what I think is a transport corridor, has been scrapped. Can the Minister indicate which parties were involved in the consultation on that? Can he indicate what studies were done beforehand? What studies have been done since as a consequence of that decision? Who undertook those studies and what are the consequences of those studies in terms of the present priority for the State Government in meeting the transport needs between the north and south? We will take up this issue in more detail under the Highways Department, but at this stage it also comes under the Transport Department because that is where, I understand, a lot of the research and policy recommendations came from, as opposed to the Highways Department.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Government's decision to abolish the north-south corridor was discussed by the Resources and Physical Development Committee, which is a subcommittee of Cabinet, on three or four occasions, in conjunction with both the Department of Transport and the officers from the Highways Department. Full discussions and consideration were given to the effect of this decision. We realised that it was an important decision, but the Government felt that, on the evidence available to it, it made the right decision. I have made it quite clear in my press statements that the traffic counts and the population growth rates would not be what was anticipated earlier when the decision to continue with the north-south corridor was taken.

The former Government reduced the size of the north-south corridor, and it was left on the Metropolitan Development Plan as a concept only; so the former Government surely must have had some concern as to whether that freeway should proceed or not. I can assure the member for Davenport that there was full consultation with all officers of both the Transport and Highways Departments before the Government took the decision to abolish the north-south corridor.

The corridor land was acquired using both State and Federal funds. Just which categories of State moneys and Federal grants and which Acts were relevant to the acquisition of parcels of land is now being investigated. At the very least, all funds that were paid out by the Highways Department for the purchase of this land will be reimbursed when the land is sold.

**Mr HAMILTON:** On page 4 of the programme Estimates document, under the heading 'Corporate management objectives', it states in the seventh paragraph:

To improve the level of safety in the transport system through an integrated and effective safety programme, embracing education, legislation, engineering, traffic control and vehicle design.

I believe that the Minister would be aware, particularly, of the controversy raging over the future of General Motors-Holden's, Woodville, which I do not want to get into, but many spare parts and vehicles come into Australia which do not conform to the Australian vehicle design rules. Can the Minister say what progress has taken place with other States and the Federal Government in reaching some uni-

formity in relation to vehicle design rules, not only for the vehicles but also for many of the spare parts?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** There is uniformity now in vehicle design. A committee makes recommendations to the Australian Transport Advisory Council, which considers the recommendations. Every State tries to adopt uniformity with regard to the design of vehicles, especially in relation to safety. I ask the Director-General whether he has further comment on the question.

**Dr Scafton:** The only comments that I could add to what the Minister has said is that most of this area is co-ordinated through the Australian Transport Advisory Council, which has a multitude of organisations reporting to it. The important thing from the point of view of the Department's budget is the progress that is being made in the State, which has been considerable since the establishment of the Regency Park inspection centre. At present, something of the order of 20 staff (16 now and an additional four is proposed for 1983-84) are at Regency Park, and in addition there is the load trading group which handles commercial vehicles. Both these organisations get their responsibility through the Road Traffic Board and the Road Traffic Act. They carry out their responsibilities under the aegis of the Road Traffic Act.

The main concern at present in the portfolio is to ensure that these organisations, both Federal and State, act with a modicum of consistency. We have a concern at present about the ability of the various organisations to provide somewhat conflicting advice and approvals which are not necessarily in conformity with one another. That would be one of the big efforts of 1983-84: to try to bring about greater conformity in that area. That is a programme that has been going on for, I guess, three years now to bring this to fruition. Completion of the inspection centre was the first step, and the uniformity of advice and approvals that are given is the next step.

Many of the inspections are done through giving delegated approval to organisations such as regional offices of the Highways Department, the police and the E. & W.S. Department; the State Transport Authority handles its own vehicles, and so on. That is all I can add.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Again on page 4, I refer to the following paragraph:

To be aware of other State Government objectives which could affect or be affected by the transport system by:

- minimising all forms of environmental damage (social and/or ecological) from construction and/or operation of transport facilities;
- encouraging fuel-efficient vehicles and alternative means of propulsion.

I understand that emission control legislation has been passed by this Government. Is the Government waiting on the Department for Environment and Planning in conjunction with proposed legislation to enforce properly these emission controls?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Until recently the Department of Transport funded the development of an electric car and van at Flinders University. It currently holds patents on the technology and control system jointly with Flinders University. A project to evaluate the feasibility of encouraging mopeds and small motor cycles has recently been undertaken, while economically favourable rider safety would appear to be an issue. There is departmental representation on the State Bicycle Committee, a committee for the development of the infra-structure necessary to encourage cycling. A joint study experiment with the Commonwealth and the Department of Mines and Energy has been undertaken by the Department of Transport into car pooling (share riding) with very limited success to date. To my knowledge there is no legislative proposal being considered presently. In

regard to emission control, we have to go to lead-free petrol by 1985. In the meantime, there will be a partial reduction that should take place shortly, and legislation is being prepared for that at present.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I refer again on the same page to the following paragraph:

Encouraging the owners of hazardous goods to accept fair responsibility for the safe transport of the goods.

What does the phrase 'safe transport of the goods' mean, especially in regard to hazardous goods? I think a couple of years ago cyanide or some other dangerous substance was spilled just outside Burra from a semi-trailer. That matter concerned me and I questioned the previous Minister about it. What specific legislation or intention has the Government in this area?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Our aim is to ensure that radioactive materials and other dangerous substances are transported in South Australia with a minimum of danger to the public, transport operators and also the environment, by maintaining liaison with regulating agencies and with the transport industry by means of discussions, inspections and service on working groups and committees and the like. We are trying to encourage the owners of hazardous goods to accept their responsibility for the safe transport of goods, and my understanding is that the legislation is with the Departments of Health and Environment and Planning at present.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I wish to raise the issue of the north-south transport corridor, particularly because of the Minister's response. The Minister indicated that recent population figures show that there was not the same demand for the north-south transport corridor. First, I refer the Minister to the population figures released by the Department for Environment and Planning in March 1982 which show (the Minister will agree that they are recent figures) that the population in the southern suburbs of Adelaide will increase by 46 per cent. They were the same figures used by the Minister in regard to the Highways Department on the widening of South Road which the Minister released in March 1983. As the Minister formally released those figures and accepted them then, does he still accept the figures now and, if not, which figures does he accept?

When the Minister refers to the fact that there was consultation within Government (I do not dispute that he may have consulted his Cabinet colleagues or the Department of Transport, but certainly he did not consult local government, particularly in the light of the election promises and statements made as Minister to local government bodies in the southern metropolitan area), why did he not consult with those bodies before making the decision and announcing it?

The Minister indicated that historical costs would be returned to various Acts, whether Federal or State. However, the Minister would realise that the value of the land purchased has appreciated greatly over almost 15 or 20 years, and some of the land would be worth three times its original value. Therefore, the assurance that 'historical costs will be refunded to the appropriate fund, such as the Highways Department' simply means that all the increase in value due to inflation is likely to go to general revenue. Will the Minister undertake to proportion those funds between the Commonwealth and the State, where required, depending on whence the money originally came, and ensure that all the State funds will go to the Highways Fund for road construction and not into general revenue? In view of the public reaction, particularly from local government bodies, will the Minister review and reverse his decision with regard to scrapping the north-south freeway, especially as he did not consult with local government bodies, which have come out so violently in opposition to what he has put forward?

Finally, the Minister did not answer my earlier question: what subsequent studies are now being undertaken to overcome what will be obvious transport difficulties in that area? Based on the Minister's figures released by the Highways Department in March, we see that by 1990, which is only seven years away, existing roads in the Darlington area will be completely congested and unable to cope with the traffic and that by 1992 all the roads in a transect of Adelaide adjacent to South Road and Anzac Highway intersection will be completely congested from Unley Road to Brighton Road. What studies are being undertaken to dramatically meet the needs of that southern area in terms of both private cars and other transport needs now that the transport corridor has been scrapped?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The member for Davenport says that I have not answered an earlier question, and I would like to deal with that first. I did not gather what part of his question I did not answer. Can the honourable member repeat that?

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** What studies are being undertaken to provide completely different transport services to the southern suburbs now that the transport corridor has been scrubbed? In other words, has the Minister arranged for studies to be undertaken which can be released publicly and which will show how he, as Minister of Transport, will cope with the obvious transport difficulties that will exist by 1990?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** There are a number of studies presently being undertaken. One encompasses the question of an overpass at the Darlington intersection. However, it will be some time before that study is completed. We are also considering overpasses for other areas. I do not expect these reports to reach me before the end of this year. I indicated in my answer to a number of members' questions, and to councils in certain areas, the improvements that we intend to implement during the 1983-84 financial year. The improvements named were indicative only because it is our intention to consult with councils in the southern region as to the matter of priorities. Among the projects that we are planning for the 1983-84 financial year is the upgrading of Ocean Boulevard and of Dyson Road/Sheriffs Road to Beach Road. There are various sections there to be upgraded. Reservoir Drive is a new link that will be commenced next year, and the South Road between Darlington and Reynella will receive minor improvements. As I said earlier, they are purely indicative matters at this stage and will depend on financial resources being available and on the result of discussions and consultation with local councils.

I turn now to repayments to the Highways Department from sale of houses in the proposed transport corridor. The member mentioned that these houses have depreciated considerably over the years and I think that that remark is true. As I have already stated, the Highways Department will be reimbursed with the historical cost of those houses plus an amount for any improvements made to them over the years. Mr John Hutchinson from the Transport Planning Department is at the table and I ask him to add further detail about some of the questions asked by the member for Davenport.

**Mr Hutchinson:** The population projections used are the recent ones and the ones that the honourable member quoted from.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** They are March 1982 figures.

**Mr Hutchinson:** I cannot be precise about the date but they are the most recent figures produced by the Department for Environment and Planning. The next part of the member's question related to the matter that the Minister was addressing regarding what portion of funds raised from sale of land in the transport corridor will be returned to the

Highways Department. This matter rests with Cabinet, not with me as a technical officer. However, my understanding is that a large part of the corridor land will be resold and the total funds repaid to the Highways Department. In some areas there may be only historic cost repaid. Beyond that, the honourable member will have to clarify any further questions he wishes me to answer through the Minister.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I do not regard this as another question.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I know that it is going to be difficult for the Minister and his officers if members ask a multiplicity of questions all at the same time. I will certainly allow questions followed by supplementary questions about a particular point, but I ask honourable members not to ask 10 questions at once.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I remind the Minister that my other question was whether the Government would review its decision in line with the strong reaction against that decision that came from local government.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Director-General has some of the figures that the member has asked for and I ask him to highlight them.

**Dr Scrafton:** In view of earlier comments, I do not intend to go into great detail about the data source. However, I would like to comment on its applicability to the north-south transport corridor problem. The important thing that I draw to the attention of the Committee is that the population projections produced by the Department of Environment and Planning in 1982 for the years 1981 to 2011 are much lower than the original figures. I consider this to be fundamentally very important. The original figures being used in this matter were produced in 1976-77 by the then Department of Urban and Regional Affairs and were for the period 1976 to 2011.

The figures we are now using, the 1982 figures to which the honourable member has referred, are incorrect in that they still do not reproduce the base year, which is 1981, correctly. As I understand, and I guess this is not a matter I can comment on to any extent, the Department of Environment and Planning is again reviewing these numbers. More importantly to the matter of the north-south corridor are the employment projections shown in these figures. The decline in employment figures shown is quite startling and obviously of great concern. It is, of course, a figure that metropolitan councils are not particularly anxious to debate. In fact, it is difficult to find people, even in the State Government, who want to acknowledge the enormous difficulties involved in attracting employment to the south of Adelaide.

The situation (and I am not sure how far I can go with this argument) is that one could argue strongly that, if a freeway or another transport facility costing a lot of money was built, it might make life easier for people living on the north-south corridor but the fundamental question is whether or not figures of \$200 million to \$250 million can be afforded to test a hypothesis. Our difficulty in giving advice to the Government (advice given in collaboration with the Highways Department, Department of Environment and Planning and Department of Premier and Cabinet) is that the trend in population and employment figures is startling enough to cause a reassessment of the project. I think that the advice the department gave to the Government, aided by other departments on the committee, was that the project should be removed from the metropolitan Development Plan. It was advice given to the former Government, which responded that it would leave it on the plan as a concept only.

The difficulty that officers have with that answer (and this problem has yet to be confronted in the Metropolitan

Development Plan modifications or amendments which have yet to be formulated and come forward) is how one leaves a concept on a plan. That is the sort of advice that the department, in collaboration with other departments, gave to the Government. How the previous or the existing Government responds to that advice is something that I cannot comment on. I can say that the figures on which some earlier plans were made were far from robust and I do not think one has to be an absolute genius to see that. The great difficulty we have in communicating with southern area councils is that they are very reluctant to accept that fact. The other point I make is that if the north-south corridor was built it would not encourage development in the south, but would make it very much easier for people in the south to commute to work places in the north and would simply encourage development of industry in the north; this already (and again this is outside my line of responsibility) is a great disadvantage for relocation of industry.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I am glad that Dr Scrafton raised the employment aspect. I have just finished three years as Minister of Industrial Affairs, during which time I tried to attract industry to the southern metropolitan area. I negotiated with a lot of companies, but the biggest single barrier to creating jobs and employment opportunities and encouraging industrial development in the southern area, such as at Lonsdale, was the transport problem. All of the companies to which I spoke, despite the fact that generous financial incentives were offered by the Department of Trade and Industry and the Housing Trust in regard to industrial premises, would not commit themselves unless there was a firm commitment on a time basis in regard to the building of the north-south transport corridor. We are locking ourselves into long-term transport corridors. I would argue that the very reason the Government and the State Transport Authority put forward for not building the north-south corridor is exactly the reason why it should be built—it would provide job opportunities in that area.

I am glad that the March 1982 figures are being used, because it was those figures that the Highways Department used in its report on the widening of South Road, the very same figures that stressed that by 1990, even with the widening of South Road, with the Emerson overpass and other improvements, all of the roads in the Darlington area, including the new Ocean Boulevard, after upgrading, will be completely congested. That fact came out in a Highways Department report that was released by the Minister in March this year. From the figures in Appendix 1 of that report, one sees that there will be complete congestion by 1992 on all the other major roads running into Adelaide between Unley Road and Brighton Road, and in the area of Anzac Highway.

I refer now to safety. I note from page 15 of the yellow book that 270 road fatalities occurred last calendar year, and there were about 11 000 injuries. The estimated cost to the community of each road fatality is \$375 000. I believe that we are all concerned about the cost to the community, the social cost, and the human suffering cost of road fatalities. Because that document highlights those costs, I was somewhat concerned to note, from page 16, that recurrent expenditure for road safety promotion publicity has been reduced from \$417 000 to \$271 000. Having highlighted the enormous costs of road fatalities, what is the Government's rationale in dramatically reducing the expenditure on road safety promotion and publicity, which seems to be the very tool for reducing the cost of those injuries?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask Mr Collett to respond to that question.

**Mr Collett:** The figure of \$417 000, which sum was expended last year, includes additional moneys made available by the Government for road safety purposes from

special funds that are held in respect to personalised number plates. That money would represent certain campaigns that were carried out on an *ad hoc* basis last year. The same situation could well apply this year. If one considers the vote for last year (\$272 000) in comparison to the allocation for this year of \$271 000, one sees that the *status quo* is really being maintained. Nevertheless, the Government still has the ability to spend money from those special funds as the occasion arises. Indeed, that will occur at Christmas time this year, when a special campaign will be launched in regard to drink driving for the 18 to 24 year old age group.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I appreciate that last year more money was actually spent than was allocated because of the revenue from personalised number plates, but I am still concerned that there is a one-third reduction in actual financial terms, and even more in real financial terms, in the sum allocated. The table also shows that the allocation for driver education has been reduced from \$397 000 to \$367 000. I note that the costs of the driver education campaign increased, so in real terms the reduction is even more dramatic, possibly as high as 20 per cent. I cannot quite understand the rationale. It appears that many of the programmes in that area have been reduced when I believe that we should be increasing the effort.

I note from pages 13 and 14 that approval has been given for two additional staff for the introduction and maintenance of the road towing roster system. Will the Minister say whether he will implement that towing service and the new scheme? The Act has been passed by Parliament. If the Minister will implement the service, when will he do so, and what will be the costs of implementation?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Mr Collett has more detail on this matter.

**Mr Collett:** Last year we made provision in the Budget for two additional staff because of the new tow truck regulations. That did not eventuate, and this year we have made no financial provision. We will seek special funds when the Government agrees to the introduction of the new regulations for tow trucks. At that time we will seek additional staff and additional funds in that regard. Regarding driver education, last year the allocation was high (\$397 000), because it involved the repair of the skid pan at the road safety centre. That was a once-only undertaking and involved a fairly major repair job, which had to be carried out. There has been no diminution this year in the driver education vote. The same number of people are employed and the same contingency will apply.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I realise that I have asked three questions, but I asked the Minister when the legislation on tow truck regulations will be implemented and when it will operate.

**Mr Collett:** The regulations are with the Crown Law Office for a certificate of validity, and when they come back the Government will consider it.

**Mr KLUNDER:** I note from pages 11 and 12 of the yellow book that \$8 983 000 has been allocated for concessions, with the employment level being nil. I presume that that involves a paper transfer. According to the first paragraph on page 11, I take it that that sum was arrived at by taking 17 per cent of the running costs of the S.T.A. Will the Minister confirm or correct those impressions?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I can give a breakdown of this expenditure. The programme incorporates the reimbursement made by the Government to the S.T.A., to private bus operators, including the country town bus operators, and Australian National for the carriage of pensioners, and to the S.T.A. only for war widows and children.

The concession only applies to war widows using State Transport Authority services. The concession has not been



extended to country areas at this stage for people who use Australian National facilities. Reimbursement for the carriage of students was made to both the State Transport Authority and private bus operators. The amount of the reimbursement is put through the books of the Education Department and does not appear in this programme. The student reimbursement to the S.T.A. amounts to the difference between the fare paid by the student and the common adult fare. On a cash student fare of 30 cents it amounts to 60 cents per journey.

The S.T.A. is further reimbursed to 30 times the common adult fare for each monthly ticket sold. A student monthly ticket now costs \$9. Private operators receive monthly student reimbursements to the single adult fare, multiplied by 30. It is proposed that \$200 000 will be provided in relation to pensioners and others who receive a concession in relation to Australian National; \$8 000 is provided for concession cards; \$130 000 for the blind and incapacitated; \$7.395 million for pensioners, including war widows; and \$1.250 million for children. That amounts to \$8.983 million.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I suggest that questions of this type would be better asked under the 'Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous' line or the State Transport Authority line.

**Mr KLUNDER:** Mr Chairman, I could not find it under S.T.A., but I am guided by your decision.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I point out to the honourable member that it appears under the 'Miscellaneous' line.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I refer to the Motor Transport Division and the Road Safety Centre. Formerly, it was known as the Division of Road Safety and Motor Transport. In its wisdom, the Government has decided to split the division. The total salaries and wages for the two areas, plus the contingencies, amount to a combined vote of \$1.669 million (that is for the Motor Transport Division and the Road Safety Centre combined, which will provide an approximate apportionment for last year's vote for road safety and motor transport). On whose advice did the Government take the decision to split a division with a total vote of \$1.669 million into two smaller divisions? Since 1974 there have been various efforts to reorganise agencies within the Transport Department and the transport scene overall, because they were widely dispersed. Numerous studies have been conducted on these types of questions and, in fact, one important study was undertaken by Fred Athlick and Associates. The former Government moved to assist in rationalising transport agencies, as did a previous Labor Government under Mr Virgo in relation to the Transport Control Board and the State Transport Authority. They were correct decisions. On whose advice did the Minister take the decision to split the division? Who now heads up the two agencies and why did the Government take the decision?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** In its policy speech the Government said that the Road Safety Centre at Oaklands Park would be freed from the bureaucratic control imposed on it by the previous Liberal Government. To achieve that objective it was necessary to restore the charter of the Road Safety Council, which was ignored by the former Government. The Road Safety Council was established in 1966 to administer an annual Commonwealth grant, which is currently \$18 750, and such State funds that become available from time to time for road safety purposes.

As a result of the council's initiatives, the Oaklands Park Safety Instruction Centre was opened in 1972 and it became the focus for Road Safety Council meetings and activities. Prior to 1976 the council's Chairman was part time, but from 3 August 1976 to 13 October 1981 the Chairman of the Road Safety Council was a full-time public servant who managed the centre at Oaklands Park and arranged courses at other centres, such as those at Whyalla, Elizabeth and

Tea Tree Gully. When the former Government established the Road Safety and Motor Transport Division in 1981 it ignored training functions and the Road Safety Council's charter. The Oaklands Park centre became part of the division's activities and the Road Safety Council became a purely advisory body to the Minister of Transport, with a new part-time Chairman, Dr Donald Beard. The membership was also reduced by eliminating representatives from local government, the State Transport Authority and the Road Traffic Board.

In relation to who made the decision, the Government promised to free the Road Safety Council from the bureaucratic control that it was under. This Government felt that road safety is an important issue and that it should not have any political interference. As a consequence, the Government decided to restore the Road Safety Centre to its pre-1979 situation. The current manager of the Oaklands Park Road Safety Centre is Mr Tom Chambers. The Manager of the Motor Transport and Road Safety Division is Mr Tony Flint. The Division is still responsible for road safety publicity. In fact, the Division will be doing the major publicity work, because it is impossible for the Road Safety Council, which is a voluntary organisation with voluntary representation, to do it. It now has a budget. The area has been split, but it is not receiving less money.

The Road Safety Council is a useful representative body and its expertise was being wasted under the arrangements set up by the previous Government. As I have said, we decided to restore its charter to enable it to play a more active role in relation to road safety. As a result, we have placed the operations of the Road Safety Centre at Oaklands Park under the direction of the Road Safety Council and have provided a budget that will allow it to conduct a variety of road safety campaigns. In order to upgrade the basic information available to myself as Minister and to bodies such as the Road Safety Council, we are developing a research team within the Department of Transport that will undertake a programme of road safety research in South Australia.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** That is an extraordinary statement by the Minister. I intend to comment on a couple of points that he made. First, the Minister said that the resources of the Road Safety Council were wasted by the previous Government. The decision to free the Road Safety Council from responsibility at Warradale was taken on advice from various transport consultants, because the Road Safety Council was continually involving itself in the day-to-day matters of the Road Safety Centre at Warradale.

It is not the function of the Road Safety Council to deal with the number of motor cyclists being tested at Warradale and with various other minutiae. The Road Safety Council, especially considering the importance of road safety, has a role to advise the Government on major items of legislation in road safety and on items of publicity. The Minister, by his own admission, has now said that the present Government has dispersed the effort of road safety through three different agencies (that is ignoring other Governments agencies such as Education and the Police). The Minister has said that the Motor Transport Division is already handling some aspects of road safety, and the Road Safety Centre is still concerning itself with the training of drivers, which is its function; it is a training centre.

I find the Minister's statements absolutely extraordinary. He has gone against all professional advice in taking this decision, and I believe that it has been taken for ideological reasons. I was the first to give credit to Mr Virgo and the former Labor Government for setting up the Road Safety Centre at Warradale. It was an excellent initiative, but that does not mean that the work of the Road Safety Council should be entirely taken up with the day-to-day running of

the Road Safety Centre itself. It is a ridiculous situation where a division is split and where each component of that division will now have a budget of some \$800 000 total.

I resent the Minister's reflections on the previous Government, that the previous Government wasted the resources of the Road Safety Council, when Dr Beard and the Road Safety Council were set up for the very purpose of advising the Government (and I would have hoped the present Government, too) on the extremely important initiatives that need to be taken in the area of road safety. My colleague from Davenport has already mentioned the diminution of effort that appears to be going into road safety by this Government, despite criticisms made by the Minister and his colleagues when in Opposition. I believe that it is a retrograde step. I was going to give the Committee the benefit of my appreciation of why it happened, but I will not do that; that is another matter.

I will move on to the question of the Motor Registration Division. I refer to the Auditor-General's Report. On page 217 we see that the receipts for the Motor Registration Division in registration fees and driving licence fees were \$58.608 million. On the next page (the table at the bottom of page 219) we see that that \$58.608 million includes the receipts from slogan vehicle plates and personalised vehicle plates. If we deduct those two figures of (because, as I understand it, the receipts from those two areas go into special funds allocated for road safety purposes) \$375 000 and \$227 000, we get a total accrued from motor registration receipts of \$58.005 million. Paid to the Highways Department was \$48.693 million (that figure, again, is on page 217). This is the important figure.

The questions that I want to put to the Minister are these, but I just make this short explanation first. The Motor Registration Division receipts to go the Highways Fund for road purposes. From those funds a first charge is deducted for administration. If we deduct the costs for administration of Motor Registration, contained on pages 84 and 85 of the Estimates, we find that the total is \$8.5 million, leaving a shortfall of between \$800 000 and \$1 million in the amount transferred to the Highways Department. I would like the Minister to tell me where that \$800 000 to \$1 million has gone because, as I read it—and there may be something that I have missed—that is money that should be spent on roads.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Mr Collett has the detail on this.

**Mr Collett:** One of the reasons for the \$1 million discrepancy about which we are talking is that we are now being cross-charged for Public Buildings services. That is the Motor Registration building and all the other buildings, telephones and that sort of thing. You will find this throughout the budget of the Department now, in other areas where cross-charges and other charges appear for the first time. I have not done the sums on this as you have done, but that would account for most of it.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Does that mean that the Highways Department is also being cross-charged? I would hate to think that there was double dipping in the area of transport.

**Mr Collett:** I do not think so. Public Buildings, to my knowledge, would not have any responsibility for that building out there. It would be maintained by the Highways Department itself. This is a charge that we have. In the past, that charge would have been shown elsewhere; it has always been there, but now it is more obvious.

**The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder):** Order! While it is perfectly reasonable to have the occasional indirect chat, it is now getting to the point of third supplementary questions, and I would prefer that to be done through the Chair.

**Mr Collett:** I would like to ask the honourable member whether he deducted the one-sixth of drivers' licence fees, which totals \$1.1 million. The estimated receipts for this year are \$1.1 million.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Despite the fact that we have deducted those amounts, I understand that the money should still go to the Highways Fund, although it is kept in a special account in the Highways Fund. I do not believe that it has any bearing. Indeed, I am not sure that the amount for slogan vehicle plates should not also go into the Highways Fund in a special account. That special account is very handy for the Minister of Transport to have because he can use that money for road safety purposes but, as I understand it, the money still goes to the Highways Fund. I still believe that there is about \$1 million shortfall, despite what the Minister says. If it is all due to rental costs now being apportioned through the Minister of Public Works, so be it, but I would like that to be checked out and confirmed if possible.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** We will be happy to try to obtain that information for the honourable member and bring it back during the afternoon.

**Mr HAMILTON:** My question is of a local nature as it affects many people in my district. I refer to the proposed extension of West Lakes Boulevard. The previous Minister would be well aware of my interest in this matter. Can the Minister say what is the Government's intention in regard to the boulevard and can he indicate any likely time table that he may have in regard to transport needs of the people in that area?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** This important matter is really associated with the Highways Department rather than the Department of Transport, but I am happy to deal with it now.

**The CHAIRMAN:** It relates partly to the Department of Transport, although I ask members to be sure to link up the questions raised. This matter would better come under the Highways Department, but perhaps the Minister can answer the question now.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** As the question affects railways, it is really a combination of both areas and can be answered now. It is the desire of the Highways Department and the Government to extend West Lakes Boulevard from Tapleys Hill Road to Clark Terrace at Hendon as soon as possible. The S.T.A. did own that corridor, the reserve land, which still has a railway line on it. The Authority no longer requires the land and we have approached the Australian Railways Union to see whether there is any difficulty with pulling up the line so that we can extend the boulevard. We are still awaiting a response from the A.W.U. to see whether it has any objections. I do not expect any great difficulty.

The Highways Department had an alignment which went through much housing in the area, from Tapleys Hill Road, to the intersection of Port Road near General Motors-Holden's. If we can extend West Lakes Boulevard, it will create much work and release all the housing that has been acquired along the northern alignment. This matter is well in hand. The Government is anxious to extend West Lakes Boulevard in this area as quickly as possible, and we hope to have more definite information within a month or so.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Another issue of concern to me and many of my constituents is the Minister's recent statement about photographs on drivers' licences. Can the Minister provide more details on the Government's intention in this matter, especially as some groups in the community believe that such action could be an infringement of civil liberties? Many people who have approached me are concerned about this matter.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Government has taken no decision about photographs on drivers' licences. The matter



has been looked at in the past but at that time it was considered to be too expensive. The system is under review in Victoria and we intend to watch that review to see whether or not it is a viable proposition. Basically, it is a good idea, but there are no plans to institute it at the moment.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Finally, in the study 'Adelaide into the 80s' and the article 'Eco Plan International' of May 1980, the following statements are made on page 38:

Strategic parking studies over the past decade, parking policies have developed into a powerful tool for effecting choice.

I am just selectively quoting—

A strategic metropolitan-wide parking study is required to guide future decision in this area . . . Initial policy guidelines are being developed on the basis of a concept study underway at present with the City of Adelaide Planning Commission and the City Council . . . The requirement and justification for more detailed study should emerge from that work and from the base line analysis project.

Can the Minister or his officers elaborate on this issue?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask the Director-General to comment.

**Dr Scrafton:** The statement read out by the member from the 'Adelaide into the 80s' study is still as valid now as it was when it was written. Unfortunately, any attempt to get rational decision making into the provision of parking facilities has proved very difficult. We have worked for several years now, as the member said, through the City of Adelaide Planning Commission, of which I am a member, to try to influence this situation to some extent. However, it is proving to be one of the most intractable transport planning issues that we face in South Australia.

There is a reluctance by people to face up to the ability of using parking (either its supply or pricing) as a serious tool to control urban development. There tends to be a feeling, like the provision of transport facilities in other contexts, that transport is there to pick up and correct the errors that have been made in other areas of urban planning and development. Much evidence of this is around at present.

The fact that the present issue concerning Adelaide Central Market is dominated by the provision of parking facilities is due partly to the fact that the provision of parking for the Hilton Hotel is about a block and a half away. In a city the size of Adelaide that appears to be terrible. The provision of the new parking facilities provided in Franklin Street, and soon to be provided at the southern end of Gawler Place, would provide that parking in terms of supply (the number of places) quite adequately. However, this is a very emotional issue and, for that reason, I can say only that we are pursuing it to the best of our ability, but I can report little progress. The emotional issues surrounding parking seem to make it very difficult for officers in other areas to co-operate in the sort of study to which the honourable member refers. I can only say that we will persevere with work in this area along the lines referred to by the honourable member.

**Mr OSWALD:** My question picks up the line dealing with the Road Safety Centre. Last year \$118 000 was voted to the Adelaide Bike Plan, and the actual payment made was \$75 516. This year the vote is down to \$18 000. Although the payment last year was much down on the amount voted, there is now a massive slash of 300 per cent in the amount proposed for this year compared with last year's payment. Can the Minister explain the situation? Has there been a shift in policy in the planning of cycle tracks around Adelaide? Will we see a downgrading in the number of proposed cycle tracks, or is there some other logical explanation for this situation?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The appropriation to that line represents the final payment of the contract for the development of the Adelaide Bike Plan. The tracks are paid for

through the Highways Department. There is a financial provision in their budget this year for that.

**Mr OSWALD:** Then the Metropolitan Adelaide Plan is now completed and it is up to the Highways Department, in liaison with councils, to implement that plan. Is that so?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I understand that the \$18 000 proposed for the 1983-84 financial year is a carry-over. It will be paid for from the Highways budget.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I turn to the eco plan study at page 43, where it states that social service transport appears to be too scattered, too dedicated, too specific, that client groups are not sufficiently cost effective, and that a major reorganisation would be timely and should be examined in full. Will the Minister advise the Committee what has taken place in relation to this examination and what details are available?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Director-General of Transport has that information.

**Dr Scrafton:** The issue of transport provided by social services continues to be a big problem. There are numerous agencies with fairly large fleets of buses, but it has proved difficult to get them to co-ordinate the operations of those fleets. We feel that a more constructive thrust by the Government is to continue with the community bus programme, and we have recommended that to successive Governments. The present Budget makes provision for that continuation. However, we do see improvements in the co-ordination between social agencies, particularly as many of them are having trouble replacing the buses in their fleets.

In addition, problems have arisen in recent years due to higher standards being required for buses, including regular inspections, and so on, which have caused some of these agencies to think more carefully about the advantages of chartering buses as their needs arise rather than holding their own fleet, particularly when that fleet consists of secondhand buses and give-away hand-me-downs from organisations such as the S.T.A. and private bus operators. Slow progress is being made in this area with the main thrust being through the community bus programme.

**Mr HAMILTON:** An article that appeared in the *Advertiser* of 23 May this year, under the heading, 'Dramatic' rate of test failures', states, in part:

An unexpectedly high proportion of cars involved in *The Advertiser*/Girlock brake safety test required immediate attention to their brakes according to Girlock sales manager. . .

The tests were conducted free of charge on Saturday mornings during March at the car parks of main shopping centres at Reynella, Parabanks, Ingle Farm and Kurralta Park.

The report continues:

Mr Williams said more than 60 per cent of cars tested had a brake fluid boiling point at which brake failure could occur. He described the failure rate of cars roller tested for braking efficiency as 'dramatic'. Almost 45 per cent of cars had failed this part of the brake test.

I will not bore the Committee with all the details from that article, but will the Minister say what the Government has done to redress this problem?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** We do not inspect private vehicles. Approaches have been made by various private organisations asking for compulsory vehicle tests, but we have not yet acted upon those requests. The Director-General will comment further on this matter.

**Dr Scrafton:** The main thrust in this area at present is through the defective vehicle programme. However, as the honourable member said, a vehicle has to be picked up for some reason before it is put through that programme. The roller test for cars at the vehicle inspection station at Regency Park is very rigorous. The people there are very proud of the equipment, which consists of a computerised testing rig sunk into the floor of the building. However, as the Minister

has pointed out, this involves a small proportion of vehicles on the road. This is a serious problem, and the Government must consider whether or not it should move into the area of general vehicle inspection.

**Mr HAMILTON:** The study that I mentioned, under the heading 'Interface, Access and Fares Study', states:

The public transport system that should now be built up in Adelaide, bringing together urban rail, tram, transit bus, taxi, paratransit, and other access elements, must be perceived by its users as a unified system. Because it consists of multiple elements, what happens at the various interfaces of the system becomes a matter of primary importance.

What further information can the Minister provide to the Committee about this subject?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** We are waiting for the Commonwealth Government to approve proposals we have put forward under A.B.R.D. programme for urban public transport. The submission included mention of the Salisbury bus/train interchange. We are confident that that proposal will finally be approved, although it has not been approved at this time. We hope to hear from the Federal Minister about it within weeks. The Director-General has further detail relating to this matter which I now ask him to give.

**Dr Scrafton:** The economic pressures now facing the S.T.A. and other components of the transport industry within this State are such that this issue of better interface between transport modes is increasingly important. Not only can it provide improved service but also, more importantly, it can save costs for those units providing the service. During most of the years that I have been here, emphasis has been on modal interchange at particular growth centres. This has been done in co-operation with local councils and with what is now the Department of Environment and Planning. The main one, of course, is the City of Adelaide, but there are also the regional centres at Noarlunga, Elizabeth, Salisbury, Port Adelaide, Tea Tree Plaza, Glenelg and more recently, to a smaller extent, West Lakes. It involves not just the interface between the main components such as bus and train or bus and tram but also the interface with things like taxi operations. It may well be that in the longer term we will have to rely much more on providers of lower cost taxi services to achieve the objectives mentioned in the study to which the honourable member referred.

One example in the past year of considerable success is the provision of a service to the Adelaide Airport. Until very recently, the airport was almost an isolated centre. It was served by independent buses provided by the airlines, and it was only with the withdrawal of the airline companies from that business that the Government and private enterprise were able to work together to achieve some integrated service to the airport. That has been successfully carried out by licensing one mini-bus operator and by achieving a situation whereby taxi companies have agreed to share rides, which is quite a breakthrough in South Australia. It has been well known for years that that sort of thing could be achieved. People have shared taxis to go to the races or to the football, but that was never considered normal day-to-day practice. However, that situation has come about at the airport.

They are the sorts of improvements that have been achieved in the past few years. As the Minister stated, in the future the Salisbury interchange will be implemented, which is one of the public transport proposals that is picked up under the bicentennial road programme. We look forward to the Federal Government approving that fairly soon.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Has the Government any plans for increasing the allocation in the future for the Road Safety Centre so that driver education will improve road safety on South Australian roads? This matter has long been of concern to me. When one considers the stringent driving requirements

in some other countries and compares them with the requirements in Australia (not only in South Australia), one sees a reason why we have a fairly sad and sorry record in relation to road safety and road behaviour. I am firmly of the opinion that, if young drivers were required to undertake more stringent training and education than is the case at present, we would go a long way towards overcoming some of the difficulties that exist on South Australian roads.

I am sure that the Minister realises that the 16 to 24 age group is involved in a high percentage of accidents relative to the total number of drivers. I believe that advanced driver training should become compulsory for any person before he graduates from a P licence to a full licence. In other words, a driver should be trained in the art of defensive driving and take advantage of the skills that are available from the advanced driver training courses that can be undertaken at Warradale. I realise that we face financial constraints, but the savings to the South Australian public if road accidents were reduced would far outweigh the costs to the Government in implementing rather more advanced requirements for training and education before a full licence could be issued.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I can say only that I agree wholeheartedly with the honourable member's suggestion. The research and planning that is being implemented in the Department of Transport will take into account that matter. From time to time the Department is approached by school classes that are facing difficulty in meeting the fees charged and an exemption is requested. We do not object to that: we know that some schools face difficulty in regard to the purchase or hire of a bus, and quite considerable fees are charged for travelling to the Road Safety Centre. On that understanding, we do not charge driving fees. This is a very important area, and driver skills is a particularly important matter. The Oaklands Park centre is first-class. The honourable member's suggestion will be taken up by our research team when it is established.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Subsequent to the first question I asked (and I am glad to know that the Minister will pass on the suggestions I have made, because I would like those matters to be considered seriously), I note that \$80 000 has been allocated this year for contingencies in regard to transport research projects, but that almost \$100 000 was expended in that regard last year. Thus, this year there is a reduction of 20 per cent in money terms, although the reduction is considerably more than that in real terms. I would have thought that any funds expended on transport research projects would work to the betterment of the facilities that are available to South Australians. Will the Minister explain why there has been such a serious reduction in that line?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The appropriation is made every year as the State Government's contribution towards transport planning and research. The payment is made by way of a charge against specific projects that are actually receipted into the Loan Account? The proposal to Treasury for the transport research projects was that the allocation should be at least the same as it was last year. However, the P.A.C. is conducting an inquiry into the Highways Department, and an approach was made to me, as Minister, similar to the approach that was made to the former Minister. I took up the matter with the Premier and the Department of Transport, and it was believed that, under this line, it would assist in part the P.A.C. if we engaged consultants to help in conducting that inquiry into the accounting of the Highways Department.

We believe that the P.A.C. inquiry is important, and the money was made available from the Department of Transport and transferred to the Premier's Department for that purpose. However, the Director-General may be able to add more to what I have said.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Before the Director-General comments, I wish to ask for a slight expansion on the Minister's answer. Who are the consultants and what will they be doing?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Director-General can supply those names.

**Dr Scrafton:** Off the top of my head, I think that Mr Nicholas Clarke, of Clarke and Associates, and Mr John Mant are involved. I understand that those two consultants are working in collaboration. The matter should more correctly be directed to the P.A.C. That is the only information that I can give the honourable member.

I will elaborate on the \$80 000 provided for that line. Normally, it is \$100 000. However, whatever the entry in that column, it is very much a Treasury money-moving exercise. It does not affect our budget directly. At the end of each year we transfer from the Capital Account to the Loan Account an amount to lessen the debt servicing that is required from transport R. and D. It is usually applied to projects that have no hardware element, that is, there would be no capital facility at the end of it. For instance, if one was investigating new technology, there is justification for it being charged to the Capital Account. However, studies undertaken in relation to, say, attitudinal surveys, transport economics, pricing or other non-technical or non-hardware items would normally be charged at the end of the year to the line mentioned by the honourable member.

That accounts for the discrepancy of \$25 last year between the vote and the actual payment. About 12 projects were transferred last year, totalling \$25 less than the vote. This year the \$80 000 represents \$80 000 plus \$20 000 already transferred for this activity to be undertaken under the auspices of the Public Accounts Committee and not under the Department's research line. It can be viewed as a piece of transport-related economic research being undertaken outside the bounds of the Department.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I refer to the bicycle plan. The Minister would be aware that I have written to him on a number of occasions about bicycle tracks. I also raised the matter with the previous Minister of Transport. I firmly believe that we should be planning to provide far more bicycle tracks than is presently the case. Mr Chairman, you may prefer that I raise this matter under the Highways Department vote.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The honourable member can proceed.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Will the Minister ensure that his Department always carefully determines the possibility of including bicycle tracks when a new road is being built or redeveloped? For example, in the north-eastern suburbs I believe that the Lower North-East Road, the North-East Road and Grand Junction Road ideally lend themselves to the provision of bicycle tracks rather than bicycle lanes. I hope that the Minister continues with the previous Government's plan to provide a bicycle track the full length of the Torrens River corridor and adjacent to the busway. If bicycle tracks could be provided along the North-East Road, the Lower North-East Road, and Grand Junction Road, by linking with the Torrens River bicycle track residents of north-eastern suburbs would have a facility that would provide easy access into the city. That would take some of the pressure off our roads, because it would mean fewer vehicles on those roads, and it would take some pressure away from public transport because fewer people would be utilising that facility if people were able to ride bicycles to and from the city safely. The City of Tea Tree Gully has developed an extensive series of bicycle tracks of its own that could be linked to bicycle tracks along the arterial roads that I have mentioned. Will the Minister seriously consider the provision of bicycle tracks, not bicycle lanes, in relation to future road developments?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the Minister to consider the question and provide a reply following the luncheon adjournment.

*[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Prior to the luncheon adjournment the Minister was about to reply to a question from the member for Todd.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** On the question asked by the member for Todd on bicycles, we stated in our policy prior to the last election that a bicycle park plan would be drawn up by the Government. The unco-ordinated building of bike parks can create safety problems and actually discourage cyclists. We would like cyclists to be encouraged more and more. Recent surveys have shown that more and more cyclists are on our roads today. We also indicated that a City to Henley Beach bike park plan would be one of the proposals of the Government and that we would investigate that possibility.

When planning roads, we look at the provision for the need to establish bicycle lanes and where it is economically possible we will provide a bicycle lane on an arterial road. However, rarely can one justify bicycle lanes on arterial roads. The Department is quite happy to look at this. It is also a responsibility of local government authorities to make applications to the Bicycle Committee for funding of projects which will involve off-road bicycle tracks. Generally, we support the development of bicycle tracks and bicycle lanes, and we will do all that we can in the current economic climate to provide as many bicycle tracks as we can.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** It is an hour since I asked the question. There was one other point that the Minister omitted from the answer. Can he give an assurance that the bicycle park or track planned by the previous Government along the Torrens and adjacent to the O-Bahn busway will continue?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** That is presently being developed through the linear park area. Much of the trackway has been established already and that will continue, as was planned by the previous Government.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I wish to briefly comment on the response given earlier, I think to the member for Todd, in which the Director-General said that provision of \$20 000 for a consultancy study was in the Budget: yesterday I was a member of Committee A, which formally approved the allocation of \$20 000 under the Legislature line for a consultancy study for the Public Accounts Committee. It appears that either two \$20 000 provisions have been made or that there is no provision made here. I think that you will find that there is no provision here and that it is shown under the Legislature line under the title of Public Accounts Committee. That is what the Premier said yesterday in answering a series of questions on that. It appears that the Treasury flogged it back or whatever.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I do not want the Minister to comment in any way that may reflect on the other Committee or to comment on any decision taken in the other Committee.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** That was not a question; that was just pointing out that it was formally approved. It is good news that the Minister has \$20 000 more than he obviously thought that he had. I refer the Minister to page 5 of the yellow book, where there are two lines on which I would like to ask him questions. One is that the provision for compulsory blood tests will increase from \$16 000 in 1982-83 to \$205 000 in 1983-84. Why the increase? In the next paragraph, under the 'Road transport safety programme', I asked an earlier question as to why the State Government or the Minister was providing less funds this year than last year. I was surprised that the Minister did not at least make any mention of the fact that road safety is apparently to be sponsored now, I presume, by private sponsors. I refer him

to that paragraph, as I understand it at least, which says that there will be a reduction this year due largely to the introduction of sponsorship into road safety publicity and promotion. Have I misread that, and is there no sponsorship? Can the Minister enlighten me as to what that paragraph means if there is no sponsorship?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The State Government Insurance Commission has provided \$100 000 towards that campaign; I overlooked making mention of that. The expenditure on the line to which the member referred results from blood alcohol tests performed by doctors in areas other than the Adelaide Metropolitan Planning Area. The Department has been allocated additional funds in 1983-84 because of cross-charging by the Chemistry Division of the Department of Services and Supply for blood alcohol tests performed. That has gone from \$20 to \$58 an hour.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Each test is now \$58?

**Mr Collett:** No; about three tests are done in an hour and it is \$58 an hour.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** It has gone from \$20 an hour to \$58 an hour?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Perhaps for the benefit of *Hansard*, instead of going across the Chamber the way we are, questions should be asked through the Chair.

**Mr Collett:** The Chemistry Division is now charging \$58 an hour for blood alcohol tests. About three tests are done per hour; so, it is about \$20 a test, whereas probably in the past it was about \$8.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Perhaps we should get the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs to look at the prices charged by the Chemistry Division, or at least refer them to the Prices Justification Tribunal. I raise a point in terms of accommodation within the Motor Registration Centre building. As I understand it from an answer to the first question I asked, there will be a reduction in the number of employees involved—some in the regional centres and some in that building. Can the Minister indicate how many people are currently working within that building? Based on the Government guidelines, as proposed by the Public Buildings Department, in terms of area per employee, how many people could be accommodated in that building? I realise that you probably do not have the information handy. I understand that Treasury advice is that currently about 300 people are accommodated in the building, but that the building on Government standards could accommodate about 500. I would appreciate having those figures confirmed. If so, when the Minister comes back with a detailed response, can he indicate how he intends to improve the utilisation of that building?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask the Director-General to answer this question.

**Dr Scrafton:** It is quite true that we do not have the actual numbers, but the general statement is true: it is under-occupied at present. We contemplated putting what was then the whole Road Safety and Motor Transport Division into that building. However, we agreed with the Government Accommodation Committee to defer that until a decision was made on whether the 'on line' would be housed in the building and, if so, on which floor, and then make a determination as to which other parts of the Department could move in there.

The Public Buildings Department is looking at the possibility of removing the stairwell from the building. That would be necessary to fulfil the requirement to accommodate 500 workers. It is based upon removing the stairwell between the ground and first floors. The space it takes up is not great, but it makes it difficult to use the space to the optimum extent. There is much wasted space on the ground and first floors. When those changes are complete and the decision is taken on the 'on line' and the removing of the

stairwell we can look at who else in the department will go there. Doubtless, there will be radical changes in the building. Perhaps it will be State Taxes that moves in there. We could possibly see a special unit associated with the introduction of the financial measures associated with the 1c levy on American Express and the like being accommodated, but we intend that it is to be used more intelligently than it has been used in the past.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** If \$1 100 000 is being spent for accommodation in that building and it is only being 60 per cent utilised, a saving of about \$400 000 could be made if greater utilisation was achieved, and that would be significant. Random breath tests have been in operation for about two years. The Minister has not yet made an announcement on the review of random breath tests which must be carried out within the next 12 months; otherwise, the grandfather clause wipes out the legislation. Can the Minister indicate the type of people who will carry out the review and the general terms of reference that will apply? Will the Legislative Council be consulted, as a Select Committee of that Council reported on random breath tests initially?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The review of the random breath test legislation is still being formulated. The review is of great importance, not only to South Australia but nationally as well. Its findings will be received with considerable interest by all groups interested in road safety. As the State conducted surveys before the introduction of random breath testing, we have a better statistical base from which to work than do other States. We are concerned that the review panel should contain sufficient representation, expertise and status to give its findings full credibility. The Government will not be hustled into a rushed or half-hearted exercise on this important review. However, I should be able to announce the composition of the review committee in the near future. We are giving serious consideration to a number of people to form an expert committee with an independent Chairman. Whilst the terms of reference have not yet been finalised, I can give some idea of what they are likely to be.

They would include the effect of random breath testing on the incidence of road accidents and fatalities, its effect on blood-alcohol levels in drivers, the social impact, including community attitudes to drink driving, and the effect on patronage and employment in the liquor and entertainment industries, and the cost effectiveness of random breath testing in relation to the broad road safety area. The Government has already taken some initiatives in preparation for the review.

It is also contemplating a major campaign on drink driving aimed at the 18 to 24 year-old drivers who comprise the highest risk group and who need special attention, as I have already indicated. That campaign will be strictly monitored to gauge its impact on attitudes and behaviour in the target group. We have also commissioned a research project into the causes of country road accidents, which should be completed by the end of the year. There is a disproportionate number of fatalities occurring in country areas, and the reason for this needs full investigation. Both these initiatives will provide useful information for the committee reviewing the operation of random breath testing. Also, we hope to work in conjunction with, or provide information to, the Upper House Select Committee which inquired previously into random breath testing generally. That is all I can say now, but I hope we can make an announcement within a month.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Will the Minister consider including on the review committee someone from the Police Department? Will he consider including in the committee's terms of reference how the present operations of random breath testing can be further improved? I am aware of the situation in regard to cost effectiveness, but how the testing

can be improved in terms of its ability to apprehend people driving under the influence is vital. Unless that last term of reference is included, one of the major purposes of the review will be lost.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Certainly, I will be happy to consider those suggestions. It is desirable to keep any committee reasonably small. There are many people available with sufficient status for such a review. We could have any number, but it is necessary to keep the committee as small as we can. I will be happy to consider police representation and the suggestion in regard to the further term of reference.

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

#### Works and Services—Department of Transport, \$780 000

##### Chairman:

Mr G.T. Whitten

##### Members:

Mrs J.E. Appleby

Mr E.S. Ashenden

The Hon. D.C. Brown

Mr K.C. Hamilton

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Mr J.K.G. Oswald

Mr J.P. Trainer

The Hon. Michael Wilson

##### Witness:

The Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Transport.

##### Departmental Advisers:

Dr D. Scrafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr P.T. Tregoweth, Senior Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr K.J. Collett, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Transport.

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

Mr J.V. Brown, General Manager, State Transport Authority.

Mr J.W. Hutchinson, Director, Transport Policy Research, Department of Transport.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Can the Minister outline why the allocation of funds for the energy conservation and transport programme has been reduced this year? Can he outline briefly why development in State transport has been reduced substantially by about \$70 000 or \$80 000, yet the Metropolitan Area Transport Review allocation has been increased? What work is being undertaken on this development of State transport? It is a capital line. Are consultancies and studies involved? If so, who is carrying out those studies and what proportion goes on consultancies?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask the Director-General to respond to that question.

**Dr Scrafton:** The first question related to the energy conservation and transport project. The fluctuation in expenditure on these lines does not follow a regular pattern. Sometimes the projects included in those lines are the termination of a project on which there was a large expenditure in the previous year. In other cases, within the total Budget line, we have had to reorder priorities, as the honourable member has said.

This year there is a need to increase the project content in the Metropolitan Area Transport Review because of decisions taken in the past year or so. The amount of money spent on strategic transport plans, or particularly on model

updating and the need to check some of the input data on some of the material we have already, will increase. We simply have to reorder that budget. The other thing that demonstrates that is that if one looks at actual expenditure as against the projected expenditure one sees that they vary roughly in the way that the honourable member phrased his question, that we spent more last year on transport reviews than we expected we would spend so that other areas, such as transport economics, suffered. The first question related to energy conservation. The biggest single project, which relates to non-technical impediments to introducing energy conservation techniques in transport, is virtually complete and we expect to have a report on it in the near future. We expect to have to budget something of the order of \$15 000 for that work in this year.

The other aspect of this matter is that we take a lot of leadership in this area from the Department of Mines and Energy. In some areas we simply pick up aspects of projects that that department is not able to finance in its own area. We work with the Department of Mines and Energy on joint projects and that influences the extent to which we are able to finance such projects and the extent to which we agree to finance them. A question was asked as to what extent projects are consultant studies as against other projects. Consultant studies usually cost about half the total budget in any year. Last year consultant studies cost \$410 872 out of a total expenditure of \$800 000. That amount was shared among 15 or 16 companies, mainly small consultancies, but one or two national organisations and international organisations such as Travers Morgan or Loder and Bayley. A lot of the small consultants are based in South Australia, consultants such as David Bray and Associates, T.J. Packer and Associates, and John Walker and Associates. Expenditure varied from a maximum of \$87 000 to a minimum of \$1 950 for these consultants. This information can be made available in detail because it is covered in our accounts. We would be happy to make such information available for the honourable member.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I ask the Minister to undertake to supply, in writing, detail of individual projects undertaken, who has undertaken them and the estimated cost for each of those five projects; energy conservation and transport development; development of State transport; metropolitan area transport review; transport economics and other transport projects.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will supply that information in writing for the honourable member.

**Mr HAMILTON:** On page 20 of the programme papers under the heading 'Planning and co-ordination of land transport' it states the following:

Liaise with Australian National on country rail services—Line closures, passenger services, etc.

Will the Minister advise the Committee what further closures are contemplated by Australian National in relation to railway services in the non-metropolitan services area in South Australia, and will he also give the expected time table (if he has it) for these happenings? If he does not have that time table can he get this information for the Committee?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am aware that Australian National is considering reducing the train services from Adelaide to Mount Gambier and from Adelaide to Victor Harbor. My understanding is that the Federal Minister will be discussing this matter with the trade unions involved. I am not aware whether or not he has done that yet. The Director-General is on the Australian National Commission and may be able to comment further.

**Dr Scrafton:** There is little I can add except to say that consideration is being given to preserving some sort of service between Adelaide and Victor Harbor in conjunction with the Department of Tourism in South Australia. This

involves the projects that the Federal Government is financing in regard to unemployment relief.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Can the Minister advise what projects Australian National is contemplating? The member for Florey and the former Minister of Industrial Affairs raised questions in the Parliament about standardisation of the Adelaide to Melbourne rail link. Can the Minister say what progress, if any, has been made in that area?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** When I attended the ATAC conference in New Zealand in February of this year I raised the matter of the standard gauge railway from Darwin to Alice Springs. I was surprised that the Northern Territory Transport Minister made no comment about the matter other than to say he would be happy to jump into bed with me on that particular matter. The matter was also raised at the ATAC conference in Brisbane in July, and I raised the question of the standardisation of the gauge from Adelaide to Melbourne. I think the member for Davenport raised this question in the House recently. The Government regards this as a most important matter. However, I understand that Australian National has no intention of implementing the realignment in the Adelaide Hills that has been talked about. The Federal Minister indicated that there is no money available for any of these projects. I pressed the point that this is an important link in the standard gauge system throughout Australia linking the major capital cities from Sydney to Perth. I received a report from the Victorian Minister (Victoria is strongly behind this move) about this matter. The South Australian Government would like to see this scheme implemented as soon as finance becomes available. I do not know whether the Director-General can add later information about this matter.

**Dr Scrafton:** I think not. The Minister has covered the project and the comments made by the member for Davenport in the House of Assembly. Australian National is keen on the project, but the major part of the investment for it would come from the Victorian side of the border. It is for the Victorian Government, in association with the Federal Government, to determine the time table. I understand that a lot of the preliminary work has been completed.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** In answer to the question from the member for Albert Park concerning the reduction of services between Adelaide and Mount Gambier and possibly the closure of the service between Adelaide and Victor Harbor, the Minister stated that the Federal Minister, Mr Morris, is consulting the appropriate unions. Will the Minister give an assurance that he will take the strongest possible action to prevent the loss of the Victor Harbor rail service? I understand that this matter involves consultation with the Department of Tourism. We should try to prevent a drastic reduction in the services to Mount Gambier. Once these services are stopped, that is the end.

I would like an assurance from the Minister that he would be prepared to take the matter as far as arbitration at the very least. Australian National is very well aware that the former Government was prepared to go to arbitration—I told Australian National that we would do that. I want an assurance from the Minister that he will try to protect the State's interests to the extent of going to Canberra to see Mr Morris so that Mr Morris consults not only with the unions but also with the State Minister.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I have made public statements about the Adelaide to Victor Harbor line. We would be prepared to take the matter to arbitration if Australian National insisted that the line should be closed. We have given pretty serious consideration to this matter, and it may well be that we have to take a realistic attitude. We have given serious thought to what our position would be if we took the matter to arbitration and lost. If that happens, we may not be in a very strong position to gain Commonwealth

assistance to do something with the line, hence our discussions with the Department of Tourism. The matter is presently with that department, which is ascertaining whether the historical steam trains organisation is interested. We are awaiting advice.

We will then have to consider whether the line could be developed as a major tourist attraction for the area. The Adelaide to Victor Harbor railway line is very costly. Australian National has stated that, if we want to retain the line, or if we want to try to force the Commonwealth's hand, the State Government will have to spend \$2 million to \$3 million renewing sleepers along the track. We simply do not have the finance available to do that and, after all is said and done, that is not our responsibility. We can make all the noise in the world about going to arbitration and still lose out. We may be in a better position to negotiate some kind of deal or arrangement whereby we could obtain financial assistance for any project that we implement to save the greater part of the line.

Regarding the Mount Gambier line, I can assure the honourable member that I will take all possible steps to prevent any downgrading of that service. I believe that Mount Gambier is another very important tourist area in South Australia. Mount Gambier is a growing city in the South-East, and the service should be maintained to the fullest.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I thank the Minister for that answer. By way of comment, I point out that Australian National is screwed down by the Federal Government under the corporate plan and has to make savings. Unfortunately, whenever Australian National has to make savings, that tends to react adversely on South Australia, and the decisions made recently have certainly reacted adversely on South Australia. One of the areas affected was marine and harbors, to which I will refer later.

Regarding transport research and development, once again I am disappointed to note that the allocation to this very important area has been reduced. The allocation has been reduced not only this year but it was reduced over the past five to seven years, and that is a pity because research and development in transport, especially in this area, is really the hub of the whole portfolio and is the basis of its dynamism. The \$20 000 reduction occurs in the recurrent line, to which we referred this morning.

Will the Minister advise whether he has initiated any transport research projects since becoming Minister? I know that he is to present the member for Davenport with a detailed list of all projects, but I wonder whether he has initiated any research programmes since he entered the Ministry.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The only project I have initiated is in regard to the Road Safety Council, and I believe that that is absolutely necessary in the interests of road safety.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** One of the most important transport research projects in the past few years has been the Adelaide road-user management study which, I understand, is a joint study between the Department of Transport and the Highways Department. If my memory is wrong, I would like the Minister to correct me. According to the Auditor-General, \$92 000 was spent in 1983 on that project, so that gives us some idea of its importance and its width and breadth. Will the Minister say what stage that project has reached, when preliminary reports are expected, when the public will have a chance to look at the preliminary reports, and the total cost of the project? How is the cost apportioned between the two Departments?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am not in a position to answer that question, but Mr John Hutchinson from the transport planning section will respond.



**Mr Hutchinson:** As initiated, the study was to be undertaken by consultants. Work progressed during the past year and we decided to change directions slightly. Until the limit quoted in the Auditor-General's Report, money was expended on a consultant's project, with about one-third of the work being undertaken in the Department of Transport. Since that time, the exercise has been undertaken essentially by a team from the Highways Department and the Department of Transport with no expenditure from this line. However, it is likely that expenditure from this line will occur in the next six months, and that reports outlining the basic approach to identification of functions and responsibility for roads will be available for discussion with local government and interested parties towards the end of this year or early next year.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Has the Minister or his Department considered an extension to the articulated buses that currently run in Adelaide. I was in Perth recently where I saw an extension coupled to articulated buses, similar to a road train. Has any research been undertaken to determine whether it is possible to use similar extensions in South Australia to service large crowds and enable them to be moved away quickly from, for example, Adelaide Oval or Football Park? I believe that this question should be investigated, if that has not already occurred.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** It is proposed that 100 additional articulated buses will be built. An additional 50 articulated buses are required for the O-Bahn operation. We have also asked the Federal Government to provide an additional 50 articulated vehicles under the A.B.R.D. urban transport allocation. As I have said, we are waiting for the allocation to be approved by the Commonwealth Government. In relation to an extension to articulated buses, I am not aware of any study in that matter. Perhaps the Director-General could respond in relation to any surveys conducted on the better use of articulated buses compared to ordinary buses.

**Dr Sraffon:** If it is acceptable to handle this matter under this line, perhaps the Chairman of the S.T.A. could respond.

**Mr Rump:** I am unfamiliar with the extension referred to by the member for Albert Park. However, we would have problems if we lengthened our articulated buses beyond their current length. Many roads in the metropolitan area could not cater for buses if their length were extended. At the moment, we have some difficulties with bus stops. Obviously, we are reaching a situation where buses pulling up at bus stops virtually have to block entrances to private properties. We want to ensure that legislation prevents our drivers from being prosecuted for infringing the law by blocking driveways. It is a necessary aspect of the use of articulated buses in the metropolitan area.

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

Works and Services—State Transport Authority,  
\$7 700 000.

**Chairman:**

Mr G.T. Whitten

**Members:**

Mrs J.E. Appleby  
Mr E.S. Ashenden  
The Hon. D.C. Brown  
Mr K.C. Hamilton  
Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
Mr J.K.G. Oswald  
Mr J.P. Trainer  
The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

The Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Transport.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Dr D. Sraffon, Director-General of Transport.

Mr P.T. Tregoweth, Senior Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr K.J. Collett, Director, Administrator and Finance, Department of Transport.

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

Mr J.V. Brown, General Manager, State Transport Authority.

Mr J.W. Hutchinson, Director, Transport Policy Research, Department of Transport.

Mr F.A. Wayte, Director, North-East Busway Project.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I ask for some leniency from the Chair in relation to this vote, which deals with the capital side of the State Transport Authority. The next line, Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous, deals with allocations to cover the State Transport Authority deficit, which amounts to \$64 million. I will attempt to direct my questions to the capital side, but to deal with those questions effectively there may be times when one will impinge on the recurrent side and, therefore, the miscellaneous side. I ask for the Minister's assistance, and your assistance, Mr Chairman, when I ask meaningful questions in that way.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I assure the honourable member that the Chair will be tolerant. If I believe that the member has impinged or if the Minister does not wish to follow the member's suggestion we will come to some sort of agreement.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I note an allocation of approximately \$3.5 million for signalling and communications equipment. Earlier this afternoon and late this morning an industrial dispute resulted in trains not running. Apparently, signalmen were complaining about having to look at T.V. monitoring units as part of their signalling equipment. When does the Minister expect the first part of the signalling equipment to be installed? To what extent have signalmen been involved in negotiations in this area? To what extent have they been to, for instance, the Council of Technological Change or some other body to assist in the introduction of new technology and overcome the fears of the trade union involved? What is the exact conflict in relation to what the union is asking for, because I understand that it is asking for a different piece of equipment to that being purchased? What are the merits of the two pieces of equipment?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will answer the honourable member's last question first in relation to visual display units and the mosaic system, which I understand is the present signalling system used at the Adelaide Railway Station. The Chairman of the State Transport Authority and other officers have investigated these systems in other States. As a result, they are now leaning towards a combination of visual display units and the mosaic system, which is preferred by the union. The union is opposed to the use of visual display units because it says that they can affect the employees' eyesight and so on. However, the units operate in Victoria and partly operate in New South Wales.

I am not familiar with the difference between the two systems. In a moment I will ask the Chairman to explain that aspect of the honourable member's question. The signalling programme is proceeding. There has been some debate about the operations centre equipment in relation to whether it should be completely visual display or a combination of visual display units and the mosaic system. The Chairman may care to elaborate further on the points that I have made with regard to the system to be used.

**Mr Rump:** We have had close consultation with the unions in relation to the preparation of the proposed resignalling

system. The General Manager may wish to make a further comment and enlarge on the extent of that consultation. To avoid installing a system that would create difficulties it was decided that we should look at installations in other States. Our consultants favour the use of visual display units, which, no doubt, are the state of the art. In years to come I think there will be a greater tendency to use visual display units. New South Wales and Queensland are still using the mosaic system. In New South Wales there is a combination of the mosaic system with a v.d.u. supplement.

The authority has proposed and has resolved to put forward a suggestion that we believe is quite reasonable, that is, that we proceed with the v.d.u. installation but supplement it with a miniature mosaic panel. Therefore, whilst difficulties might be experienced in relation to technological change and signalmen are not accustomed to modern technology, there could be transition difficulties. Whilst we are not keen to see money wasted in a \$25 million signalling programme, we believe it is still wise to supplement the signalling control panels with the addition that I have mentioned, which will incur further cost amounting to several hundred thousand dollars. However, in the total concept we believe that it is wise to do that. Other officers may wish to comment further on the involvement of the unions in our negotiations.

**Mr Brown:** When the resignalling project was first mooted, a consultative committee was set up with management and union representatives, including representatives of the signalmen. As a result of the discussions with that consultative committee, the recommendation was finally made to the Government through the Authority that a v.d.u. system be the basis of the signalling of the Adelaide metropolitan area. It has distinct advantages over the former mosaic-type signalling system in that it permits greater control of the operations in an area like the Adelaide metropolitan area.

Right up until the recommendations were made by the consultative committee there was apparent agreement between all parties that the v.d.u. system would be adequate. It is only since the recommendations were made to Government and the resignalling system was adopted that the problem of mosaics has arisen. We are currently happy to negotiate and continue negotiations with the Australian Railways Union in this matter to try and bring it to resolution. The Federal Secretary of the Australian Railways Union negotiated a deal between the Victorian branch of the union and the railway system for MURLA, which overcame completely the fears that the signalmen had in that State about the use of v.d.u.'s. The Authority has been in touch with the Federal Secretary of the Australian Railways Union and has sought his assistance in getting a resolution to the problem. This, I might add, was some time ago, and those lines of communication, as far as the Authority is concerned, are still open.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Before I call on the member for Davenport, will the Minister introduce the officer alongside him at the present time?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** It is Mr F.A. Wayte, who is the Project Manager for the O-Bahn busway.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I thank the Minister and the officers for that information. In the light of that information, it is fair to say that the industrial stoppage today is most unfortunate because, obviously, every attempt at consultation and agreement has been made. It would appear that agreement was reached and has now been breached. I hope, therefore, that the Minister will take the matter in hand quite seriously and ask the unions why, apparently, the previous agreement is not being adhered to and why the travelling public is now being inconvenienced over this issue.

I refer generally to the capital works side because that is what we are dealing with in general. I still did not receive

a response as to when the first of the signalling equipment would be installed, but the Minister can answer that as he answers the next question. What does the Minister see as the overall demands for capital funds in the next three to five years within the State Transport Authority? I suppose that this came up when I was a member of the Budget Review Committee. I know that there were fairly heavy demands then in terms of the capital works for the State Transport Authority.

**An honourable member:** You were very good about that.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Yes, we were very generous as a Budget Review Committee in relation to what funds we allocated. For instance, I see no allocation of funds for the upgrading of 'red hens' or for the purchase of new railcars this year. It may be that they will be purchased on a lease agreement so that no funds would need to be allocated. Can we have information on that, as well as on capital funds for the tramline from Cross Roads to Sturt Creek; capital funds where necessary for the power steering on the 700 series buses; capital funds for the refurbishing of various stations; capital funds for the remodelling of the Islington junction for Islington (the relay interlocking system); for car parks for Blackwood and Salisbury (although I think that the Salisbury one has now been resolved with the allocation of \$1.6 million for the rationalisation there); and the concourse development at the Adelaide Railway Station? They are some of the projects that I know are needed.

It may be best for the State Transport Authority, through the Minister, to come back with a written reply on this and to list a schedule of all the projects where it thinks that capital funds are fairly urgently needed in the next few years, the priority of those projects and what it sees is the demand not only this year but also the ongoing demand. I raise this for subsequent years because it does have flow-on implications; if we start one project and allocate funds this year for one of those projects, we automatically lock ourselves into certain projects for the next three or four years. I would appreciate a fairly detailed response, but realise that it may not be possible to give it today. In fact, it may be best in a table form after a general comment. I would appreciate when the written response comes back a break-down year by year for the next four years and project by project.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The suggestion from the member for Davenport would be admirable. If the Minister can get a written response to that it will not only be acceptable to the Committee but it will also save a lot of time and we will be able to get on further today.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I was going to make the same suggestion myself, unless the Chairman wants to provide some information now. If he is not in a position to do that, we would be quite happy to provide that report at a later date.

**Mr Rump:** We would be quite pleased to provide that in written form. If there is any specific question on which the member would like an answer now we will endeavour to give him that answer, but to try to answer all of it would not be appropriate.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I will be happy with a considered written reply in great detail. Page 62 of the yellow book refers to the new railcar depot and indicates (in the right-hand column about one-third of the way down) the following:

The effect of the Railcar Depot during 1983-84 will account only for an increase of \$0.4 million and a manning level increase of 18 men.

However, that is qualified later on. I would appreciate knowing whether the new railcar depot will cost more money to run than was previously allocated for the old one. Will it require more men? If so, why? The former Government was under the distinct impression that this new railcar

facility would save men; fewer men would be required; fewer costs would be involved; and it would certainly reduce significantly the chance for industrial disputation because of the poor working conditions.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Chairman of the State Transport Authority will respond to this matter.

**Mr Rump:** The situation is that we are undertaking an additional type of work within the railcar depot, which would indicate the need for more men because we are undertaking work which, prior to the facility being available to us, was being undertaken by Australian National at Islington. In more detail, the General Manager could highlight the actual class of work.

**Mr Brown:** It is perhaps the type of work that has changed at the railcar depot with the building of the \$10.25 million facility. The additional 18 staff is a transitional increase, whilst the classification of staff and the type of work is moving from what was done previously to what we will do in the future. Different types of equipment will be used. We have a rundown of the old types of classification of work and a build-up of the new type of work. There are different types of tradesmen and different numbers of types of tradesmen. During that transition period there will be an increase, but, overall and in the longer term, there will be a reduction in staff. Costs of maintenance will be reduced and, generally, the atmosphere in the railcar depot area will be markedly improved.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Can the Minister provide the Committee with information on headway plotting in regard to rail services in the metropolitan area? How far has that system progressed? Does the S.T.A. Railway Division still propose to introduce it? What further progress has to be made in relation to centralised traffic control operations on all metropolitan lines, and what priorities are given to which lines?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Can the member elaborate in regard to the question of headways?

**Mr HAMILTON:** A report was put out for the Authority on 6 May by John Connell, Mott, Hay and Anderson in regard to the distance between rail cars travelling on specific lines in terms of the need to by-pass a stopper as against an express service. What has taken place in this area?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** As I cannot provide any information at this point, I will ask the Chairman to comment.

**Mr Rump:** I refer the question to the General Manager. The question relates to the signalling programme work undertaken by Connell, Mott, our consultants.

**Mr Brown:** The only project involving such work is the design of the signalling system and the location of signals. To be able to do that efficiently we need to know what minimum headway is likely to occur in the long term. I cannot answer the question any better than that, but I will get more information for the member.

**Mr HAMILTON:** In regard to my question about priority for centralised traffic control operations, what priority is given to lines, for example, Noarlunga central line, Outer Harbor, Gawler, and so on?

**Mr Brown:** I presume you mean for central traffic control operation and priority. The whole system will come under the central traffic control system in due course. I refer to the metropolitan Adelaide system, the north line, Noarlunga, Port Adelaide and the Hills; the whole system will be under central traffic control.

**Mr HAMILTON:** So, no priority will be given to a particular line? They will all be phased in at the one time?

**Mr Brown:** Trains will be permitted to enter the Adelaide station on the time table basis.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Obviously, I have not made myself clear. I thought you would introduce it on the Noarlunga central line first and then perhaps the Gawler line afterwards.

Considerable disquiet has been expressed amongst S.T.A. employees about the ticketing system. It is not uncommon for me to have calls from railway people, in view of my background, about the ticketing system. What progress has been made in this area? What steps can be taken to allay the fears of those people who feel that the Government is not collecting money for tickets that should be sold to travellers? Secondly, and equally as important to those employees of the Authority in the Bus and Rail Division is the considerable disquiet that they have expressed about the ticketing system and the fraudulent use of tickets.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** At present the authority is looking at validating equipment for the issuing of tickets to try to overcome some of the problems that we have been running into. The whole matter is being looked at by a task force that I established following the last series of fare increases. As I am not a member of that task force, I will ask the Chairman or General Manager to give a progress report.

**Mr Rump:** As Chairman of the task force, I can say that meaningful discussions are taking place with both representatives of the tram and bus union and the rail union. We are progressing satisfactorily, because it is not an easy matter to change the whole of our ticketing system but, in consultation with the unions, we are going out to tender for validating equipment. We have to be careful about this subject as we have been told that it will never work, unless we are careful, because the unions will not let it work. However, by being very open in our discussions we believe that we will get to the stage of co-operation with the unions enabling the introduction of a more modern ticketing system. I cannot say anything more at this time. We are still meeting on a weekly basis and discussions are continuing.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I refer to page 61 of the Programme Estimates in regard to further rationalisation of public transport services. Can the Minister advise what rationalisation of services is contemplated in the near and distant future and also in regard to Authority employees? What is the situation in regard to direct appointments to the Authority from Australian National? Have those arrangements been completed? Has the Authority all the employees that it needs? Is that situation in progress or are negotiations continuing? How many more employees will be needed and over what period will they be required?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** In regard to further rationalisation, a number of services are now under-utilised on a passenger basis. One or two come to mind: the Port Adelaide Dry Creek service has few passengers and suggestions have been made in regard to the City Loop. There may be a need to rearrange the City Loop because of an addition to other services crossing the same area. The other route that comes to mind is at Port Adelaide. There is another service that is under-utilised. The whole question of rationalising services is now before the Resources and Physical Development Committee, a subcommittee of Cabinet. No decision has been taken on any of those services as yet, but they are under consideration.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I have a series of questions about the north-east transport system. First, I turn to the relevant line in the Budget and to the figures provided in it, because I am extremely concerned to note that, although the previous Government voted \$12.5 million for expenditure on the north-east transport system in the financial year just completed, the present Government has spent less than \$10 million of that money on the project. When over \$2.5 million has not been spent on this project, it indicates to me that work that should have proceeded on the transport system has not proceeded and that the Government has lowered the priority of the north-east transport system despite promises given by it prior to the election that it would meet the time table presented by the previous Government that

a rapid public transport system would be provided through to Tea Tree Plaza by 1986.

I must admit that no commitment was given as to what type of system would be implemented by that time, but the Government certainly gave a commitment that a rapid transport system to Tea Tree Plaza would be completed by 1986. Despite that promise, and despite the importance of a rapid public transport system to residents of the north-eastern suburbs, over \$2.5 million allocated to this project was not spent in the financial year just completed. Will the Minister explain why that is so and why his Government has reduced the priority of the north-east busway transport system?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Part of that non-expenditure is due to programme changes and under-budget expenditure. I am pleased to be able to say that the total under-budget expenditure amounts to \$1.2 million at present. The whole of the O-Bahn project is running on schedule, and a service will be provided from Darley Road to the city by 1986. As I said earlier today, a decision does not have to be made until next year about the section of the busway from Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza. I will ask the project manager to explain about other areas where changes have occurred.

**Mr Wayte:** The figure of \$12.5 million quoted for 1982-83 included linear park work which is not included in the figure of \$9.9 million given as actual expenditure, because that is recognised as a capital grant for a non-transport purpose. Actual expenditure was about \$10.7 million last year, so the difference is not as large as it appears. The main reason for the remaining difference is, as the Minister said, that some items were completed under budget and some work was rearranged for more efficient assembly contracting, and so on. Some of that expenditure will be transferred to this year or subsequent years. The difference does not represent a reduction in the proposed programme for 1982-83.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** The Minister mentioned that there was under-expenditure because of costs amounting to \$1.7 million being below contract estimates. My advice is that this under-expenditure has not all occurred in that one financial year and that it is not correct for the Minister to allocate the whole \$1.7 million to the one financial year. The Minister also said that progress on the busway is on schedule. My advice is that the state of progress of the busway is well behind what it would have been had the previous Government been returned to office.

At the time of the election the construction of the busway was ahead of the former Government's programme, yet it is now well behind what that programme would now have been. I do not believe, therefore, that the Minister can state that construction is going according to schedule. It may be going according to his Party's schedule, but it is certainly not matching the schedule originally envisaged in order that the busway would be completed through to Tea Tree Plaza by 1986. The Minister might like to expand on that matter.

My second question relates to the fact that the former Government stated before the election that the busway or a rapid public transport system would be completed by 1986. The Minister has now stated that his Government will not have this project completed by 1986. He has said that the busway will be completed only to Darley Road by 1986. The Minister has not given a satisfactory commitment either to me, or to my constituents, about this matter.

When one looks at the history of the present Government or its predecessor until 1979, one can understand the concern that my constituents feel, because the Dunstan Government on a number of occasions promised a light rail system to the north-eastern suburbs, but nothing was done except that, before the 1979 election, a hole was dug in King William

Street. When the Liberal Government came to office in 1979 there was rapid progress towards the completion of a rapid transport system for the north-eastern suburbs.

It is now quite obvious that that programme has been cut back substantially. I look to the Minister to provide categorical assurances about this system and to indicate to this Committee what are his Government's plans in relation to the completion of the busway from Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza. I want an absolute commitment and a programme schedule regarding this matter.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The first point that the member made in relation to the \$1.7 million under-expenditure is correct; that did not happen only in the last financial year but has occurred over the whole of the project. In the 1982-83 financial year under-expenditure amounted to approximately \$600 000. Perhaps the member would like to explain to me how his Government would have completed the busway by 1986, because more money has been allocated to this project in this financial year than was allocated in the last financial year. I will ask the Project Manager to elaborate on this matter.

**Mr Wayte:** The programme up until this financial year is similar to that adopted from earlier stages of the work. It is based on completion of the section to Darley Road by 1986 in accordance with the Government's decision. For our own planning purposes, we have developed a programme on the basis of its completion to Tea Tree Gully by 1988. However, that is dependent on the Government's review of that section next year.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I appreciate the answer that Mr Wayte has given, but I remind the Minister that I asked him to provide an absolute commitment to the residents of the north-eastern suburbs that a rapid transport system will be completed through to Tea Tree Plaza. The Minister also asked how on earth the previous Government would have met its commitments. I can easily answer that by stating that, had the previous Government been returned, its priorities would have been quite different from those of the present Government. Undoubtedly, there are areas in which savings could be made in the Budget, and moneys could well be spent on the north-east transport system, which is a vital and absolutely essential system to the residents of the north-eastern suburbs.

I do not accept the Minister's point that the proposed sum of \$12.6 million is greater than the vote for 1982-83. That sum is less in real terms when inflation is taken into account and, as the project develops, more funding should be provided. The cost of the project will obviously increase as we get closer to 1986 and the completion of the project. However, I also note that Mr Wayte has indicated that plans are now afoot for the project to be completed by 1988. What are the Government's intentions? What type of public transport system will be provided?

I have been given information from what I regard as an absolutely impeccable source—from engineers whose qualifications cannot be questioned. They have told me that they have absolutely no doubt that the soils in the area from Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza will certainly be able to support a guided busway system within the accuracy requirements of the very strict parameters. I am advised that Zublin Engineers have also completed an investigation. I believe that the Minister has already received a report from the engineers on this matter and I cannot understand why the Government will not come straight out and say, 'Yes, there will be a guided busway to Tea Tree Plaza.' Again, I can only indicate that the residents of the north-eastern suburbs will not accept anything but a guided busway system. Will the Minister indicate the results of the Zublin report, which I believe he has, and will he say whether the

Government intends to ensure that the guided busway will proceed the full distance?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I cannot give that assurance to the honourable member, because the Government has not decided, at this point in time, whether the extension from Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza will, in fact, be a guided busway; I would expect it to be. I have said repeatedly and publicly, as well as earlier today in this Committee, that the Government intends to complete the busway right to Tea Tree Plaza. It is not necessary to make a decision until next year in regard to the outer section, whether that be a guided track all the way or what other form it will take. I am not in a position to say what that will be, because that matter is under consideration by the Resources and Physical Development Committee. That is all I can say on that matter.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The member for Todd has advised me that he wishes to ask a supplementary question, which I will allow.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I wish to ask two supplementary questions. The Minister stated that his Government was committed to the completion of a rapid public transport system to Tea Tree Plaza. When will that system be completed? Because of the Minister's previous answers and the money allocated in this line, is that an indication that the Government has now given up hope of completing the full project to Tea Tree Plaza by 1986?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Government intends to complete the full O-Bahn busway to Tea Tree Plaza by 1988. If it is possible to complete it earlier, every effort will be made to do so. We have indicated that 1988 is the completion date, in view of the financial circumstances.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I refer to '1983/84 specific targets/objectives (significant initiatives/improvements/results sought)' on page 69 of the yellow book, which states, 'To operate the S.T.A. roadliner operations at a profit'. How does the Minister believe that that can be achieved? Also in that context I refer to level crossings and the safety of motor vehicles and perhaps buses?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I initiated an inquiry into the charter bus service conducted by the State Transport Authority, from which I have received a report. I have asked for further information, which is currently under consideration. I have received no further information at this time, so I cannot refer to the recommendations contained in the report.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I refer to 'Broad objective(s)/goal(s)' and 'Delivery mechanism' on page 71 of the yellow book under the programme title 'Catering and trading services'. I note that the cafeteria, dining-room, tavern bar, and so on are listed under 'Delivery mechanism'. Page 480 of the Auditor-General's Report states under the heading 'Catering and trading operations':

An audit review of these operations disclosed deficiencies in the control of stocks and sales receipts. The operation of the tavern bar was examined by consultants during the year. They concluded that the profit contribution was lower than expectations under industry standards.

Will the Minister elaborate on the action taken in that area and will he comment on the current situation?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Authority's food catering service is provided on a commercial basis with prices geared to recover direct labour and material costs, along with an allowance for overhead costs and a margin for profit. The kitchen and cafeteria located at the Adelaide Railway Station were recently refurbished to provide an improved level of service to the public and to improve the efficiency of operations. The Authority operates the following trading concessions on the Adelaide railway station concourse: a cake stall, book stall, milk bar, cigar store, confectionery and drink kiosk, and a tavern bar. A number of other shops and

concessions in the precincts of the station are leased to private traders. A market study to determine further requirements for concessions is currently being conducted, as part of a redevelopment programme for the station concourse and its environs. I understand that operations at the Adelaide Railway Station are now more efficient and in line with the Auditor-General's recommendations. The General Manager may be able to provide further information.

**Mr Brown:** In relation to the Auditor-General's Report and his comments about the steps taken by the Authority, I indicate that electronic cash registers have been installed and new procedures implemented to enable us to accurately assess sales against the cash tills. In the past, that was not possible because of the old equipment being used. Further, a procedure for stocktaking on a daily basis is now being implemented, and that was not done previously. There was a certain amount of liquor wastage in the tavern bar. Those procedures have now been tidied up.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I refer to the programme titled 'Property leasing and selling of advertising space' on page 73 of the yellow book. Can the Minister advise what amount of revenue is received from the selling of advertising space? What amount of property has been returned to the State Transport Authority by the S.P.A. in the past financial year? What has occurred in relation to the disposal of surplus houses and land at Greenacres, Gawler and Athol Park?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** In relation to the disposal of houses, the member for Eyre asked me to visit Peterborough to view homes belonging to the Authority in conjunction with the Peterborough council. I made that inspection accompanied by the member for Eyre, and I agreed with his view that the homes had deteriorated. It is a real problem. The Authority owns 74 homes at Peterborough.

Unless something is done very quickly, that problem will get worse. I reported to the S.T.A. officers on my return and asked them to look at this problem urgently. The Authority's policy has been to sell those homes as quickly as possible, but there is very little demand in Peterborough, and the Authority is not in the business of providing welfare housing. We looked at what could be done about them. The officers, together with the Director-General, visited Peterborough to look for themselves in conjunction with members of the Peterborough council. Negotiations have been held with a private buyer, who has expressed some interest in the homes. We hope that in the near future an agreement will be drawn up that will take care of existing residents of those homes.

With regard to other property held by the Authority, I am not in a position to answer that question. I will ask the General Manager or the Chairman to give further detail.

**Mr Rump:** In the matter of the Greenacres land referred to by the member for Albert Park, we have signed a contract for the disposal of surplus land at Greenacres, which is no longer required by the Authority because we will use the St Agnes depot and upgrade same to meet the requirements of the busway. Therefore, that land will be disposed of. In addition, we have further homes that progressively are being disposed of—as rapidly as we can. As the Minister said, we have handled the Peterborough surplus houses. We have some other areas in the country which we are trying to dispose of as rapidly as possible because in many instances they are an on-going problem because of maintenance and lack of available tenants in some of those country towns.

Our income from advertising and rental of properties that have been referred to is approximately \$1.523 million in our estimate this year. The sale of properties varies; we have budgeted for about \$750 000 exclusive of Greenacres, because the Greenacres disposal was not envisaged when we did that estimate of disposal of houses and other surplus land.

**Mr HAMILTON:** It was pointed out to me that I asked a question earlier in relation to the secondment of staff. I understand that that information could be read into *Hansard*.

**Mr Rump:** I have the information to which the member referred. It was a question regarding 'made-availables'. Our establishment of 'made-availables' is 1 035; we actually have 849. That 186 difference is not a shortage of staff, but an indication of the number of 'made-availables' that have been moved over into direct employment. We have an ongoing policy of trying to get all the 'made-availables' ultimately into our direct employ because we believe that it is much better: it provides more accountability. It is better to be employed by the person that one is working for rather than to be made available. One of the stoppages referred to (that is, today's stoppage by the A.R.U.), if one says that we had resolved the v.d.u. signalling problem, the only other justification for that stoppage which has been put forward by the union does not involve S.T.A. operations. It is really a matter in dispute with Australian National. We would not be involved in that problem if we did not have 'made-available' employees.

**Mr OSWALD:** Regarding page 145 of the Estimates under the line 'Miscellaneous works, plant and equipment', I particularly address my remarks to the upgrading of the tracks on the Glenelg-Adelaide tram line. I notice that last year the vote for that line was \$2.325 million; the actual payments were \$1.4 million, a drop of some \$900 000, and you are proposing \$1.988 million this year. On page 164 of the same book when I refer to the breakdown, I notice that last year expenditure to 30 June 1983 for tram track reconstruction was nil. Bearing in mind that the former Government made a commitment to complete the tram tracks by 1983-84, what happened to that money that we allocated last year for the construction of the tracks? Perhaps, depending on the answer to that, I may have some supplementary questions.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Authority is spending \$632 000 approximately this year as part of the upgrading of the Glenelg tram line. The project will take several years, and the final costs associated with the upgrading are expected to be in the vicinity of \$7 million. This is a capital project which will continue at a rate that will be determined by the availability of funds in future years. The tram track reconstruction will include King William Street, Moseley Square, and Morphett to Sturt Creek. The Chairman or General Manager might want to add to those comments.

**Mr Brown:** The reference to no finance being expended last year is not quite correct. The sum of \$433 000 was voted out of the capital expenditure vote for the tram tracks. In fact, the work was paid for out of our recurrent expenditure. That work was the upgrading of Jetty Road and you will be aware that that work was undertaken. The source of funds was changed because \$3.5 million of capital works was transferred into recurrent expenditure last financial year.

**Mr OSWALD:** My next question relates to a letter which the Minister wrote to me recently, saying that the upgrading of the tram line would be completed in the 1984-85 financial year. Page 164 of the Estimates quotes the completion date of the tram track reconstruction project as now being June 1987. It is a fair question to ask for the details of the proposal for the whole of the project up to that date.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The details of the new works will be: Beckman Street level crossing, where \$71 000 has been proposed; tram track reconstruction, \$632 000 up to June 1987 as the completion date.

**Mr OSWALD:** On a point of order, I wish to clarify that question in case it is misinterpreted: I was told that the whole of the project for the tram line to Glenelg would be completed in the 1984-85 financial year. I notice now that

the completion date for the project is June 1987. How have you amended the schedule of works along the whole length of the tram line so that, whereas we at Glenelg had expected the whole project to be finished at the end of the 1984-85 financial year (having thought beforehand that it would be finished 12 months earlier), you have extended the project for 12 months? I now read these Budget papers and it appears that you have extended this project for another three years beyond that. What I want now is the itemised detail of the schedule of works so that we can see how you intend to plan and proceed to complete that project by June 1987.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** My reference to the \$632 000 and the completion date of June 1987 was for tram track reconstruction. The remainder of the open track is programmed for reconstruction as follows:

Cross Road to Morphettville, and Sixth Avenue to Brighton Road, 1984-85, \$337 000; Leah Street to Beckman Street, \$390 000, 1985-86; Beckman Street to Cross Road, \$390 000, 1986-87; Sturt Creek bridge at Morphettville, \$10 000, 1986-87; and to reconstruct a crossing over South Terrace, \$50 000, 1986-87.

Those are fairly minor works. Perhaps the General Manager can explain why that has been extended over those years.

**Mr Rump:** The unavailability of funds.

**Mr OSWALD:** Is it fair to say that you have downgraded the priority to complete that track from the original plan of completion by the 1983-84 financial year and that I can now announce in my district that you do not intend to complete the track before 1987?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** If the member would like details of that programme, we would be happy to provide it to him.

**Mr OSWALD:** I seek a clear 'Yes' or 'No' answer so that my constituents are clear about the completion date, as doubt has been cast on it.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask the Director-General to comment.

**Dr Scrafton:** The answer is exactly opposite to what the member suggests. The priority given to the Glenelg area was that the Jetty Road area could be completed first. Minor works further down the track were deferred to provide funds so that Jetty Road could be completed. It depends how one interprets priorities. We felt the highest priority should be given to Jetty Road, and that work was done first.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I asked the previous Minister of Transport a question about my district involving the servicing of Football Park by S.T.A. bus services and whether he would take up with sporting organisations, especially football clubs, running special services from football clubs so that club patrons could ride on S.T.A. services from the club to Football Park and back to the club after the match. This would be desirable because it would reduce the number of vehicles on the road and perhaps the number of drink drivers. The previous Minister said he would look at the situation. Therefore, can the present Minister say whether he will consider the suggestion in regard to football clubs and any other organisation interested in filling S.T.A. buses for visits to Football Park?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will be happy to look at the matter. The Australian Railways Union made such an approach to me recently with regard to providing special services. It gave one example concerning Central Districts playing at Football Park and the possibility of arranging a special train from Elizabeth to Albert Park station and providing buses to Football Park from the station. The suggestion has much merit and I am happy to look at it, although I am advised that it has been looked at in the past, was tried, but was not proved successful.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Last year there was a series of level crossing accidents in metropolitan Adelaide. Can the Minister



say what expenditure is involved in the protection of railway crossings in Adelaide?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** In level crossing upgrading for 1983-84 it is intended to upgrade Beckman Street, Glandore (Tramline), \$71 000; Fletcher Road, Largs North, \$65 000; and Main Road, Blackwood, \$65 000.

Level crossings requiring upgrading on the Gawler line have been deferred as it is necessary to replace all control gear on these crossings as part of the resignalling project. These crossings include Andersons Walk, Smithfield; Dalkeith Road, Kudla; Clarke Road, Tambelin; Para Road, Para; Barnet Street, Gawler; Victoria Terrace, Gawler; and Howard Street, North Gawler.

A priority order has been placed on 13 crossings for upgrading in future years. These include Coglein Street, Bowden; East Street, Bowden; Gibson Street, Bowden; Gedville Road, Taperoo; Grange Road, Mitcham; Angas Road, Mitcham; Hargrave Street, Peterhead; Wills Street, Largs; West Street, Bowden; Kalapore Avenue, Draper; Harris Street, Peterhead; Brighton Parade, Coromandel; and Klingberg Drive, Yerlo.

**Mr HAMILTON:** What amounts will be expended on railway bridges in metropolitan Adelaide, and which bridges are they?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I refer that question to the General Manager.

**Mr Brown:** I cannot advise the member exactly on which bridges we will be working, but a programme of maintenance and upgrading is planned. Priorities have not yet been set.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I apologise to the Committee but I was temporarily called from the Chamber during the questioning by the member for Morphett and the member for Albert Park, because their questions and the answers bear somewhat on the matters with which I wish to deal. I refer the Minister to pages 163 and 164 of the Estimates, which deal with capital programmes and the S.T.A. Page 163 deals with new works, central train control building, storage rationalisation, suburban stations—upgrading and other and then, on a further line dealing with new works, reference is made to level crossings—various, and radio and telephone equipment. Page 164 deals with new works again and the Beckman Street level crossing, train wash facilities and tram track reconstruction. The sum of \$7.25 million has not been spent in the last financial year which was allocated by the previous Government but not spent in the financial year just ended. That is very serious. I caught the answer of the General Manager when he said that no finance was available

I would like to know where that \$7.25 million has gone. Has it been used to prop up recurrent expenditure in any way, because we know that the deficit on operations of the State Transport Authority was \$75 million in the last financial year? I regard this matter as serious and wish to continue with the point made by the member for Albert Park when he talked about level crossings because no money was spent on the upgrading of level crossings in the last financial year. It was the policy of the former Government to upgrade at least three level crossings each year because of the serious level crossing accidents that happen in this State from time to time, which are always of great concern to the Minister involved. Will the Minister say where that \$7.25 million has gone and why he did not insist, if there was money to be spent, that that money was spent on level crossings, which is a safety matter that should not be deferred?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The policy of the present Government in relation to level crossings is a programme of grade separation. I think that is an important policy because level crossing accidents, as the honourable member has said, are very serious. There have been some nasty accidents at level crossings over the years. That is an important reason

why the Government has adopted a policy of grade separation. The more underpasses and overpasses there are the less chance there is of nasty level crossing accidents occurring. I understand that the reason this money was not spent was a readjustment of the capital budget. I will ask the Chairman to provide details about this matter, which I understand happened under the former Government.

**Mr Rump:** As the Minister has stated, although money was shown as being voted the Treasury did not allocate that money to the authority so some of the proposed work had to be covered by using other moneys. The General Manager can give details of the work that had to be taken out of our current capital works budget.

**Mr Brown:** Page 145 of the Budget papers shows under section 13, just above the centre of the page, a figure of \$25.5 million voted for the last financial year. However, we actually received payments of \$17.6 million so if one compares work done out of capital voted against the actual figure there is a discrepancy of about \$7.5 million. That work was still undertaken but financed out of recurrent expenditure, or, to put it another way, out of our reserves.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Am I to understand that these works were carried out?

**Mr Brown:** Yes.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Therefore, three level crossings were constructed?

**Mr Brown:** They were constructed or are well under way.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** And radio and telephone equipment was provided costing \$140 000?

**Mr Brown:** Yes.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** There was suburban station upgrading, and the train control building had \$340 000 spent on it, etc.?

**Mr Brown:** Not all of the \$340 000 was spent, only the design figure. We can get details of this expenditure for the member.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** And \$71 000 was spent on the Beckman Street level crossing?

**Mr Brown:** We can get the member the exact figure on that. However, I think Mr Wilson is quoting the 1983-84 figures rather than the 1982-83 figures. We are talking about what was done last year.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I am talking about expenditure until 30 June 1983. The Estimates show that no money was spent on those items, although money was voted for them 12 months ago. That is what I want to know.

**Mr Brown:** We will provide a list of the actual works undertaken in 1982-83.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** If the Minister intends solving the level crossing problem by providing overpasses or grade separation (which is obviously the best way to do it), we will be waiting for a long time because it has taken five or six years to get the Emerson Crossing to its present stage. If we are going to provide grade separation over dangerous level crossings there will be one completed every five or six years, which I think will be totally unacceptable to everybody.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I assume that the member for Torrens did not mean that to be a question?

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** No, it was just a preamble.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I do not want the little interchange that just occurred to be repeated. I want members of the Committee to direct their questions to the Minister, otherwise we are in grave danger of there being an altercation between members of the Committee and officers. The honourable member for Torrens.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** There is no way that I want to get into an altercation with the Minister's officers.

Is the Minister aware of any officer from Victoria having visited South Australia to speak to him or any of his officers about proposals to plan for the introduction into Victoria of an O-Bahn type bus system? I ask this question because I am informed that it was announced on Victorian radio some weeks ago that the Doncaster council, in particular, is looking at constructing an O-Bahn busway down the middle of the north-east freeway in Melbourne. It is certainly looking at other options such as a light rail system, but I understand that the Doncaster council has had discussions with the Victorian Minister of Transport about this matter. I have been informed that an officer has been to Adelaide to discuss this matter with South Australian authorities. If so, it is very important that another State is looking at this new technology.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am not aware of any such approach. Perhaps Mr Wayte can indicate whether any such approach has been made. I can say that there has been tremendous interest in the O-Bahn busway both inside and outside of Australia. We have had many requests for detailed information on its design and construction and much interest expressed. I ask Mr Wayte whether he knows of any approach about this matter.

**Mr Wayte:** We have received no approach from either the Victorian Minister of Transport or the Doncaster council. I have heard about the proposal and been approached by journalists about it, but not by either of those two bodies.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Will the Minister say when 'give-way' signs are likely to be introduced on the back of buses. Also, will he say what is happening concerning the upgrading of suburban railway stations in the metropolitan area? I draw his attention to the run down condition of the Albert Park railway station which is eaten out by white ants and which has been in that condition for a long time. Its repair would be a worthy project to be undertaken by many of the unemployed in the north-western suburbs of Adelaide.

I note that 60 bus shelters will be provided in the next financial year, and that will be of interest to the aged people in our community. This has been an ongoing problem for many years, and I hope that that matter will be redressed in future Budgets.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Government intends to continue the programme of upgrading suburban stations in regard to lighting and other services. This will include the demolition of redundant buildings, the provision of vandal-proof shelters and landscaping of selected suburban stations. This programme was initiated by the former Government and it is continuing. This year \$150 000 has been allocated for that purpose.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Is the Albert Park station a priority?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** No. The Chairman may be able to comment on the Albert Park station.

**Mr Rump:** We have set no priorities, but we will use the \$150 000 based on a programme to be established.

**Mr Gunn:** I wish to make a brief comment before asking the Minister a question, supplementary to the Dorothy Dix question asked by the member for Albert Park regarding Peterborough.

**Mr HAMILTON:** It was not a Dorothy Dix.

**Mr Gunn:** From the way in which the honourable member asked the question, it was fairly obvious that it was a Dorothy Dix. I point out that the houses at Peterborough have caused the corporation a great deal of concern over a long period. To put it mildly, the response to date has been virtually non-existent. I have been advised that an officer of the Housing Trust went to Peterborough to look at the houses.

The council has expressed to me the following concerns. First, some time ago a departmental officer drew up an agreement that tenants could sign if they were to rent one

of the houses, but that agreement was so restrictive that it was doubtful whether anyone would want to sign it. We managed to persuade the Minister to consider the matter, and it is clear that he appreciated the problem. Unfortunately, the problem has not been solved. Vandalism is continuing and the police have indicated that the group of houses make up one of the problem areas in the town. The Minister was in Peterborough in July, but it is now nearly the end of September and the situation has still not been resolved.

What guarantee can the Minister give the Committee and the corporation of Peterborough that this problem will be solved very soon? Either the corporation could take over the homes, the homes that are not fit for occupation could be demolished, or another body could put those houses to some use. The problem will only get worse. Another thing that comes to mind is that it is fairly obvious that some houses could be transferred from the State Transport Authority. How much would be involved? Why does the State Transport Authority place such value on these houses? The Authority has already taken the houses once. I am concerned for my constituents. I appreciate the fact that the Minister has visited Peterborough, but can he give an undertaking that everything possible will be done to have the houses handed over to the council or to some other appropriate authority that can organise them as quickly as possible?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I indicated the urgency in relation to this problem when I answered the previous question from the member for Albert Park. The Government would like to have this problem solved as soon as possible. As I said, a private buyer is interested in the houses. The Chairman of the State Transport Authority will indicate how those negotiations are proceeding and he can comment in regard to the drawing up of an agreement.

However, before referring the matter to the Chairman, in answer to the member for Albert Park, I omitted to say that we approached other Government departments such as the Housing Trust, the Education Department, and the E. & W.S. Department to see whether they were interested in any of the 74 houses that the Authority owns at Peterborough. However, none of those departments is interested in any of the houses. This is a very real problem—I admit that—because vandalism and destruction of the houses is continuing, and if it goes on for very much longer, the only solution would be to bulldoze the houses. They would be totally lost if that happened. That would be quite a disaster in view of the great demand for housing in other areas, particularly in the metropolitan area. The Chairman will outline the steps that are being taken and the position in regard to future negotiations.

**Mr Rump:** At the Minister's request, accompanied by the Director-General of Transport, the General Manager, our property manager and I inspected the houses. The houses had been offered to the Peterborough council, but the council did not want them. We sought Cabinet approval and we were given permission to sell the houses to a private buyer. A contract was organised and (if it has not been signed) it is days away from being signed. We had to warn the purchaser, in accordance with the advice from the Minister of Housing and the Housing Trust, that some of the houses could well be subject to a notice that would indicate that they were not fit for human occupation. We wanted to be certain that there was no problem with the purchaser's claiming that we had misled him. We carried out all of the instructions of Cabinet, as approved, and it is now a formality that the houses will be sold.

**Mr Gunn:** I do not wish to be difficult, but I just want to say that the corporation, according to my understanding, was keen to take over the houses if the Government made them available at no cost. It appears that the Government has been able to dispose of the houses privately. I doubt

whether the council would object, but I believe that it will object if this matter is allowed to continue for a few more weeks, and, if it continues for a month, I believe that the council will make public statements. I realise the difficulty of the situation and I always endeavour to be reasonable, but if the situation continues much longer there will be public controversy in this regard. I hope that the undertakings that were given will come to fruition quickly.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I believe it was yesterday that I signed a letter to the member for Eyre: he will receive that letter in the next day or so pointing out what the Government is doing. We are proceeding as quickly as possible. The honourable member stated that the houses would be provided at no cost, but I believe that the Government and the Authority are entitled to obtain as much as they possibly can for the houses, and that is what we are trying to achieve.

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

Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous, \$73 519 000

**Chairman:**

Mr G.T. Whitten

**Members:**

Mr E.S. Ashenden  
The Hon. D.C. Brown  
The Hon. Peter Duncan  
Mr K.C. Hamilton  
Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
Mr J.K.G. Oswald  
Mr J.P. Trainer  
The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

The Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Transport.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Dr D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.  
Mr P.T. Tregoweth, Senior Finance Officer, Department of Transport.  
Mr K.J. Collett, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Transport.  
Mr J.D. Rump, Chairman, State Transport Authority.  
Mr J.V. Brown, General Manager, State Transport Authority.  
Mr J.W. Hutchinson, Director, Transport Policy Research, Department of Transport.  
Mr F.A. Wayte, Director, North-East Busway Project.

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

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** The allocation of \$64 million under this vote is to enable the State Transport Authority to meet its deficit. I refer to the industrial disputes that have occurred recently within the State Transport Authority. On three occasions the travelling public of Adelaide have been left standing in the streets with virtually no warning whatsoever, with bus drivers going out on strike from either one depot or several depots. On each occasion the Minister seems to have sat by meekly without doing anything, although after the last dispute and following a public statement that I made I think he also made a faint-hearted statement criticising the unions.

I understand that the current dispute relates to rosters. I have spoken to a couple of drivers who say that the issue is simply over the taking on of additional staff and the fact

that drivers do not have to work as many days on overtime or on their rostered days off. Earlier this afternoon, we heard that there could be a dispute with the unions over ticketing and particularly in relation to ticketing machines. I think the Minister made the incredible statement that whether or not ticketing machines were introduced would very much depend on the union.

We had a dispute within the State Transport Authority that saw railway signalmen stop work over the use of visual display units as part of a new resignalling operation. It appears that State Transport Authority unions are attempting to dictate the terms, conditions and management of the Authority.

I am not reflecting on the existing management, because I believe that it is doing an extremely good job in attempting to resist the union. The last thing that we want in the State Transport Authority is a duplication of the problems that currently exist at Yatala Labour Prison. The union and the Ombudsman agree that the union runs the Yatala Labour Prison. It appears that the Minister has sat by accepting the union proposition in relation to the three recent disputes. I am concerned that the Minister is not prepared to look at the rational argument involved or to back up the State Transport Authority management.

Earlier this afternoon the State Transport Authority management actually indicated that the unions had agreed to the use of visual display units but have now broken that agreement. To my knowledge, the Minister has said nothing publicly about that and has not criticised the union for breaching the agreement. The Minister has a responsibility to supply services to the public of Adelaide. Those services are breaking down because the Minister is not prepared to take a firm stand against the union, even when it appears to have breached an agreement. Will the Minister reassess his stand and his relationship with the union? Will he take a much stronger stand, and is he willing to stand up to the union and tell its members to go back to work? If the Minister is unable to achieve that situation, will he go to the Federal Industrial Commission and ask it to supply the backbone that he is not prepared to supply and take strong industrial action against the union for breaching award conditions?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The member for Davenport is totally wrong when he says that I said nothing in relation to the disputes. I was in Melbourne last Friday when the recent dispute occurred. I made two statements from Melbourne criticising the union, saying that it was totally irresponsible and that its actions were not acceptable to the Government. The damage that the union is doing to the public is not acceptable. This matter was before the Commission, and there will be a further hearing on 29 September. The Commission was critical of a previous stoppage, and it gave the union a dressing down.

Several issues have been in dispute, including rosters at the city depot and working on cancelled days off. The Authority is attempting to do something quite within the award provisions. We are being criticised by bus operators for breaching previous agreements. I cannot see where we have breached any agreement whatsoever. As I have said, we are working quite within the award provisions. Rosters are changed periodically to accommodate improved time-table services. New rosters will have a different impact on different depots.

One of the problems relates to the city depot where there are fewer operators to share cancelled days off, which means overtime for the rosters. The Authority needed time to assess how it could adjust the situation. Unfortunately, the union would not give us an opportunity to do that. As a result, the city depot considers that the roster situation places undue demands on its staff. As I have said, the matter

is now before the Commission. We hope that the parties can arrive at a solution. The dispute in relation to cancelled days off is a part of the union's campaign for a 38-hour week. The Minister of Industrial Relations informs me that a proposal for a reduction of hours has been submitted for arbitration and that it will be heard shortly.

The Government's policy is to introduce a 38-hour week in the public sector wherever the guidelines as to the cost of its implementation can be met. As I have said, negotiations are continuing in that area. I have expressed my concern to the union that its industrial action has been taken precipitately on these issues with great inconvenience to the public. I have directed all my efforts to ensure that the parties involved continue to negotiate in order to reach a settlement as expeditiously as possible. It is quite wrong for the member to say that I have stood by idly saying nothing. I have been critical about the current disputes. It may well be that the Government will have to take much stronger action in an attempt to resolve the situation, if it continues for much longer.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I am totally dissatisfied with the Minister's answer. We have already had three stoppages and there is a threat of a further stoppage next week. The union is almost proud of the way in which it is touting itself around Adelaide to the press and in the media. Following the third stoppage, the Minister has merely come out with a meek and mild statement, issued through his press secretary.

Earlier today I asked the Minister to take specific action. No union will be worried by a meek and mild statement from a Minister, especially in the terms he used. I heard the Minister's press statement over the air. The first thing the Minister should do is inform the union that, if it continues its behaviour, the Government will discontinue negotiations in relation to the introduction of a 38-hour week.

*The Hon. R.K. Abbott interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask the Minister not to interject, and I ask the member for Davenport to come to his question.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I will do that, Mr Chairman. I ask the Minister to immediately consider breaking off negotiations with the union for a 38-hour week while it continues its threat of industrial action. Secondly, will the Minister immediately ask the Industrial Commission to take action against the union? I point out that the Minister could have done that following each of the previous three disputes. We have had three disputes and the Minister has yet to approach the Industrial Commission. I know that the Industrial Commission made a statement several disputes ago, but to my knowledge, it has not made a statement and has not had a hearing, and the Minister has not asked the Commission for an urgent hearing since the two most recent disputes. I ask the Minister to take that action. It appears that the union, realising that we have a Labor Government in this State, is trying to take advantage of that fact and is trying to run the State Transport Authority. I think the State Transport Authority management has taken a strong stand in resisting those attempts.

The only way in which we can break those attempts is for the Government itself (which the union is trying to dominate on this issue) to step in and show a firm stand, and that is up to the Minister.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am not too sure which line of the Estimates this dispute relates to.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I made that quite clear.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** At the commencement of today's proceedings the member for Davenport stood up and said that he hoped that there would be no political speeches. Most of our discussion today has been along those lines and has had very little to do with the Estimate lines. I am

quite satisfied in relation to this dispute. The S.T.A. officers have been to the Commission. There is a further hearing on 29 September, which is tomorrow. I am satisfied that every effort is being made to resolve the dispute.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I intend to go on to another matter but, before doing so, I am disgusted to think that the Minister has admitted here this afternoon that he is satisfied with the disputes. That is the exact quote of what he said. I point out to the Minister that he might like to go away and investigate and discuss with the S.T.A. the information that came out earlier this afternoon that the signmen of the union had reached agreement on the use of the v.d.u. disputes and have now breached the agreement. I do not intend to pursue that line of questioning any further. The Minister said that he is satisfied with the dispute, and I am staggered to think that he is willing to sit back and accept the union behaviour like that.

On transport concessions, on page 87 concerning Australian National and the various concessions (pensioners and others, State concession cards and, over the page, blind and incapacitated persons, children and pensioners), there is a total figure of \$9 million to \$10 million. I had a letter last week from someone who is a quadraplegic and who certainly needs specialised transport and to get around in a motorised wheelchair. The point that that gentleman made was (and I think that it is a very pertinent point) that the taxpayers are subsidising public transport for those who are fit and well in our community to the extent of \$64 million, plus a further substantial subsidy for those who have not got a job and in areas like that.

But, this person, whom one would have to put in the most disadvantaged group in our community, is required to use specialised transport; he has to pay the full fare to a private bus operator. He is very praiseworthy of that private bus operator, but I will not mention his name here. He stresses that whilst everyone else, including all those who are physically fit, have their public transport subsidised, he as a quadraplegic has to pay and bear the full cost of his transport around Adelaide.

I ask the Minister whether he will review the guidelines under which the concessions are granted with a view, particularly, to looking at how, even though private buses may be used, those in our community such as quadraplegics who need specialised transport can get some sort of transport concession.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Government is concerned about the range and amounts of concessions offered on its services. A substantial number affect the transport portfolio and their future impact on Budgets and the benefits to the community are being considered. Currently, there are 20 different concessions, under 10 different assessment criteria, administered by 15 departments at a cost of around \$76 million per annum. A Government subcommittee is reviewing these matters to enable better co-ordination and the more efficient provision of benefits to those people who are in need of those concessions.

The additional concession which was introduced by this Government and to which I referred earlier was to war widows. That amounted to approximately \$500 000. That is the answer I give to the honourable member: the Government is giving consideration to the whole range of concessions in the hope that it will become more efficient and that it will benefit those who need them most.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Before I ask the question of the Minister, I would like to preface my remarks in relation to the so-called industrial dispute pertaining to v.d.u.'s today. My understanding is that this may not necessarily be the reason why this industrial dispute took place, but I might point out to the previous speaker that it may be to his advantage before he runs around—

**Mr OSWALD:** Come along. This is not a debate.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I ask members to show decorum while the Chairman is speaking. The member for Albert Park will address his remarks to the Chair or to the Minister.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I will certainly address them to you, as Chairman, but it concerns me that there are those people who would appear to wish to inflame industrial disputes. I ask the Minister whether he has concrete information which indicates that the dispute today is because of the v.d.u. situation, or whether it is incorporated (as I understand) in terms of the manning levels, which incorporates Australian National itself. I would certainly like the Minister to clarify this situation rather than have the inflammatory remarks which have just been made by the member for Davenport, who is obviously here to inflame industrial disputes.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! Interjections are out of order.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** My understanding of today's dispute, which is the dispute to which the member for Albert Park refers, is only what I read in the press this morning, and I understand that mention was made of their opposition to the introduction of visual display units as against those operating in other States. There are also the manning levels, which is an Australian National dispute and responsibility, and the signalling in relation to the Adelaide-Crystal Brook area, which also involves Australian National. That is all that I know in relation to today's dispute.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I have only one question on this line. I say in preface that I am very puzzled about the amount of \$64.04 million allocated for the deficit in the coming 12 months. The deficit for this last 12 months was \$64.869 million, and here we have the State Transport Authority deficit for this current year being allocated at less than it was for the one that has just been completed. Obviously, a deficit is only the amount that the Treasury is prepared to pay the S.T.A.

I am concerned, as I was before, about the \$7.25 million which was not spent on capital works in the past 12 months, and I wondered where that was being picked up. The operating shortage for the past 12 months was \$75 million and, although traffic receipts increased by \$6.9 million, operation costs increased by \$16 million. Although there has been a large fare increase, I seek an explanation from the Minister about how he intends the Authority to operate in the this financial year with a Treasury payment less than in the last financial year when such cost increases are taken into account. I refer to the \$7.25 million not spent on capital works last year. Is capital works money to be used to prop up the deficit? This is an extremely important question and both the Committee and the public are entitled to obtain an answer.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The funds required from the State Government for S.T.A. recurrent operations amounted to \$68.664 million. The Treasury allocation for the recurrent Budget is \$64.04 million, a shortfall of about \$4.5 million, which is below the amount required and which will need to be funded from reserves. I am just as concerned as the member for Torrens about this. Limited options are available to the Authority to reduce this gap. However, every effort will be made by increasing efficiencies in all areas, including general administration, engineering administration, and the servicing of buses, railcars and the infrastructure, etc. The rationalising programme may help wherever it is possible to rationalise services, and we may also have to look in due course at a further increase in fares. I will ask the Chairman to answer the question about capital works and money not spent in that area.

**Mr Rump:** One of the things that I would like to point out is the comparison of the figures. The sum of \$64 million for 1983-84 does not include any wage increases, because

that is not allowed in our budgets. Also, the short funding of \$4.5 million relates to a system that has been going on for some years whereby Treasury does not provide our full costs. It is progressively cutting down our reserves and it will not be able to continue after this year, because we will not have any reserves. We have reached the bottom of the barrel.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Will the Minister say what are the Authority's reserves now, how much the Authority has budgeted to take out of reserves and what is the estimated actual deficit for this financial year? I mean not the amount that Treasury has said it will pay the Authority but the actual estimated deficit. I understand the position in regard to wage increases, which are not contained in the amount.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** That information is available. Reserve funds are decreasing and have been decreasing over the years. The member could advise the Committee how much those funds decreased in his term as Minister. I will ask the Chairman to give the figure of the reserve fund if he has it.

**Mr Rump:** The 1983-84 appropriation is \$64.04 million. The net cost of providing public transport services in 1983-84 is expected to be \$75.19 million. A further detailed breakdown is available in another schedule, but it would not be appropriate now to go into that detail. From the net cost of \$75.19 million comes depreciation not funded and other adjustments (about which I appreciate the member did not inquire), so that the actual short funding is taken out of reserves. As I indicated, by the end of this current financial year we will be down to \$4.418 million.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** My question relates to the increase in transport fares announced earlier this year. In his policy speech before the last election, the Premier stated in regard to transport:

In transport our priority will be to keep fares down, to attract and retain passengers.

How does the Minister relate the Premier's promise to keep fares down with the average 47 per cent increase in S.T.A. fares announced several months ago? What impact does he believe the fare increase will have on the number of passengers in 1983-84 compared with that of 1982-83?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Government's policy on fare increases is that we will increase fares only in relation to costs. I have said previously that one cannot run a public transport system from a fare base, no matter what fare one charges. The last general increase in fares occurred two years ago and involved a 20 per cent increase. The new schedule will increase fare revenue by about 21 per cent. Authority operating costs have increased by 54 per cent since August 1980 and by 35 per cent since August 1981, those dates being the dates of the last fare increases.

In regard to the effect that it will have on the general public, no-one likes increasing fares at any time but, in view of the Authority's deficit, it was necessary to look at the fare structure and increase fares accordingly. That is what happened. We have a committee looking at problems associated with the operators and ticketing systems. This is all being considered by the task force, which has yet to report to me.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** My question is about services to the north-eastern suburbs. The Minister is aware of representations made by me in regard to route 552. Recently a deputation was brought to the Minister, and I thank him for the time that he made available to see my constituents. The Minister indicated then that he shared the concern of my constituents and me about the problems existing in regard to route 552.

The Minister assured me that he would ask his officers to look closely at the possibility of implementing changes

that would overcome the problems that presently exist. Will the Minister advise me whether or not his officers have been able to make recommendations to him about this matter and whether or not some assistance will be forthcoming for my constituents along route 552?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I recall the visit by the member and his constituents. He has been asking questions relating to this service for some time. At the moment I have received no feedback about the undertaking that we gave. I will follow up this matter and notify the member tomorrow by telephone whether or not information is yet available.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I thank the Minister for that undertaking. I turn now to the subsidy paid to community bus services. I notice that the proposed figure for 1983-84 for these services is the same as the amount allocated for the 1982-83 year. That, therefore, represents a reduction in real terms. I am concerned about that, because the Corporation of the City of Tea Tree Gully has what is recognised as the best and most efficient of these bus services provided for a local community, a service known as the 'Green Line bus service'.

The council has advised me that its buses are too small for the demand placed upon them because the service is so effective and popular and the buses are frequently full. I have also been advised that the buses are reaching the end of their useful life and need to be replaced. In other words, there is a problem both in relation to size and age of these buses. I have been hoping that the Government would allocate additional funds rather than reducing, in real terms, funds available as a subsidy for community bus services. Is it possible that the Minister's Government will reconsider this allocation in order that councils such as the Tea Tree Gully council that have taken such an initiative can continue to provide what is a vital service to the area?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** This allocation is provided to encourage the establishment of community bus services in council areas throughout the State. Any grant to a council is to cover the purchase price of a bus and the cost of six months' registration. Grants to be made in 1983-84 are as follows: Walkerville council, \$5 916; Mitcham council, \$5 680; Noarlunga council, \$6 162; Adelaide City Council, \$11 360; Brighton council, \$36 667; Mount Barker council, \$5 680; Clare council, \$22 000; and Morgan council, \$6 535—a total of \$100 000 shown under the 'Subsidy to community bus services' line. I would like to have twice that amount to spend on community bus services because I think that they are a well worthwhile community service that needs to be expanded wherever possible. However, advice to me was that due to current restraints it was not possible to increase that allocation this year.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Is the Minister indicating to me that there is no possibility of Government subsidy assistance to the Tea Tree Gully council in its efforts to provide a better community service to the ratepayers of that city?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** That council will be in a position to apply for funds next year. I will ask the Director-General, who has more information about this matter, to respond further.

**Dr Scrafton:** I add the comment about the Tea Tree Gully programme that this bus programme was one of the few innovative programmes introduced in past years. The amount allocated for this programme has been at the \$100 000 actual figure for several years. In some ways, as the Minister has pointed out, that is a bad thing because we should at least be allowed to increase some of these programmes to cover increases in the c.p.i. However, in a way the programme demonstrates that given the declining value of the dollar, one can still maintain an innovative programme even though there is a built-in sunset clause because, as the value of the dollar decreases the programme

still allows for the provision of some innovative services whereas, if it were a subsidy programme, as with country buses and the F.C.A., there is the trouble of trying to hold the deficit down.

When the Tea Tree Gully programme was introduced it was never intended that replacement buses would be provided, and this was spelt out in the early days of the programme. Capital was to be provided in the first instance but running costs and provision for bus replacements were to be met by the community. In discussions with the former Government each year the Department looked at whether this provision of non-replacement ought to be varied. Because Tea Tree Gully had one of the earliest community bus programmes obviously its replacement requirements will come up soon and, as the Minister has pointed out, we would take that into account in a future year. It would not be true to say that there is absolutely no likelihood of funds being made available. However, as long as there are pressures from other communities which in the past have had no assistance, or limited assistance, then the Department must take those requirements into account in making recommendations to the Government of the day. I guess that the short answer is that it does not look very bright, but the possibility will be reviewed next year and a variation in the terms under which community bus grants are given might be recommended.

**The Hon. PETER DUNCAN:** I note from the list that the Minister read out that the grants for community bus services are going to Liberal electorates except for Brighton and Noarlunga, which seems, on the figures that I have roughly calculated, to be about 90 per cent of the money going, in effect, to middle-class areas. Is there any reason for this happening? As we now have a Labor Government one might have expected priorities to shift to a more neutral position than one might have expected under the previous Government. Also, is there any arrangement as part of this programme to ensure that working-class areas such as Elizabeth and Munno Para can become involved in this programme, particularly given the problems that councils in working-class areas have? In fact, they have more difficulty in raising rates because property values are lower, but they have to pay the same amount as other councils for wages, salaries and other expenses. The Elizabeth council has indicated that it feels unable to fund such a programme because of the factors I have mentioned.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The allocation to the councils for community bus services does vary from year to year. Account is taken of what public transport facilities, particularly in the metropolitan area, are provided, and so on. We try to be as fair as possible in the allocation so that a proper service is provided to the community. Regarding metropolitan community bus expenditure, in 1982-83 the Enfield Council received \$19 229, and Munno Para received \$18 243, and both of those grants related to the purchase of a community bus. The Adelaide, Mitcham, Noarlunga, and Prospect councils also received further allocations in that year. The grant fluctuates from year to year, but we try to be as fair as possible to all councils that apply.

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

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Highways, \$29 954 000

**Chairman:**

Mr G.T. Whitten

**Members:**

Mr E.S. Ashenden

The Hon. D.C. Brown



The Hon. Peter Duncan  
 Mr K.C. Hamilton  
 Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
 Mr J.K.G. Oswald  
 Mr J.P. Trainer  
 The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

The Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Transport.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr M.J.F. Knight, Acting Commissioner of Highways, Highways Department.

Mr J.S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, Highways Department.

Mr C.J. McInnes, Assistant Commissioner, Planning, Highways Department.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Regarding the sum that goes into the Highways Fund, how much of that will actually go towards road construction and maintenance? Can we draw a comparison between the sum for this year and last year? I understand that moneys from the Highways Fund come from motor vehicle registrations and fuel tax. There has been an increase in fuel tax, but Parliament has passed a Bill under which the extra 1c a litre in fuel tax is not tied to the Highways Fund. The only commitment we have from the Premier is that funding for the Highways Fund will be kept at the same level in 1983-84 as it was in 1982-83, in money terms, which means in real terms that there is a depreciation of about 7 per cent to 10 per cent, according to the inflation factor.

We ascertained earlier today that, before that sum reaches the Highways Fund, an additional \$1.1 million is to be taken for accommodation for the Motor Vehicle Registration Division, which was previously paid for by the Public Buildings Department. The total sum dedicated is reduced partly by inflation by 10 per cent, by a further \$1.1 million which goes towards accommodation for the Department of Transport, and by an extra percentage which was voted for the police safety programme and the road safety programmes which, in a full year, would amount to about \$1 million. Therefore, another \$1 million would be taken from the total sum before it is channelled into the Highways Fund. I presume that there are increases in administration costs for the Highways Department. How much will be allocated for road construction and maintenance from the Highways Fund, how does the situation compare to the situation last year, and what is the percentage decrease in real terms?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** When the Government came to office in November, it found the State in a very serious financial situation, and it had no alternative but to implement a number of revenue measures, one of which was the Business Franchise (Petroleum Products) Act Amendment Bill. While we would have preferred not to be in that position, we really had no alternative. The State coffers were truly in a howling mess. The procedure to which reference has been made, ensures flexibility. The Highways Fund will not receive less, as the honourable member knows, than the allocation for last year, and if it is found necessary to go back to Treasury for further funds, we can do just that. It is my genuine desire and endeavour to obtain as much funding for the construction and maintenance of the State road network as possible. I cannot give the percentage difference between last year and this year, but the Acting Commissioner may be able to add to what I have said.

**Mr Knight:** I cannot give the actual percentages, but in very broad terms I can say that the State income that will go towards the Highways Department this year is about \$64 million as compared to \$58 million last year. In real terms,

there is probably a decrease. Regarding the total funding for the Highways Department from all sources, the Australian Government and the State Government, there is an increase of about 21 per cent.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Without asking a subsequent question, I would like clarification of a point. Mr Knight stated that the State income for the Highways Fund will be \$64 million this year compared to \$58 million last year.

**Mr Knight:** That involves collections from registrations, licences and fuel franchise.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Is that after—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I will allow supplementary questions, but I will not allow conversation between an adviser and a member of the Committee.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Through you, Mr Chairman, I would like to ask what exactly is included in the \$64 million, and how much of that sum will actually go towards highway construction and maintenance?

**Mr Knight:** The figures that I have given are the sums paid into the Highways Fund from Treasury, the actual amounts that go into the fund to be used for construction and maintenance works.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** My original question was how much of that sum will go towards highways construction and maintenance compared to last year?

**Mr Knight:** I cannot say, because I do not have the figures. The total amount will go towards construction and maintenance, but whether all of that sum goes towards construction or all towards maintenance, I cannot detail.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Perhaps the Minister could supply a detailed written answer so that we have a complete breakdown of all the revenue collected from motor vehicle registrations and petrol tax, and so that we can ascertain how the sum has diminished in terms of allocations that are taken off for administration and accommodation of the Motor Registration Division, the cost of the police safety programme, the money taken off for other safety programmes, and any other sums that are taken out before the money is actually spent on highways construction.

I ask the Minister to supply a written answer. The Premier picked up this point in his second reading speech when introducing the Budget. The Premier said that there appeared to be a real reduction by the State Government in terms of funds for road construction and road maintenance and that that would cause significant problems because the Australian bi-centennial road development programme required the maintenance of State effort. What problems does the Minister see arising as a result of the reduction? Unless a new agreement or a change in conditions can be negotiated with the Federal Government, do we face the possibility of a reduction in Commonwealth funding under the Australian bi-centennial road development programme?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** That matter is being considered at the moment.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** The Minister's answer is insufficient. That is what the Premier indicated in his second reading speech when introducing the Budget. The danger we face if we fail to negotiate new conditions with Canberra is a reduction in the Australian bi-centennial road development programme. If that occurs, based on the allocation of funds provided in the State Budget, what reduction would we face from Canberra this year and in subsequent years?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Minister is discussing that matter with the Prime Minister at the moment. I am not in a position to comment on the outcome of those discussions. I prefer to wait until the discussions are completed, when we will gauge their effect.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I refer back to the allocation of funds for road construction and maintenance. I refer to figures supplied by the Commissioner of Highways in March

this year, by courtesy of the Minister (and I thank him for that), and I note that the total money allocated in what were constant 1982-83 dollar terms has declined from \$126 million in 1971-72 to about \$64 million in 1981-82. That is a reduction to half of what it was. The allocation increased slightly in 1982-83 to about \$79 million. In the light of a major reduction in total funding for road construction (and I refer to exhibit 8 of the graphs supplied by the Commissioner of Highways), why has the Government taken the policy decision this year to reduce in real terms the State effort when, in fact, it is quite obvious that a substantial increase in State effort is required?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Acting Commissioner will provide that information.

**Mr Knight:** It is difficult for me to say why the Government might have decided to reduce the State funds. I think the Minister might answer that question. In relation to the total income to the Department, it is correct that the aggregate amount of moneys allocated from both the Federal and State Governments has been declining in real terms over the years. The Australian bi-centennial road development programme was introduced part way through last year, which means that the trend is starting to reverse. Indeed, in total terms, the funds for this year in real terms are somewhat increased beyond last year's level. It is expected that that will continue for about a year, when the effect of the A.B.R.D., because it involves a fixed levy of 2c a litre, will tail off and we could reach a point where we start to decline again in real terms.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I draw the Minister's attention to my question. I did not expect the Acting Commissioner to comment on why the Government took that policy decision. I ask the Minister to say why the Government took the policy decision to reduce the State effort. I draw the Minister's attention to a statement on page 36 of the yellow book, as follows:

Based on an assessment by the Commonwealth Bureau of Transport Economics in 1979, the total road funds available to South Australia from all sources was about 20 per cent less than that required to meet indicated community needs. The situation has not improved since that time and road construction costs have risen at a rate greater than the c.p.i. To protect the existing community asset and to maintain the current level of service, priority has been given to the road maintenance programme; any shortfall in funds therefore results largely in a reduction of effort in areas of new construction and upgrading.

That statement originated from the Minister, and it indicates the need for more money for road construction and maintenance. However, the State Government has decided this year, despite the fact that it imposed an additional fuel tax of 1c a litre, not to put that money into this urgent area of need; instead, the Government has decided that there shall be a reduction in State effort. Why did Cabinet make that extraordinary decision in light of the need outlined by the Minister?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The State Government has a responsibility to the whole of the State. It must take into account the whole of the Budget. There are other areas of responsibility and other areas of great need that need to be looked after. It was certainly not a deliberate effort to reduce State funding. Because of the economic restraints faced by the Government, it had no alternative but to ensure that other areas were satisfactorily covered.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Before the last State election the Premier sent to councils in the southern metropolitan area a document entitled 'The Southern Policy Package'. A section of that document relates to transport. The Minister made a commitment on behalf of the Australian Labor Party under the road section of the policy document, as follows:

Labor will realign and construct and seal Reservoir Drive.

The document then discusses that matter, and then states:

As a first priority we will re-examine the north-south corridor. Our objective will be to provide for enhanced public participation and to ensure that facilities are not unduly disrupted.

As I pointed out earlier today, there was no consultation at all, despite the promise of 'enhanced public participation'. The document then refers to the reconstruction of Flagstaff Road. I recently travelled along that road and realise the need for its reconstruction. The document then continues:

To honour the commitment to redesign and construct the Morphet Vale by-pass. To examine the upgrading of the Darlington intersection and to support the grade separation at Hove.

Two weeks ago the Minister sent a letter to Mr B.D. Coates, Executive Officer of the Southern Region of Councils Incorporated. Attached to that letter was a map which included a number of major roadwork programmes for the southern area. I stress that he said that this is a programme that is indicative only and certainly does not undertake any promise by the Government (in other words, it is a most optimistic outlook, but the Government is willing to see it blow out by many years).

Under that programme that the Minister outlined, whereas before the election the Government promised to reconstruct Flagstaff Road, the reconstruction of Flagstaff Road would not occur until the early 1990s—some eight to nine years away. That was the most optimistic commitment that the Minister could give two weeks ago. I again draw his attention to the fact that before the election he said, 'to honour the commitment to design and construct the Morphet Vale by-pass'. In that letter with the attached map that he sent out two weeks ago, under his programme (which he said was the most optimistic programme) that would not be done until the mid to late 1990s.

No wonder the councils down there are totally disenchanted and cannot believe a thing that the Minister has said so far, because here is an election promise made less than 12 months ago which said, 'we will honour the commitment to design and construct a by-pass', and now, within a year, the Minister has said that it is at least 15 to 20 years away, and that is the most optimistic outlook!

I again stress that this is the whole nub of the decision of the Government to scrap the north-south transport corridor. The Government has made a decision with no alternative whatsoever and has left those people down there, in an area which is expanding at a rate of 47 per cent between now and the next 10 years (as agreed by the population projections supplied by the Minister and agreed to this morning) with enormous transport problems and to what, in the words of the Highways Department at least, will be congested roads from 1990 on. In other words, we will have total traffic congestion and disruption from 1990 on, but many of the major works will not be done until the late 1990s. What is the rationale behind the Government's thinking in all of this, and when will the Government see sense and do something to help the transport problems that already exist?

On the day after the Minister announced the scrapping of the north-south transport corridor, I went down to the Darlington intersection. One of the policemen happened to be there and came out and talked about some of the traffic problems, and highlighted the fact that already on certain occasions in the morning during peak hours the traffic banks up from the Darlington intersection right along the Main South Road up O'Halloran Hill to the hotel—at least 1½ to 2 kilometres away. That is the sort of congestion that already exists. Now we find that there is no commitment—in fact, the most optimistic commitment from the Government is not to do anything for at least another 10 years.

I ask the Minister to please explain his rationale behind the Government's policy in this area. I really think that the

Minister should do it rather than ask the Highways Department advisers to do it because I cannot believe that the Highways Department advisers would have given him the advice that the Government has now adopted as policy.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I call the Minister to answer the question, but if he desires to refer it to his officers he is quite at liberty to do so.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I would like to say that the member has a motion before the House which is presently being debated. He was also invited to discuss the details with the Director-General and his officers, and that invitation is still open to him. I do not believe that this is the forum in which to discuss detailed forecasts of population and traffic growth, etc. It is a highly complex and detailed issue which can be better addressed by a meeting between the member and officers of my Department. To attempt to debate this matter here would be just a waste of the time of this Estimates Committee. We will answer questions on any line in the Estimates.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I find it incredible that here on a fundamental issue that affects the whole of the transport concept of Adelaide we have the Minister refusing, despite the most significant transport announcement for 10 to 15 years or more, to come out and discuss it or explain why the Government has made this decision. It is just beyond comprehension because Adelaide is a city spread out to the north and south.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Which decision are you talking about?

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I am talking about the decision of the Government to scrap the north-south transport corridor. The Minister referred to the motion in the House. The Minister has so far refused to come into the House to debate that motion, but I stress the point that we are debating the allocation of funds for transport. It is only proper that we should do it here as well as in the House on some other motion, and just because there is a motion does not exclude us from doing it here in the Budget. What is the rationale behind the Government's thinking on this issue? It is the Government which has made the decisions and the announcements. I find it incredible that the Premier says that it is the best decision that he has made since coming into Government; perhaps that highlights how bad all the others are. It concerns me that the Government has left those people in the southern metropolitan area absolutely high and dry, facing enormous transport problems for the next 15 to 20 years, with no solutions whatsoever.

This afternoon we had the Director-General of Transport admit that they could not get job opportunities down there. I put forward the argument that the main reason is the transport difficulties that already exist. Again, I ask the Minister to explain the rationale behind the Government's decision, and I also ask the Minister to go back to the Government and for goodness sake reconsider what must be the worst decision made by a Government in recent years.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The rationale behind the Government's decision was that on the advice available to the Government the north-south corridor would not be needed for the next 15 or 30 years. So, it took a decision to abolish it. The figures in the report to which the honourable member refers are not relevant to this debate. It is complex; there is a great amount of detail on it. An invitation was extended to the member to discuss the matter with my officers at his pleasure. He has not seen fit so far to do that, but the invitation is still there and he is free to get all the information that he wishes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Before calling the member for Daventry again, I remind him of the opening statements that he made concerning the speeches. I do not want a grievance

debate to take place; I do not want a second reading speech, but we are now starting to drift into that area. I do not want that to happen because it will not be for the benefit of this Committee.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Certainly, I do not intend to get involved in a debate on this any further. I thank you for your reminder. I need to leave at 6 o'clock because of commitments before the other Committee, although this line can carry on after 7.30. I think that it has been agreed that it can carry on until about 8 o'clock, if the Minister is happy with that, but obviously we will not finish it by 6 o'clock.

In terms of at least bringing the facts to my attention, I will certainly take up his offer to meet with the Highways Department officers, and I would appreciate it if I could also meet with the Minister on that occasion to discuss it. I also ask the Minister to supply me with other information, including the Southern Area Road Network Strategy Report, because if the Minister would release that report to me it might help me to understand some of the other issues and some of the work involved with the Highways Department. Frankly, unless the Minister is willing for me to see that report, there does not seem to be much point in meeting with the Highways Department if information is to be withheld.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The invitation was extended by the Director-General, and it still stands. In regard to the report, I have indicated previously that it is one of several confidential Government reports. It is confidential information to the Government and will not be released. I indicated that previously, and the member is aware of it. When I met the southern regional councils we discussed the whole question of their concerns and our decision to delete the corridor. We promised that we would compile a package of roadworks and improvements in the southern region, which is what I promised them. That is being released. As I indicated, it was only an indicative programme. We intend to discuss the priorities of the proposals contained within that report.

**Mr HAMILTON:** At page 131 of his Report the Auditor-General indicates the use of private contractors as a component of departmental works increased from \$8 million to \$27.6 million. The table illustrates the increasing level of private contract work in the past four years from 1980 to 1983. Has the Government reviewed the amount of work directed towards private contractors, with more work being undertaken by the Highways Department? What is the Government's intention? What percentage of the Highways Department's line has been directed towards its employees compared with private contractors?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** There has been a large increase in the amount of private contract work, which is mainly brought about because of the A.B.R.D. legislation, which spells out that all work on national highways and arterial roads is to be undertaken by contract. The tendering situation in regard to local government and State Government authorities is such that they are now able to tender for national and arterial road projects under the A.B.R.D. scheme. This can cause some dilemmas in the awarding of contracts between public authorities and private industry. The Government is responsible equally for preserving jobs in both the public and the private work force. However, I can assure the member that decisions about awarding contracts will be taken most carefully and that every consideration will be taken into account in regard to the effect on the organisation's involved. Certainly, we will not be preserving the public sector at the expense of the private sector, or vice versa. The effective maintenance of employment levels as a whole in the community is our prime concern. A commonsense attitude and an awareness of the problems

facing everyone in the civil construction industry should help to reduce any conflict. Local government should exercise care and consideration in this area, and we have asked it to do that.

The Federal Government has ruled on cost advantages by local government when tendering for contracts as compared with private construction people. It ruled that that should not be taken into account. We are using an even-handed approach in trying to preserve jobs in all areas. The main reason for the increase in private enterprise construction work is a result of the A.B.R.D. legislation.

**Mr HAMILTON:** Can the Minister advise what is the future of *m.v. Troubridge*? Has consideration been given to the replacement of the vessel? If it has, when is that likely to occur and has consideration been given to letting contracts?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Doubtless the member is aware that I have established a committee to investigate ways and means of making the *Troubridge* operations more efficient. The terms of reference, set out in the Auditor-General's Report, are as follows:

- Determine the shipping needs of users of Kangaroo Island transport and advise whether those needs are being adequately met by *m.v. Troubridge* and other established services;
- Examine the operating costs of the vessel and advise means by which these costs could be reduced and/or recovered while maintaining an adequate service;
- Examine and advise on the condition of the vessel and if appropriate, the need for replacement;
- Examine and report on the location of berthing facilities for a passenger and/or cargo shipping service to Kangaroo Island.

This has been a problem over a number of years. The former Government was concerned about the escalating cost of this programme, and I understand that the working party I set up has met on a number of occasions and I understand that it is nearing completion. I expect a report by the end of next month. As Mr Abraham is the Chairman of that working party, I will ask him to comment on the progress of the inquiry.

**Mr Abraham:** We have been meeting since March/April. The ship is old, being one of the oldest ships on the run. Although in reasonably good condition, economically it is not a viable situation because of its size and its manning crew. We understand that a smaller ship could probably operate on that run much more efficiently, and that is one of the options we are considering. We are having discussions in consultation with the unions, managing agents and the like. As the Minister indicated, we hope to report by the end of next month.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** First, under the Australian Bicentenary Road Development Programme there is a requirement that all the work must be done by contract. Recently, the Government decided to allow the Kadina council or district council to tender for some of that work. Does the Minister intend to allow other councils to tender for other work? Can the Minister give an absolute undertaking that the Highways Department will not be permitted to tender for any of that work?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** In regard to the contract let to the Kadina council, it happened to have the lowest tender. Finance is tight and I suppose that what the Government has to say is very important. I think that if other councils tender we would certainly take into account the question of employment, whether they have difficulties with their employment or not, before granting any further contracts to them. I cannot say whether they will tender or not. With regard to giving an undertaking as to whether the Highways Department will not tender, I am not in a position to give that undertaking and do not think that I can give it. The Federal Government has ruled that it is quite within its right to tender if it so chooses, but to date the Highways

Department has not tendered. Perhaps the Acting Commissioner can offer some comments.

**Mr Knight:** We cannot stop councils tendering for projects. Indeed, we have to assess such tenders based on rules set down by the Federal Government. This means that if a council is technically competent to do a job and financially able to do it, then we are obliged to make a recommendation in its favour. So far as the Highways Department is concerned, it would be a matter of Government policy, but at this stage we cannot see, so far as our manpower is concerned, that we have any immediate need to contemplate a tender situation.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I recently spoke during a grievance debate about the granting of permits for carrying wide, over-weight and over-length loads. Has the Minister had an opportunity to consider the points raised during that grievance debate and will he give an undertaking to review procedures under which such permits are granted? I have had considerable contact with people who have grievances about this matter. Normally, if one gets a number of grievances about a matter there is some legitimate complaint behind them and obviously present procedures are not working well. Will the Minister give an undertaking to review this matter in an attempt to arrive at a procedure which gives far greater certainty to people wishing to move wide or over-weight loads?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am happy to give an undertaking to the honourable member to review that area.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** As I will not be here tonight I would like to thank officers, in particular, for the assistance they have given during the day and ask the Minister to pass those thanks on to the officers who have already left.

**The CHAIRMAN:** It is not my intention to call on further questions at this time. I must say to the officers present that I regret that I was unable to achieve the timetable I had hoped for. However, the Highways Department people should not be here for long tonight.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I was disturbed today, when the Minister was discussing the sale of the land in the north-south corridor, to hear that the money from the sale of that land would be paid into the Highways Fund, but at historical cost only. I find this disturbing because there is no doubt that there is a shortage of money available for road maintenance and construction.

Despite the fact that the Government has decided to take this rather momentous decision of doing away with the whole north-south corridor, a lot of money is still needed for major projects such as the widening of South Road, the building of overpasses—and I refer to the Hove Crossing, the Emerson Crossing and a future by-pass at Morphet Vale—and large construction projects such as this.

Can the Minister explain what he means by the fact that the Highways Department may be recouped at historical cost only? Some of the land in question would have been bought in 1969 and 1970 when the MATS plan was first brought to light. One can imagine the difference between the purchase cost and the sale cost when there is anything up to 13 or 14 years between those two dates. What will happen if the land is sold at present-day market values? If the Highways Department is to be reimbursed at historical cost only, where will the rest of the money go?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The honourable member said that I indicated this afternoon that the Highways Department would be reimbursed for the historical cost only. I later clarified that by saying that it involved the historical value plus any improvements that had occurred to any of that land. Regarding the north-south corridor, this applies only in the western suburbs. It is planned to transfer the remainder

of the money into a Government development fund under the control of the Minister for Environment and Planning for development within the western suburbs of Adelaide; this will be done under the Government's policy to try to upgrade the suburbs, particularly in the western area and eventually right around the city in areas that need assistance.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Can the Minister give an estimate of the amount of money that will go to the Highways Fund and what amount of money will go to this special fund under the control of the Minister for Environment and Planning?

While I am talking about this I would like to canvass the matter of paying back moneys to the Federal Government. It was mentioned that some of the money would be due to the Federal Government, the land having been paid for with Federal Government money. I do not see how the Highways Department can ascertain from which pocket it took the money when it paid for the land. No doubt the Federal Government is extremely interested and, if it was to receive that money back, would it receive the historical cost only? What would happen to the balance of that money?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am not in a position to answer the last part of the question. We need to await the outcome of the inquiry being undertaken presently concerning those various Acts and whether State or Federal funds were used to purchase the properties. The market value of the homes within that western area is approximately \$10 million. The historical value is approximately \$5 million, which would be transferred to the Highways Fund.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Is it the intention of the Government to use for housing the \$5 million transferred to the Minister for Environment and Planning?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** No, that is not the intention. There may be some upgrading assistance or other development. I think that that question should be directed to the Minister for Environment and Planning to enable him to spell out specifically what the money will be spent on.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Has Cabinet decided on a policy for the disposal of this land and, if so, will the Minister provide a written explanation of the policy, how it is to be implemented, and the amount of money involved? I ask him to refer not only to the central western suburbs but also to the land held in the north and south.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** A committee has been set up under the Department of Environment and Planning that will handle the sale of these properties. The Government has taken no decision and will not decide on the sale of any of the homes until it can determine the outcome of the funding matter, that is, out of which funds the money comes. As I said, this is under discussion with the Commonwealth Government.

**Mr OSWALD:** My line of questioning refers to Tapleys Hill Road at Glenelg North. A large group of concerned constituents are interested in the ultimate plan adopted by the Highways Department for redevelopment of Tapleys Hill Road and in the two options being considered at the moment.

One option is to widen the road on the eastern side (option B) and another option is to widen the road by two lanes on the eastern side (option 3C). My frustration is shared by the residents and the council. Unfortunately, there has been a deliberate attempt by the Government over the past nine months to deny me information on this project. On 19 October 1982, the department undertook to review all the options that were available in regard to Tapleys Hill Road.

As a result of questioning, I was informed that the result of the review had been put on the Minister's desk in his department at the end of February this year. To obtain further information for my constituents, I wrote to the

Minister on 22 February asking for a copy of that report and, if possible, for a briefing by departmental officers to have explained to me what was intended. Unfortunately for me and my constituents, the Minister chose to ignore that correspondence, which I suppose is his prerogative as Minister, although I found it difficult to try to explain the position to my constituents and to answer their questions.

During the last week in February my secretary telephoned the Minister's office on three occasions seeking an appointment with the Minister for me and the Glenelg council as we were informed that the Minister would meet with the Tapleys Hill Road Widening Action Group at 4 o'clock on 3 March to discuss the review. Although the Minister's secretary advised that there was a vacancy at 11 a.m. that morning, I was further advised that the Minister could not see me and the Glenelg council until 24 March to discuss the situation, as he wanted more time to consider the review. When the Glenelg council and I eventually saw the Minister on 24 March, we were advised that he was reviewing the review of the review.

It is a bit frustrating when one is trying to seek information. The Minister offered to permit an officer of the Highways Department to address the council, and we were delighted with that. In fact, the meeting took place, and subsequently at the end of June we were informed by the departmental officer (who actually told the council in my presence) that the department still preferred plan 3C, which called for the removal of the houses and the creation of two lanes of traffic on the eastern side of Tapleys Hill Road.

The answer to my Question on Notice No. 46 to the Minister indicated that the Minister was once again considering a report. In Question on Notice No. 131 of 20 September I again sought information and was informed that the Minister would be receiving the report and making a decision in five weeks and that an announcement would be made as soon as practicable. Those are the Minister's words, not mine.

On behalf of my constituents who have been very patient over the past nine months or so, I now ask whether the Minister will inform me what he means by 'as soon as practicable'? Will the Minister tell me precisely how many weeks after the final report (which is a review of a review) arrives on his desk in five weeks we will have to wait before my constituents will at last know what option will be implemented for the redevelopment of Tapleys Hill Road, Glenelg North?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** There has been no deliberate attempt to confuse anyone in regard to this matter. As the honourable member knows, a number of plans and proposals have been suggested, and they have been put forward by a number of various groups from time to time. The honourable member referred to a review of a review and a further review. As I said, different proposals and suggestions have been put forward. The latest review arose from an approach by some of the residents of that area and as a result of their suggestion that we use James Melrose Drive.

We agreed with that group to undertake this study, which is the latest. We are still analysing the data, and a report is expected in about four or five weeks. It was an original and destination survey data study, and it was suggested about three months ago. As I said, the study is presently being analysed. At that time I will have discussions with all interested parties in order to provide a practical solution in regard to this road and the transport needs.

The honourable member also said that I ignored his correspondence. I do not believe that I am guilty of that. All correspondence that is addressed to me is responded to, and I will be interested if the honourable member will provide me with the date and contents of the letter that he claims I ignored. That is just not so, to my knowledge. I

am quite happy to respond to the honourable member's correspondence. I have met many deputations in relation to the widening of Tapleys Hill Road, and no doubt I will have to meet more deputations. I will discuss the matter with the Glenelg council when we are in a position to proceed. As I said, the analysis of the review is expected within the next four or five weeks.

**Mr OSWALD:** I will ask the question again: what does the Minister mean by 'as soon as practicable' in relation to my Question on Notice, and how many weeks after the Minister receives that report can my constituents and the residents of Glenelg North expect to hear what plan will be adopted for the redevelopment of Tapleys Hill Road?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** When we receive the report in four or five weeks we can then consider the recommendations together with the other proposals that will be put forward. The honourable member referred to a Question on Notice. My reply on that occasion was that the Government will make a decision on this matter once it has the opportunity to consider a comprehensive report that is presently being considered by the Highways Department.

**Mr OSWALD:** I pose to the Minister the problem faced by my constituents, namely, that in this in-between period they do not know whether to develop their properties, to erect additions or to carry out alterations; this applies particularly to residents on the western side, whose properties are very close to the alignment. They do not know what they can do. There is a feeling of uncertainty, which is causing frustration. We all know that the Highways Department will come down in favour of either option B or 3C. It is generally known that the department knows what track it will follow in any case, and we should be perfectly frank and say that the department has firmed up on a view.

The position is no more advanced now than it was in February, when the review landed on the Minister's desk and when the advice was there for the department. The departmental officer addressed the Glenelg council and stated, 'Our option is still 3C but, if the council would like to consider the matter and make a decision, we would then have due regard to that decision.' The council could see that the department was shifting the problem straight across to the Glenelg council, which had to make a decision, and the council could then be blamed for the consequences.

The decision rests firmly on the shoulders of the Government of the day, bearing in mind that Tapleys Hill Road is an arterial road linking the northern suburbs to the southern suburbs. The Government will make a decision, and I know that it will be a hard decision, but the residents want to know what the Government will do. The Minister's answer puts us no further forward than was the position last February. We know that it will come down to a decision between option B and option 3C.

We do not want to have to wait for nine months or some time into infinity. How long will it be before the Minister announces which option will be adopted? I want to be able to tell my constituents that the Minister will receive a report in, say, five weeks and we can expect a final decision at a specific time after he receives the report. It is not an unfair question, because it involves either the demolition of homes or the acquisition of property to enable the road to be expanded on either side.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I appreciate the frustration felt by the honourable member's constituents in relation to this matter, which has dragged on for some time. The honourable member seems to think that it will be either option 3C or B. The plans were submitted before we were asked to conduct the present survey on the origin and destination, and the proposal using James Melrose Road. Whatever the decision, it will not satisfy everyone; someone will be dissatisfied. I think it is impossible to satisfy everyone.

I appreciate that a decision should be made quickly one way or the other. As the member mentioned, people are making improvements to their homes, and they do not know whether they will lose their homes or whether they will be forced to look for other accommodation. I accept that it is a real problem. It is difficult for me to say how long it will be before a decision is made after I receive the report in four or five weeks. It will depend on how long the consultation takes with the various groups. I hope that very early in the new year we will be able to say which plan the Government and the Department will adopt.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** My questions relate to the district of Todd. My first question relates to the Lower North East Road. The Minister would be aware that I have corresponded with him about the point at which the widening of the Lower North East Road has ceased. It happens to be almost at the junction of two side roads, and there are some large gum trees in a direct line with the north-bound set of lanes. The Highways Department has acknowledged that the situation is dangerous and that action was to be taken to rectify the problem. I believe that the removal of some gum trees was contemplated, along with the realignment of junctions with Lower North East Road. As it is some months since I first raised the matter with the Minister, I ask when that work will commence, and when is it anticipated that the balance of Lower North East Road will be widened.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will check on some of those details for the honourable member and provide him with the information in the next few days.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** The Minister is probably aware that work is commencing on the first section of the widening of Grand Junction Road east of North East Road. That work is desperately needed. What are the projections in relation to the balance of Grand Junction Road right through to its junction with Lower North East Road? The junction of Lower North East Road and Grand Junction Road is extremely dangerous, and it desperately needs the implementation of plans, which I know are held by the Highways Department, to close the latter part of Lower North East Road. What is the projection in relation to the completion of the widening of Grand Junction Road? If it is many years in the future, will the Minister seriously consider the immediate implementation of Highways Department plans for the realignment of the junction of Lower North East Road, Grand Junction Road and Hancock Road? It is really a most dangerous junction.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Acting Commissioner will report on that matter.

**Mr Knight:** In relation to Grand Junction Road, our projections extend only to 1984-85 and involve only Grand Junction Road through to Tolleys Road. The remainder is still a matter for consideration.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Could serious consideration be given to the implementation of plans held by the Highways Department for the realignment of Lower North East Road, Grand Junction Road and Hancock Road to overcome an extremely dangerous situation?

**Mr Knight:** Yes.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I refer to the North East Road in Tea Tree Gully. Again, I have had considerable correspondence in relation to when work in that area will be completed. I seek information on this matter because I have been advised in previous correspondence that, when the North East Road widening is completed in Tea Tree Gully, a pedestrian activated crossing will replace the present school crossing for the Tea Tree Gully Primary School. It is a dangerous situation because children must cross a busy road. When does the Department expect that work to be completed and the pedestrian activated lights installed?



**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Acting Commissioner has information on that road in the forward planning document.

**Mr Knight:** My information refers to the section between Hancock Road and Haines Road. That work will be completed in 1984-85. I have no information about traffic signals, but, if it was intended that they be installed in conjunction with other work on these roads, they would certainly be installed at the same time.

**Mr Blacker:** My query relates to future Government funding for country roads, in particular and more specifically in relation to the Lock to Elliston Road and the Cleve to Kimba Road. I am concerned that because of funding levels this year we will never catch up. The percentage of funds spent on these roads and the time that it would take at the present rate of funding means that it could be 20 to 25 years before one of those roads was completed—let alone the many other roads that require funding. Can the Minister indicate whether alternative funding formulae for councils, with a certain amount allocated on a needs basis, are contemplated for the scheme? Given the present situation, I think that we all believe that we will never see the light at the end of the tunnel.

I have another query in relation to the Cummins to Mount Hope road. It is perhaps more of a local problem in that a considerable amount of grain has been shipped from Kapinnie to Tumby Bay by road. Because of that, excessive wear and tear has been caused to the Mount Hope to Cummins Road. There is no way in which the council can be compensated or subsidised for the additional wear and tear. I assume that the Minister or his Department is aware of the difficulties experienced by the council. It is a one-off problem that has occurred only because of the unusual situation of grain being transhipped by road. Unfortunately, it occurred at the wet time of the year. All the money spent on the road by the council has been wasted as a result of three or four weeks travel on the road and the council is back to square one, even though it committed funds to that road. My basic question is the ongoing funding of these roads and whether there is a light in the tunnel or any changes being made to that means of funding.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Whilst in 1983-84 grants to local government for extensions of the road network will be reduced, there is some compensation in that specific works for rural arterial categories will be increased over and above the 1982-83 allocations. The net effect of this is that the decrease in rural arterial grants about equals the increase in rural arterial specific works to councils. I accept the point that the honourable members is making. I myself believe that there is a need to endeavour to do more for certain roads that people on Eyre Peninsula have been pushing for some time. Ideally, I would like to be able to have the amount of money available to complete some of those roads that have needed upgrading for a long time. For more detail on this I ask the Acting Commissioner of Highways to elaborate.

**Mr Knight:** We have a problem with the rural arterial classification of roads in that a large part of the funding that we get comes from A.B.R.D., which is subject to the calling of tenders and also to the provision of funds for fairly large projects based on a needs basis. We have a problem in allocating funds to this type of road from that bag of money. I think that the member spoke about a formula basis; the formula about which he speaks applies only to local road funds, and these are arterial funds, which is not really applicable to this class of road. Concerning his comments on the Mount Hope-Cummins road, I presume that that is a local road; it is under the care and control of a council. If it is a rural arterial road and there are specific and special maintenance problems on it, we would be happy

to look at it and could look at some special funding for that.

**Mr Blacker:** I take up one further point of a more specific nature on the Cleve-Kimba road. When priorities were established by the Eyre Peninsular Local Government Association and accepted by the Minister and the Highways Department, No. 1 priority was given to the Cleve-Kimba road, with the Mangalo spur. In correspondence from the Commissioner of Highways, dated 9 May this year, for the first time an indication was given to the Franklin Harbor District Council that the Mangalo spur was not to be considered as one and the same for that road funding. I quote part of that letter:

The connecting road to Mangalo and the Pygery-Port Kenny road are rural local roads and are not eligible to receive rural arterial road grants.

These priorities have been set for some two or three years. This is the first time that the spur line to Mangalo has been identified as being ineligible for funding under that priority system.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** On the Kimba-Cleve road the allocation of expenditure in 1982-83 was \$213 000. An amount of \$120 000 is scheduled under the proposed works for 1983-84. We endeavoured to obtain \$242 000, which is what the Department proposed before it was necessary to make some cuts in those areas. So, the amount of \$120 000 is proposed this year under the rural arterial grants. As to whether any specific or special funding can be made, I am not certain, but I ask the Acting Commissioner to answer that question.

**Mr Knight:** At this stage I do not think that we could enter into commitments for additional funding; it is too early in the year, but we certainly can look at the funding situation as the year progresses to see whether we could make some additional funds available.

**Mr Blacker:** Can I understand from the Minister's reply that I have just received that there is a 50 per cent cut on last year's funding on the Cleve-Kimba road?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Yes, that is what it amounts to. That is approximately a 50 per cent cut.

**Mr Blacker:** And does the same percentage apply to the Lock-Elliston road?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The proposal for the Lock-Elliston road before the cuts was \$165 000 and the schedule of proposed works for 1983-84 is \$80 000; so, again, there is approximately a 50 per cent cut.

**Mr Blacker:** In further clarification of that, how was the \$20 000 for the Cleve-Kimba road divided between the Cleve and Kimba District Councils?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will just check on that.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Owing to the lateness of the hour, while the officer is finding that I will allow the member for Eyre to ask his questions.

**Mr Gunn:** I have three matters. One is a hardy annual. I wonder whether the Minister can advise on the current programme for the Stuart Highway. The particular question I want to raise is: when will work be completed on the Coober Pedy section? I understand that a tender has been called. I am not sure whether the successful tenderer has been decided on, but I would be interested to know the exact time table; in particular, whether the tender has been let.

The other matter which I want to raise is this: at the completion of the Coober Pedy-Pootnoura section of the Stuart Highway, when is it anticipated that contracts will be let for the next section above Pootnoura which the Minister is obviously aware is a very large contract? I have been delighted with the amount of work that has taken place in the last 2½ years on that part of the Stuart Highway; when one goes to Coober Pedy and can drive from the

airport on bitumen road it is rather good. Might I say that it is unfortunate that the airfield is not in the same condition as the road.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** If I can give a run-down of the progress on the Stuart Highway, the work that has already been completed is as far as Gosses, which represents 334 kilometres. The work in progress is the area between Gosses and Mirikata, which is a total of 86 kilometres. The other works in progress are from Coober Pedy South to Pootnoura Creek, which is 113 kilometres. The completion date is May 1984 for the portion from Coober Pedy South to Pootnoura Creek.

March 1984 is the completion date from Bon Bon to Mirikata, and the same from Bon Bon to Gosses. At present there is preconstruction work from Mirikata to Coober Pedy south, a \$17 million contract. Tenders are being analysed. Preconstruction work is continuing on the remainder from Pootnoura Creek to the Northern Territory border.

**Mr Gunn:** I appreciate obtaining that information, but will the Minister provide me with details about the next contract? In current operation are the McMahon and Thompson contracts, and the Department is working itself. I have been advised that a tender is presently out and I would like to know whether a contractor has been selected to work on the next section of road.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Acting Commissioner has more detail about contracts, and I would ask him to respond.

**Mr Knight:** We currently have tenders in for the section about which the honourable member is talking. They are being assessed, and a recommendation for acceptance will be made to the Government within the next week or so.

**Mr Gunn:** In regard to the completion of the Hawker to Leigh Creek road, can the Minister advise whether the Department now intends to expedite work on the Hawker to Orroroo road? The Minister is aware of the importance of that road and that people in the area have been relatively patient because they have realised the importance of sealing the Hawker to Leigh Creek to Lyndhurst road. As that work is almost completed, can the Minister advise whether the Department intends to make a major effort on the Orroroo to Hawker road? A large amount of heavy transport uses that road going to the gas fields as well as local and tourist traffic.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** We are searching for the information.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Can you provide the answer now to the question of the member of Flinders?

**Mr Knight:** In regard to the \$120 000 for the Kimba to Cleve Road, it is going to the two councils on a 50:50 basis—\$60 000 each.

**Mr OSWALD:** What is the Highways Department's allocation to local government in 1983-84 compared with 1982-83?

**Mr Knight:** The answer can be split in two parts. The Minister has spoken about the arterial road money. The amount going to local government for arterial roads is about equal to the amount going to local government last year. In regard to local roads (and the amount is allocated on the basis of a formula), local government will be getting an increase of about 6 per cent, which represents the increase in the Federal funding. In addition to those moneys are allocations to local government for local roads under the A.B.R.D. programme.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Have you the complete information for the member for Eyre?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask the Acting Commissioner to give that information.

**Mr Knight:** In regard to the Hawker to Orroroo road, our forward plans do not indicate major works on that road. Small amounts will be provided to councils for work on

that road. At present the major thrust is the Birdsville to Hawker road; in fact, to Leigh Creek and beyond Leigh Creek to Lyndhurst. What we do after that is still a matter for further consideration

**Mr Gunn:** This year the Department provided funds for sealing Flinders Highway in the Venus Bay section; that is greatly appreciated. Will the Department be in a position next year to provide enough money to complete a small unsealed section after the Elliston District Council spends the money that has been provided this year as well as some of its own funds? As a small section will remain unsealed, is the Department in a position to indicate whether it can complete the job so that the road can be taken off the list and everyone kept happy at the same time?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am not in a position to make any firm commitment but we will make every effort to satisfy the member.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I apologise to the Highways Department officers for bringing them back for such a short time, but we did try to keep to the programme.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I thank you gentlemen as well. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

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Works and Services—Highways Department, \$8 100 000—  
Examination declared completed.

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Marine and Harbors, \$19 141 000

**Chairman:**  
Mr G.T. Whitten

**Members:**  
The Hon. Peter Duncan  
Mr G.M. Gunn  
Mr K.C. Hamilton  
Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
Mr J.K.G. Oswald  
Mr W.A. Rodda  
Mr J.P. Trainer  
The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**  
The Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Marine.

**Departmental Advisers:**  
Dr D. Scrafton, Director-General of Transport.  
Mr J. Jenkin, Acting Director-General, Department of Marine and Harbors.  
Mr K. Freeman, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Marine and Harbors.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I have to report that there is a change of Mr Gunn for the Hon. D.C. Brown and Mr Rodda for Mr Ashenden.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Before asking my first question, I wish to pay a tribute to Mr John Griffiths, the former Director-General of Marine and Harbors who retired last week. I would like to put on record our appreciation of the assistance that he gave to all members of Parliament over the years. I am sure that the good wishes I express are seconded by all members present.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The Chair also expresses its appreciation to Mr John Griffiths.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I find the Programme Estimates confusing. My first question is one of clarification. On page 84 of the Programme Estimates the first paragraph states:

Proposed total expenditure for 1983-84 is \$47.091 million which is an increase of \$2.206 million or 4.9 per cent over the 1982-83 financial year. This is represented by an increase in capital expenditure of \$3.899 million (or 48.5 per cent) to \$11.930 million offset by a reduction in recurrent expenditure of \$1.693 million (or 4.6 per cent) to \$35.161 million.

There is no way that the Estimates contain anywhere near that amount. One has to turn to the back page of the marine estimates (page 119) to find the reconciliation between that statement and the estimates of payments. We see on page 119 that that reconciliation contains an amount of \$15.75 million for inter-agency support services not paid for. That amount is not contained in the estimates of payments for the Marine and Harbors Department. Obviously, it is a book entry of some type. The point I am making is that the statement in the Programme Estimates I have referred to is completely misleading. I ask that the Minister next year look at this statement if it is to be reproduced. I would like an explanation of the \$15.75 million inter-agency support services not paid for.

**Mr Freeman:** If one turns to page 89 under the heading 'Inter-agency support services not paid for', one will see the subheading 'P.B.D. Service Charges', being interest on head office building, \$490 000; sinking fund on head office building, \$60 000; Treasury superannuation charges, \$1.4 million; Treasury interest charges, \$12.4 million; and Treasury sinking fund charges, \$1.4 million. That comprises the \$15.75 million referred to.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I accept that. It is confusing when one is trying to reconcile the two documents. I now move to the question of gaining for South Australia a direct shipping service with Japan and North Korea, the Anson service. In the House of Assembly last week the Minister said that he would fight and continue to fight with all his ability to gain this service. I believe that the Minister means this. The Minister may have heard my speech the other night about what is actually happening.

To refresh the memories of Committee members, what has happened—and we are grateful to the member for Semaphore for letting us have the details of this in the House—is that a consortium consisting of Australian National, Seaintainers Limited of Melbourne and the Port of Melbourne Authority have got together in what I believe is an act of collusion and offered a rebate of \$90 per container on a shipment of containers from Adelaide to Melbourne. When one considers that the cost of shipping a 24ft container is about \$200, that is a very considerable rebate. What that does to the State's chances of obtaining a direct shipping service to Japan and North Korea can only be left to one's imagination.

What action has the Minister taken on the diplomatic front to try to redress this piece of collusion? The Minister has given an undertaking that he will have Crown Law investigate the practice to see whether or not it contravenes the Trade Practices Act. I would be surprised if it did not. What other action has the Minister taken? For instance, has he had consultations with Mr Lew Marks of Australian National? Australian National has been a friend to South Australia. I find its action in this regard surprising although, of course, even Australian National has to take commercial decisions. Has the Minister thought of seeing Mr Morris, the Federal Minister for Transport, on this matter? Has the Minister tried to inveigle the Premier to go and see Mr Cain in Victoria about this particular promise?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** As the honourable member has said, this is a very important matter. I was surprised at

some of his comments last week when the member for Semaphore asked me what was possibly the most important question to be asked this session. I was amazed when the member for Torrens said that he knew nothing about the matter. I was surprised to hear him say that, because he was one of the first members of Parliament to receive a copy of my Ministerial statement on this issue. I indicated in that statement that these incentives had been offered and that the Japanese had indicated that they had deferred making a decision for a further 12 months. That was equally disappointing to the Department and me as well as to the member for Torrens. The former Labor Government commenced these negotiations, which were continued by the honourable member when he was the Minister and then continued by me. The response from the conference that it is not opportune to extend services to Adelaide until the middle of 1984 has considerable background. This background and the current options for action require consideration and decision if we are to have any hope of success in achieving the service in the next round of discussions.

First, I would like to consider the importance of the Japanese service to the State's objective of re-establishing itself directly in the flow of goods by sea. The Japanese conference area is by far the largest trading area for South Australia. This is true in regard to both inward and outward cargo. Apart from being the single most important market for South Australian goods, Japan is a source of raw materials and components that are vital to the State's manufacturing industry. It is my belief that unless we are successful within a reasonable time with direct Japanese and South Korean shipping services, the success we have achieved to date, notably with European services, is also at risk. I would suggest that the basic and underlying logic of the Government's initiatives in 1975, that the State could not afford to become virtually an inland State, remains true.

If this is agreed, we must think carefully about the steps required to achieve success in regard to Japanese trade. We have already indicated to the North South Shipping Conference Chairman that we would like discussions to begin well before March 1984. I believe that the honourable member would be aware that the Premier will travel to Japan early next month, and he will have discussions with the North South Shipping Conference. In particular, we are seeking a dialogue within which we can try to work towards agreement. In preparation for that, we are considering a number of options, some of which are quite radical, but they may help us to keep the initiative and achieve decisions in our favour, which would allow continuing growth of our port activities.

As the honourable member is aware, the matter was sufficiently close to a decision in our favour when he was Minister. However, it seems that the Victorian agencies put together an incentive package that applied to South Australian containers that are moved by Anson, and this involved \$90 per container, which was the figure I mentioned in answer to the member for Semaphore. I understand that participants in that package were Vicrail, the Port of Melbourne, and Container Terminals. The department has estimated that the value of that package is about \$1.5 million.

As I said, we are determined to fight this issue as hard as we possibly can. We have given briefing papers to the Premier and we hope that his visit to Japan early next month will be fruitful. Hopefully, the Premier will come back with something concrete to offer. The Acting Director-General may be able to add more to what I have said, because he is working very closely with this important issue and he is possibly as keen as is the Government and Opposition members to bring about success.

**Mr Jenkin:** The question of trade practices legislation, which I believe was mentioned, is difficult. It is a fairly

heavy hammer to start off with. The position is not clear, because some of the agencies involved are Government agencies and their legal position under the Trade Practices Act is still open to question. We are trying to solve the problem of discounts without having to resort to that kind of legalistic response.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Let me say at the outset that I welcome the Minister's statement that the Premier will contact the northern representatives of Anson when he is in Japan.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** He will contact Seatiners.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Of course. That is the type of thing that must ensue, and very quickly, because I fear that if it does not ensue we will lose any chance of obtaining the service. I compliment the Government on taking the initiative; however, I do not compliment the Minister on his statement and the lecture he delivered. The Minister provided me with a copy of his Ministerial statement, which did not contain details of the collusion that was outlined to the House by the member for Semaphore. I point out to the Minister that, as the Acting Director-General has just said, three Government agencies (Vicrail, Australian National and the Port of Melbourne Authority), as well as the private organisation, Seatiners, are involved in what I believe is a restrictive trade practice. I accept what the Acting Director-General has said. It may not be necessary to use the hammer of the Trade Practices Act.

I ask the Minister whether the matter is being investigated, because it is always necessary to have that option. My other question to the Minister is: what other action has he taken? For instance, has the Minister made an appointment to see Mr Marks on this matter to try to get some dialogue going between the Government and Australian National? The Director-General is a Commissioner. Has the Minister had discussions with Mr Marks so that there is an understanding between Mr Marks and the Minister in regard to the importance of the North South Shipping Conference service to South Australia?

There are various other actions the Minister can take in the interim. If the Minister does not want to say publicly what he is doing, I do not mind, because I recognise the sensitivity of the matter, and, if the Minister tells me in private what is happening, that information will remain confidential. Diplomatic activity must continue all the time, and I am sure that the Acting Director-General is as aware of that as is anyone else.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** We are investigating the question of a breach of the Trade Practices Act. I undertook to take that action in response to the member for Semaphore last week. I would be quite happy at any time to take the honourable member or any member of the Opposition into my confidence on a matter as important as this so that they are aware of what we are trying to achieve for the benefit of South Australians. It is true that some things cannot be said publicly for fear that that will jeopardise our approaches. I have asked the Director-General, who is the representative on the Australian National Commission, to discuss this matter with Mr Marks, the Chairman. The Director-General may like to advise of his approach to Mr Marks.

**Dr Scrafton:** I simply want to comment on the Australian National aspect. Australian National is charged with acting commercially and its response to the collusion (or whatever word one wants to apply to this rebate programme) was not entered into happily. The marketing branch reported to the Commission at a meeting about five weeks ago (and no-one is terribly happy about it) that it was absolutely necessary, if it was to retain this business, to be part of the activity. Obviously, Australian National does not want to lose \$8 per container. Those containers will be hauled in any case.

In relation to the development of the port, the fact that the Victorian authority was prepared to go to these lengths to retain the business in itself must be a fairly optimistic signal to South Australia that the marginal situation facing the conference lines coming here is close for them to feel so threatened. Therefore, there is an optimistic side. I mentioned it to the General Manager of Australian National this afternoon. I will take up the matter formally at the next meeting of the Commission and register South Australia's objection to the process. The difficulty is that the Commission is charged with being commercial. It is not a terribly serious matter for the Commission because, one way or the other, traffic will move over Australian National lines. Australian National has no great interest in pursuing the matter one way or the other. The charge that the Commission is involved in any collusion is not valid. It is purely a marketing decision.

**Mr HAMILTON:** The Minister would be well aware of my continuing interest in the West Lakes waterway in the western suburbs. I ask the Minister what is the current position in relation to the resolution of problems contained in and around the waterway? I would specifically like to inform my constituents when regulations will be enacted by the local government authority to provide it with necessary protection from vandals and other unsavoury elements that have frequented the area since the development occurred.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** A good deal of history is associated with the banks of the West Lakes area. In terms of the West Lakes indenture, during 1976 the Government accepted responsibility for the maintenance of the completed bank protection works on the lake at West Lakes, which included the sections of the step revetment formed by the use of masonry blocks. That type of revetment covers about 8 km or about 35 to 40 per cent of the total length of the banks of the lake, and some 70 000 blocks were used. Many of the blocks, particularly those subject to immersion in the lake water, have deteriorated prematurely, and over the past three or four years the Department has replaced about 1 800 blocks at a cost in the order of \$46 500. About 400 of the replacement blocks were supplied initially by the contractor to West Lakes Limited.

The remainder of the blocks were manufactured by the Department to its own specifications to provide increased durability. A further 2 360 blocks are showing various stages of deterioration, which is expected to accelerate with time and further replacements will be necessary in the near future. The replacement of all those blocks at the present time would cost in the order of about \$100 000. The Department is continually monitoring the situation and is replacing as necessary the worst of the affected blocks that are likely to be dangerous. The Department originally agreed to the concept of this type of revetment and the construction was undertaken by contractors to West Lakes Limited in the early days of the project.

The latest information is that half of the perimeter of the lake's banks consist of step revetments that incorporate these cement blocks. Of the 65 000 blocks, those in the second and third layers that are exposed to salt water have deteriorated more rapidly than those above water level. A sum of \$40 000 has been included in the 1983-84 Estimates. It is expected that a further 1 700 blocks will be replaced as a consequence. We were hoping that more money would be available to solve the problem, because we are concerned about the possibility of residents and people attending the lake injuring themselves if their ankles or feet crash through the blocks, resulting in them stumbling into the water, because they could be seriously injured, but we are moving as fast as we possibly can. Hopefully the more dangerous blocks will be replaced shortly.

**Mr HAMILTON:** The major thrust of my question was: when will it be possible, in conjunction with the Woodville council, to provide sufficient protection in accordance with the West Lakes indenture legislation in the form of regulations or further legislation to provide necessary protection for residents and to enable the police to act against unsavoury elements within the area? I draw the Minister's attention to the fact that in 1981 a public meeting was held at the West Lakes Club (at my instigation, I might add) to endeavour to answer the many problems being experienced by West Lakes residents, particularly those living around the waterway.

Information I received for the C.I. Branch of the Birkenhead police indicated that the police were not in a position to take action against persons committing unsociable acts, particularly at the southern end of the West Lakes waterway. A subcommittee was formed at the meeting to make recommendations to the Government in relation to the enactment of legislation to protect the rights of residents and safeguard their property. I understand that that information was forwarded to the Woodville council and has been before it for in excess of two years.

I have experienced considerable agitation from residents who want to know whether and when legislation will be introduced to protect people living in the area. When will a resolution of the problem be forthcoming? If the Minister has not already received it, I assure him that a letter is being forwarded to him from a Mrs Boyce who lives in the West Lakes area. She has complained bitterly. I also understand that another letter is forthcoming from a prominent resident in the Allinga Flats area of West Lakes.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I understand that the responsibility for this area currently lies with local government. It is also my impression that the police already has power to take necessary action. I will check on that and inform the honourable member accordingly. I have spoken to the member before about this matter. Local government believes that it is the responsibility of West Lakes or the Department of Marine and Harbors. The residents are getting nowhere really. It is a matter which needs to be sorted out once and for all. I will be prepared to investigate the possibility of trying to bring it to a head as soon as we can.

**Mr HAMILTON:** I appreciate those views because there is considerable agitation in that area. I would welcome the opportunity as the local member to be a party to any discussions which would involve the Department of Marine and Harbors, West Lakes Ltd and the Woodville council and, as I said, me, because that problem has dragged on for a number of years. I have endeavoured—and I have a file, I suppose an inch thick, in my office—to overcome the problem.

I point out for the Minister that in 1981 one inspector (Peter Mildren, from the Port Adelaide police) attended that meeting in the West Lakes Club and pointed out in very clear terms, as he did also prior to that in writing, that the police were almost powerless to act in accordance with the powers that were available to them at the time, apart from some minor regulations under which they could ask people to move on. That was about all the power that the police had; so they were considerably frustrated, on the information that was given to me by the C.I. Branch at Port Adelaide. I thank the Minister for his offers, and I will certainly convey that to my constituent.

**Mr RODDA:** I want to follow up the question which has been raised by my colleague, the member for Torrens. The Minister informed the Committee that the Premier will travel to Japan in the near future and will discuss this with the Japanese authorities. At first glance we applaud that the Premier should go and have these discussions with the customer, but there seems to be (if I want to put it in my

way) a brick under the wheel back here in the point of take-off in Victoria. If there is this entitlement—and we have heard the comments of the Director-General of Transport that there may be some incentive for these sorts of things coming—two points seem to be arising: the customer in Japan will be in two minds on the bonus that is occurring here. The other point is that we have this problem that is arising here; that lies at the door of the Minister. That concerns me: the problem that there is an incentive that has come up, and something has to be done about that.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** What was the honourable member's actual question?

**Mr RODDA:** I can put it in another way: it is all very well for the Premier to go to Japan to have discussions with the customer when the problem lies in this country in another State—which has another Government. It must lie with the Government; the Government owns the railways in Victoria. It does not make it terribly easy for the Premier to negotiate with another country when there is this impediment that has been highlighted in the Parliament here in this State. That was the point to which I did not get a satisfactory answer.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Ironically, South Australian trade with Japan has dropped only modestly by about 3 per cent in the same period—far less than in other major States. I indicated in my Ministerial statement on this matter that in June a number of Victorian agencies got together to offer a discriminatory discount on South Australian cargo to and from the Far East. This was in recognition of how much progress the South Australian case had made; there was a desperate move to save the cargo from being lost. They recognised its value as a source of service industry income. I do not believe that the offer influenced the Conference decision.

The collusion that has been referred to is here; it is our problem here in Australia. That needs to be rectified. However, the precedent set by the offer will be a factor in our next discussions as the competition must be met, and we are determined to meet that competition as soon as we possibly can. Certainly, in those actions the involvement of any shipping line in the offer of those incentives is in breach of the shipping Conference and is an invitation to other shipping lines to demand similar incentives for their operations. That will be the damaging effect of what has been offered in this regard.

**Mr RODDA:** The Minister has said that the overall drop is only 3 per cent, but the big incentive is to ship out of our own port to an overseas market; that is the bone of contention. The interstate people are not above sending their ships into the port of Adelaide when a strike or something takes place. I only make this observation: that the Vic Rail is run by the State. We have a very heavy wheat harvest this year. I am only making an observation, which may or may not be pertinent (but I believe that it is): the State would find it a great expense if it has to get some heavy, quick maintenance on that line. It may well be perforce of an accident or two on that line that they will use our port again. We have seen that happen with industrial problems: they are very glad to tie up here in the Gulf and use our port. It is a constraint that I am sure that the Premier wants to be well advised on when he goes to talk to the people in Japan, because they are looking at Australia (perhaps not at South Australia but at what Australia has to offer), and the onus is on this State and on our Minister to see to it that the best possible argument is put up. Would the Minister like to comment on that?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I agree wholeheartedly with what the member for Victoria is saying and I do not think that I can add any more to what he said. I support his comments entirely.

**Mr RODDA:** The Director-General of the Department of Transport gave me some heart in his comments. That being so, and if this negotiation is satisfactorily concluded—and, indeed, we hope that it will be—in the port of Adelaide and if we are to service these container lines, we need another container crane. It may be there, but I have not seen this. What is the situation with provision for another container crane? The Minister is in a catch 22 situation: if he does not conclude this satisfactorily he will be belted; if he does conclude it satisfactorily he may get belted from the customer because he has inadequate facilities. (I will not say that it is inadequate, but it is a problem if the present crane is overtaxed and there is not something there for a quick turn-round of shipping.)

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Before I comment on the second container crane, I point out that I am sure the member is aware of the attractiveness to the Japanese of our good industrial relations record in South Australia, especially in the port of Adelaide. The Japanese are very attracted by that, because turn-round time is an important element in the shipping trade. In regard to a second container crane, the number of containers handled at the container berth has built up significantly since 1977. Container ships usually carry no on-board gear to handle cargo and rely on the shore gantry cranes. For this reason it is unusual for terminals to have less than two gantry cranes to provide the required speed and reliability of handling.

In the first few years ships using the terminal were smaller and a single crane was possible, allowing the initial investment to be limited. However, now, with bigger European ships, the terminal is really under-equipped and, for this reason, the Government is looking at installing a second container crane with expenditure taking place over two financial years, starting this current year. A two-crane operation at the terminal will substantially improve its competitiveness and help attract more shipping. The Government is moving in the correct manner with regard to keeping pace with wharf facilities. If we achieve the second container crane, which the Government is setting out to do, it will be a further attraction to the Japanese.

**Mr Peterson:** I have some knowledge of the industry. I speak of the conference line and breaching of it. That has always been loyalty in volume rebates in conference lines, as I think your Director can tell you. So, there is not any contravention. The contravention is on the land side in the land transport aspects; that is, as far as I am concerned, where the collusion exists.

If we are looking at a \$90 container concession for a group of individual parties, including Commonwealth and State bodies, private and Government, how will the Minister overcome the \$90 a box discount? There is no way in a land-based aspect of a container terminal that one can give a \$90 rebate. Even if one did, one would still be behind the eight ball because one still has to bring the ship here, which is an added cost. How will the Minister combat the \$90 a box rebate?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** As I stated earlier, several options are open to the department. As to how we intend to overcome or combat the \$90 incentive, I am not at this stage willing to announce publicly our plans. However, I am happy to confer with the member privately, as I have indicated to the member for Torrens and other members, in order to inform him of what actions (some of which are quite radical) we are willing to take. The member will appreciate that we do not want to jeopardise further our chances on this issue.

**Mr Peterson:** My next question concerns the second container crane at Outer Harbor. I did not see any provision in the Budget for such a crane. I should say that the existing crane is most efficient. We still may have the best container transfer rate in Australia, and I understand that the existing

crane has a down time of only 3 per cent, thus giving a 97 per cent efficiency rating in operating time. It has been promised that as much work as possible on the crane will be undertaken in this State; even the dockyard has been promised work. Is that still the principle to be followed?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** It would be the Government's policy to have the crane built in South Australia. That is our policy. Already, there have been a number of inquiries from South Australian firms, which are capable of building the crane, as well as from interstate firms. The Government intends to have the work done in South Australia.

**Mr Peterson:** Will there be a dockyard component in that work?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I will ask the Acting Director-General to answer that.

**Mr Jenkin:** That has not yet been determined. The member would realise that we must follow procedures of tenders, and principal contractors will put up their bids based on their preferred methods of construction within the State. We have to get a bit further along the track before that question can be considered in detail.

**Mr Peterson:** In the light of a past annual report a year or two ago by the then Director-General (Mr J. Griffiths) who said that he was concerned about the maintenance of the department's equipment because of a reduction in manpower available, I noticed in one of the reports that 210 men have gone in the past five years and that there is also a comment about another 16 or 18 men who are to go soon. I have heard from the dockyard that an added number are being requested to take early retirement or to transfer out of the Department. Does the Minister believe that sufficient manpower is now available within the Department to fully maintain its plant and equipment?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** With the budget that we have for the Department and the manpower available to us, it is possible that we have sufficient manpower to carry out the available work. I stated previously that the Department was concerned about the imbalance between age and skills of its work force and that the average age of the Department's workers was increasing.

I think that the average at the moment is 55 years of age. Therefore, we are not getting young people in with the necessary skills. This matter is becoming more serious. The question needs to be addressed and, hopefully, in conjunction with members of the Department, trade unions and Government, we can try to work out a satisfactory level for the required work force.

I have some figures on the manpower statistics of full-time equivalents. For the year ended 30 June 1979 there was a total of 286 Public Service Act employees and 710 weekly paid employees, making a total of 996. For the year ended 30 June 1980 there were 286 Public Service Act employees, and the number of weekly paid employees had dropped to 654, making a total of 940. For the year ended 30 June 1981 there were 274 Public Service Act employees and 620 weekly paid employees, making a total of 894.

For the year ended 30 June 1982 there were 267 Public Service Act employees and 579 weekly paid employees, making a total of 846. For the year ended 30 June 1983 there were 276 Public Service Act employees and 562 weekly paid employees, making a total of 838. It is proposed that for this financial year to 30 June 1984 there be 270 Public Service Act employees and 545 weekly paid employees, making a total of 815. They are the target employment figures to 30 June 1984.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** How much effect did the recent drought have on departmental receipts? I point out to the Committee that there was a decline of 2.9 million tonnes in cargo handled in 1982-83. Of course, the bulk of that reduction would be in grain. In 1983, 840 000 tonnes



of grain was handled through the port, compared to 2.29 million tonnes the year before. It is hard to pick out the exact amount by which the drought has affected the receipts because of the increase in port charges, which brought a fairly handsome increase in the amount of money received. As I understand the Programme Estimates, we are looking at estimated receipts of some \$32.35 million this coming year. I would like that figure confirmed if that is the case. I would also like an estimate of the effect that the drought had on the Department's receipts.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** It is true that the effect of the drought on the operations of the Department is very serious. It will be serious again this year because we will not feel the benefit of this good season until next year. It is impossible for me to provide the details for which the member has asked, but the Director-General may be able to give the member some information.

**Mr Jenkin:** It is difficult to come up with a precise figure. Quite a few commodities were affected by the drought. Grain is one commodity, and meat and a number of agricultural products were also affected. We think that the bushfires also had an effect at about the same time, which might ease the picture further.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** From all natural disasters then.

**Mr Jenkin:** The cost in terms of grain is approximately \$2.75 per tonne. We could consider that it would not be far off \$5 million in terms of grain. We have to look at drought or dry seasons in our line of business as being part of the cycle. The Department is introducing some advanced modelling techniques to try to project tonnages over a long period of time. Interestingly enough, the model predicted the approximate tonnages of this drought period. We hope that in the future this will enable us to keep a more stable revenue path, taking into account fluctuations for dry seasons, market fluctuations, and so on.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Is it usual as at 30 June to have sundry debtors involving a sum of \$1.3 million?

**Mr Jenkin:** There is a natural lag in our accounts because of the time taken to process manifests and for those involved in the shipping industry to process accounts through their principals. We are hoping that a new computer-based financial system will help us react more rapidly to these accounts and reduce the size of the debtors' account.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** One of the most important roles of the Department is promoting industrial estates. What success has occurred in this area since the Minister has been in office? In other words, have we been able to snare industry to the port? Have the Department's promotion programmes conducted overseas brought numerous inquiries? I would like as much information on the success or otherwise of the programme.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The member for Torrens is probably aware that the Department is deeply involved with the Government in endeavouring to achieve the submarine project. This will be a magnificent initiative if we are able to pull it off. There have also been other numerous inquiries in relation to the industrial estates. I am not aware of any others, other than to say that when I visited Japan the Asahi Petro-Chemical Company was vitally interested in and impressed by the amount of land available at Port Adelaide.

However, it is continuing with its feasibility studies with regard to the establishment of a petro-chemical plant. A lot depends on the environmental studies in that regard, but that is outside my area of responsibility. I know of no other approach, but the Acting Director-General may wish to add to what I have said.

**Mr Jenkin:** The honourable member would be aware that industrial estate promotion and development is a long-term activity. It is the sort of activity in which negotiations with

prospective customers goes on over a period. We are having discussions with perhaps five or six organisations at present. I do not in any way suggest that all these discussions will lead to successful implementation, but work is continuing.

**Mr KLUNDER:** Before asking questions, I associate members on this side with the comments made by the member for Torrens about the distinguished service given by Mr Griffiths to the Department of Marine and Harbors. The P.A.C. met with Mr Griffiths and his officers on his penultimate day of service, and he was working as hard at the end of his service as he worked at the beginning of it. I understand that Mr Griffiths was an office messenger boy in the Department of Marine and Harbors, so his career is certainly an example of someone starting at the bottom and working to the top, and that is something to be proud of. I must admit that I have some difficulty in interpreting some of the costing at page 89 of the yellow book. For example the proposed 1983-84 recurrent expenditure for administrative and clerical support is shown as \$10.9 million, yet according to the Estimates of Payments (page 90) \$2.6 million has been allocated for salaries and wages, and \$1.1 million for administration expenses, minor equipment and sundries (page 91), making a total of \$3.7 million. Therefore, there is a discrepancy of about \$7.2 million, which cannot refer to administrative and clerical support. Will the Minister explain this discrepancy?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The amounts included in the line estimates are confined to expenditure from Consolidated Account, whereas the amounts included in the programme papers comprise expenditure from Consolidated Account plus expenditure associated with the department's deposit working accounts. The sum of \$10.191 million shown in the programme papers includes estimated expenditure through the department's plant and machinery working account, wages on cost account, clerk store working account, and suspense store operating account. This is in accordance with the criteria set for the preparation of the programme papers.

**Mr KLUNDER:** I also have difficulty in identifying the department's budget deficit for 1983-84. As far as I can work out, the 1982-83 receipts fell short of the operating costs by \$9.5 million. The summary at page 89 of the yellow book states that the proposed recurrent expenditure will decrease from \$36.9 million to \$35.1 million, which is a reduction of about \$1.7 million. It is also indicated that the receipts changed from the 1982-83 outcome of \$27.1 million to a proposed \$32.35 million, an increase of some \$5.7 million. Can we assume from these figures that the 1982-83 deficit of \$9.5 million will now be affected by this total of \$7 million so that there will be only a \$2.5 million deficit in 1983-84, or do other factors have to be taken into account?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The Department's budgeted deficit, or the net sum to be met from Consolidated Account for 1983-84, is estimated at \$2.6 million, which is represented by estimated revenue receipts of \$31.4 million, which is more than offset by estimated recurrent expenditure of \$19.1 million, plus the debt and other charges of \$14.9 million. I might add that these figures incorporate all activities of the department, many of which are of a statutory or service nature. For example, administration of marine affairs, maintenance of recreational jetties, and operation and maintenance of marine facilities for the fishing industry are involved. Mr Freeman may be able to comment further in regard to the other figures referred to by the honourable member.

**Mr Freeman:** The figures referred to relating to the programme papers are not comparable which those included in the department's statement of receipts and payments, as mentioned by the Minister, as the programme papers include this additional data relating to the operation of the various

deposit working accounts. I believe that that has confused a few people, including me, most of the time.

Examples included in the programme figures are dockyard working account, plant and machinery working account, and the reimbursement account. Expenditure and receipts relevant to these accounts have been incorporated in the programme papers, as mentioned earlier by the Minister, in accordance with the criteria given by the Department in relation to the completion of the papers.

**Mr RODDA:** I refer to page 114 of the yellow book, which states:

The commercial fishing industry makes a significant contribution to the economic and social welfare of the State.

The fishing industry brings in some \$30 million to the State and employs about 2 000 fishing vessels and about 3 200 fishermen. Recurrent expenditure indicates that \$552 000 was proposed last year and only \$428 000 was spent. The allocation this year is \$432 000. How will that money be spent, and I refer specifically to the towns of Robe, Beachport and others in my future district?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** In relation to the Robe slipway improvements, the total cost allocated amounts to \$650 000. The project involves the replacement of an old railway type slipway, which can only accommodate three boats at the one time. A modern travel lift system will be installed which provides a parking area for 25 boats. The local council is providing block paving, and the Department of Marine and harbors Construction Branch will be doing the finger piers on which the travel lift runs. The travel lift itself was ordered from Shakespeare Engineering at Elizabeth, which later went into liquidation. Delays occurred while a new order was placed with T. O'Connor & Sons. The expected delivery date is April 1984.

The travel lift is similar to but larger than the lift operating at North Haven. It gives greater flexibility to boat owners because they can bring boats out of the water for short periods. It is not intended to proceed with the final stage of the project, which involved excavating a hill to provide a site for a boat repair area. After exhaustive discussions with fishermen at Robe and Beachport and protests from boat repairers at Beachport, it was decided that insufficient work was available in the area to keep two separate boat yards viable. The Robe fishermen appear content to tow their boats to Beachport or take them around by sea to use the large parking and repair facility available there.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I am not criticising the fact that the Minister visited Japan; in fact, I commended him for doing so, but I cannot see an allocation in the lines for the money spent on that trip. It is usually identified as a separate item.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Mr Freeman will answer that question.

**Mr Freeman:** I refer to the published line estimates and a line headed 'Overseas visits of officers'. Actual payments during 1982-83 under that line amounted to \$19 660. The cost of the Minister's trip was included within that figure.

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

Mr K.C. Hamilton  
Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
Mr J.K.G. Oswald  
Mr W.A. Rodda  
Mr J.P. Trainer  
The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

The Hon. R.K. Abbott, Minister of Marine.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Dr D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.  
Mr J. Jenkin, Acting Director-General, Department of Marine and Harbors.  
Mr K. Freeman, Director, Administration and Finance, Department of Marine and Harbors.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I will ask one question at this stage. I refer to page 145 of the Estimates. I am concerned to note that of the \$13 million allocated for capital works only \$8 million was spent in the past financial year. A similar pattern has arisen in other Government Departments that I have looked at. The capital lines have been underspent. Only this afternoon we saw a similar problem in relation to the State Transport Authority. Can the Minister explain why the lines were underspent? I refer to a significant reduction of over \$1 million in outports. Certainly, more will be spent this year, but nevertheless there was a reduction. There was also a large reduction in relation to minor works: \$2.64 million was voted and only \$600 000 was spent. That pattern continues throughout the lines. The capital works area generates employment. I would like an explanation from the Minister as to why those capital lines were underspent in that way.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** The capital works programmes consists basically of dredging works at Port Pirie, Thevenard and Outer Harbor, plus essential ports improvement projects: the upgrading of No. 27 berth at Port Adelaide, the bulk handling loading plant, development of industrial estates, etc. Allowance is also included for a down-payment on the second container crane and replacement of the cutter suction dredge. The allocation of capital expenditure is regarded as satisfactory. It represents an increase of \$3.869 million over that which was spent in 1982-83. I know that it is less than the amount voted. That is the question to which the honourable member has referred. For more detail, I ask either the Acting Director-General or Mr Freeman to answer.

**Mr Jenkin:** Perhaps we could both have a crack at that one. There were a number of fairly large items in the last financial year—projects which really did not get to the stage where we could progress with them. One of those was the container crane; another was the cutter suction dredge. The investigations and the purpose of making those investments really did not reach the stage where we could proceed in that time span. They are the two major items at point, but I will ask Mr Freeman to follow on from that point.

**Mr Freeman:** Probably the most significant relates to dredging. The estimates were prepared last year assuming that the dredging plant would spend the majority of the year working on capital works or new dredging works. As it turned out, there was a need to do considerable dredging of spoil coming out of the I.C.I. plant into the Port River. That dredging was undertaken on a reimbursement basis from I.C.I. The amount involved there was something of the order of \$1.8 million. In addition to that, the Department undertook approximately \$750 000 worth of maintenance dredging out of the Port Adelaide River and around Outer Harbor, which was funded from the Recurrent Account. That is one of the reasons why the Recurrent Account for last year exceeded the estimate. So, adding those two figures

Works and Services—Department of Marine and Harbors,  
\$11 900 000

**Chairman:**

Mr G.T. Whitten

**Members:**

The Hon. Peter Duncan  
Mr G.M. Gunn

together, something of the order of \$2.5 million worth of dredging work was undertaken through reimbursement or recurrent expenditure rather than through Loan Account or capital works.

**Mr OSWALD:** I imagine that the Minister would be disappointed this evening if I did not raise the subject of the Patawalonga mouth, as we are on the capital line of the Department of Marine and Harbors. As the Minister would know, over the years the Department of Marine and Harbors and the Coast Protection Board have amassed a large volume of reports and knowledge on how the problem of the sandbar and estuary can be tackled and solved at Glenelg. He would also be aware of the immense interest in this problem by the Glenelg council, the whole of the boating industry and those involved in sea rescue. We would also be aware of the employment that can be generated by Glenelg's becoming the centre of the leisure boating industry.

In March I introduced to the Minister a deputation from the Glenelg council, in which we sought a positive commitment by the Government to dredge the Patawalonga channel and resolve the silting problem once and for all. The Minister received the deputation and said that he would ask his departmental officers to look at the problem. Of course, the departmental officers are well aware of the problem.

In fact, it was some time later (in May) when I asked Glenelg council if it had received a response from that deputation. It had not and so it wrote to the Minister and sought information on the results of the deputation. It took until 15 June before the Minister responded to the council (I wonder how long it would have taken without this prompting) and said:

The Department of Marine and Harbors is currently considering the acquisition of a new cutter suction dredge and its likely involvement in the future work at the Patawalonga is an aspect that would be kept in mind.

No-one could say in their wildest dreams that to be 'kept in mind' is a commitment to the Patawalonga. No commitment exists at the moment to the area other than the fact that the Government will 'keep it in mind' when the dredge is designed. My first question relates to this dredge on which we are hanging our hopes as it is the only commitment that the Government has made thus far. Does the new cutter suction dredge have the capacity to work in 2 feet or 3 feet of water? Can it work when the surf is running, or will it have to pull back into deep water in unsuitable conditions?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I am aware of the problem surrounding the Patawalonga sandbar. It has existed for more than 15 years and there is no apparent immediate solution. The Department has not the equipment at present for that job. If we are to do it, it must be done properly so that the problem can be fixed once and for all. All the dredging that has occurred in the past has solved the problem only for one or two days before the sand returned and the same problem arose again. It is an on-going problem. Even if the Department hired the necessary equipment, it would not solve the problem, and the cost would be about \$1 million.

Presently the Department is considering purchasing a new cutter suction dredge, and \$300 000 is included in the 1983-84 budget. We are still determining the size of the dredge necessary for major port works. That reassessment will take into account changes in shipping and cargo trends and the need for industrial and port land reclamation. Also significant are trends in dredging and reclamation technology. I am fully aware of the problem, which is an old one and which has been around for a long time. We must be patient until we get the right type of equipment that can solve the problem once and for all.

**Mr OSWALD:** The Minister said that there is no immediate solution. Departmental officers have a solution of

putting capital funds into the project, and so it is a clear question of the Government's organising its priorities. Therefore, on behalf of the boating industry, the people of Glenelg and all people with any interest, including Adelaide Airport, I ask whether the Government is prepared to upgrade its priorities, if not in this Budget then in the next Budget, so that we will know that the Government considers solving the Patawalonga problem through the application of funds a top priority project. If it does not make this allocation now, can we see it in the next State Budget in the capital works area of the Minister's portfolio so that the Patawalonga will be taken on as a top priority after the completion of the O'Sullivan Beach project?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** We can certainly ask Treasury for a greater allocation of capital works funding in the next Budget. I am not too sure how successful we will be. If we could be sure that we would get sufficient capital works funding we could do many of the things that are around at the moment. As I mentioned, \$300 000 is included in the 1983-84 estimates for the cutter suction dredge. At least that is a start. That amount has been allocated for the initial payment. Hopefully, next year, more money will be provided for that dredge so that it can be completed next financial year.

**Mr OSWALD:** I think that the Minister will find that we see the dangling of the cutter suction dredge not so much as a red herring but something to delay the decision of the Government to upgrade its priorities. It is not a question of saying that tonight we will go to Treasury and obtain more capital funding. What we are saying is that the Government should reallocate its priorities within the Department so that this project is taken on as the Department's top priority this year. The Minister can answer that tonight. Is the Minister prepared to ask Cabinet to reallocate the priorities within the Department so that the Patawalonga is top priority next year after the completion of the O'Sullivan Beach project? To say that you will go to Treasury to get more funds will not happen if that is the approach. It is a decision that the Minister and Cabinet have to make. I am asking the Minister to make a commitment that the Patawalonga estuary and bar will be a top priority project for the Department's next budget.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I can certainly take up this matter and give it consideration. I can ask the Government to give it top priority and I undertake to do that. I feel that that is all I can promise at this point.

**Mr RODDA:** In the Estimates of Payments on page 145 under 'Outports' the proposed expenditure is \$5.61 million. Has there been an examination or is there a proposal to look at a further deep sea port? This matter has been uppermost in the minds of the Australian wheat industry.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** There are no proposals to my knowledge.

**Mr Jenkin:** There is no simple answer to the question. There are a number of investigations as to how the needs of the grain industry could be handled in the next few years. Perhaps a new port is one proposal that will emerge during that study period.

**Mr RODDA:** I was surprised in looking at the general import of the whole vote to see the Auditor-General commenting that there was a payment of \$10.8 million for interest charges, which was 45 per cent of the vote. That seems to be an extraordinarily large proportion of interest to share when we know that sinking funds have to be met.

It seems to me a feature of our budgeting that these income-earning branches pay for the services and are somewhat bled of funds. Will the Minister comment in that regard? This was a feature of the department when I was a Minister, and it should be addressed in regard to the overall expenditure of State departments.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I understand that departments have rarely had to operate in that manner. There has been an alteration to the method in this Budget. I am aware that the Department faces some problems in this regard, and I ask the Acting Director-General to highlight some of those concerns.

**Mr Jenkin:** There is a high rate of debt repayment compared to receipts. The previous Director-General argued in a number of annual reports that in some ways this is artificial in terms of the commercial ports. As the Minister has already said, this is the way in which successive Governments have operated in regard to the repayment of Loan funds and the debt in general. This is the system that the Department is required to follow.

**Mr Peterson:** In previous discussions, dredges and a replacment were referred to, but no time table or schedule has been mentioned. Has a positive decision been made on any replacement of dredges, and when will they be purchased?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** Before proceeding with the acquisition of a significant item of plant such as a cutter suction dredge, it is necessary and prudent to reassess the probable work load for such plant over the investment period. In this case, that would be 15 to 20 years. This reassessment will take into account changes in the shipping and cargo trends, and so on, and the need for industrial and port land reclamation work.

**Mr Peterson:** The reclamation of Port Adelaide and Outer Harbor obviously depends on the dredge. Has a programme for dredging been drawn up; if so, how far ahead, and does it include manning requirements?

**Mr Jenkin:** An overall development plan is being updated.

**Mr Peterson:** What is the time scale?

**Mr Jenkin:** We have already had some discussions with the Minister on this subject, and we hope to have that completed within the next few weeks. As the Minister has already stated, we must consider this in the context of the State's shipping needs over a very long period ahead, and this is not an investment decision that can be made quickly or hastily.

We had to think through technical solutions to some problems, particularly regarding the use of clay as a reclamation material, because the river bed has now reached the stage where most of the dredged material is clay. That may affect the type, size, and nature of the equipment, and perhaps the technology required. Very direct action is being taken with respect to a development plan and a dredging programme, but the final format has not been decided.

**Mr Peterson:** It has been stated that \$5 million was underspent on the capital account last year. That worries

me, because the facility at Osborne is about 50 years old and it is falling to bits, although it still serves a real purpose. It is the only bulk discharge facility in the State. In fact, it handles all the sugar, sulphur and other commodities coming into the State. I notice in another Government Department report that an electricity power station has been pegged out in the Wallaroo area. A facility could be built at Wallaroo for the discharge of coal. If that occurs, the Osborne operation could be put at risk. What is the future of Osborne? Are there any plans for its replacement?

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I understand that there is not enough cargo to warrant significant expenditure in relation to the upgrading of Osborne. Mr Jenkin can perhaps provide more information.

**Mr Jenkin:** The Minister's point is quite valid. Only 300 000 to 350 000 tonnes of principal cargo goes through the Osborne facility. The replacement of cranes there now would cost many millions of dollars. If one does a quick piece of arithmetic and works out how that will impact per tonne in relation to the existing cargo figures, it can be seen that it is a difficult investment decision to make.

**The Hon. R.K. Abbott:** I express my thanks to those members who passed on their compliments to the retiring Director-General of Marine and Harbors. I will pass on those sentiments. I am sure that he appreciated working with us from time to time, regardless of the Government in power. Mr John Griffith was a public servant of long standing and he certainly served the Department of Marine and Harbors very well. I will wish him a long and happy retirement on behalf of honourable members.

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

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Minister of Marine, Miscellaneous, \$1 195 000—Examination declared completed.

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#### ADJOURNMENT

At 9.59 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Thursday 29 September at 11 a.m.