

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 2 October 1984

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chairman:

Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:

The Hon. D.C. Brown
 Mr K.C. Hamilton
 Mr J.H.C. Klunder
 Mr J.K.G. Oswald
 Mr K.H. Plunkett
 Mr W.A. Rodda

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I recognise the Hon. D.C. Brown as the lead speaker for the Opposition, and Mr Hamilton as the lead speaker for the Government. All questions will be directed to the Minister, and the Minister can answer them or pass them on to one of his officers to answer. However, no questions can be directed to officers, except through the Minister. All questions must relate to the vote and not to general policy. As I have done in the past, I emphasise that I want no second reading speeches and no grievance debate. Comments will relate to the lines of the Budget. In the past, the Minister, the Lead Opposition speaker and I have got together to work out a time table. I am pleased to say that that has already happened and there has been agreement on the allocation of times. At all times the quorum will be made up of four members. If a quorum is not present, the sitting of the Committee will be suspended until a quorum is formed. In regard to members who are not Committee members, they will be seen and will be allowed to ask questions: certainly, they will not be encouraged to ask questions, and it will always be with the agreement of the lead speakers of the Opposition and the Government that those members will be allowed to ask questions. I will allow three successive questions only, and the first question will come from the Opposition before the call will revert to the Government side, and it will then alternate between the sides. I intend to allow a short opening address by the Lead Opposition speaker and then I will allow the Minister to make a short statement. I suggest that those statements should be no longer than 10 minutes or 15 minutes, that is sufficient time. None of the other speakers have taken more than 10 minutes but, if 15 minutes is required, I will allow that.

 Transport, \$25 518 000
Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Dr D. Scrafton, Director-General of Transport, Department of Transport.

Mr K.J. Collett, Assistant Director-General, Department of Transport.

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

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

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

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I do not wish to make a specific opening speech but I think it is appropriate that I inform the Committee what has been worked out between the Minister and me in terms of a time schedule. From now until about 1 p.m. or soon after lunch we intend to deal with Transport and the Transport, Capital lines; from 2 p.m. until about 3.30 p.m. we will deal with the State Transport Authority and Transport, Miscellaneous; and from 3.30 p.m. until 6 p.m. we will deal with Highways and Highways, Capital lines.

There is an agreement that we finish all the lines I have mentioned by 6 p.m. and then transfer to Minister of Marine. At that stage I will move to Committee A to deal with the Technology line and the Shadow Minister of Education will transfer to this Committee to take the Minister of Marine lines. I seek co-operation in trying to meet the deadlines I have mentioned, because the other Committee is involved. We see today as a chance to get information. The questions will be short and I hope the answers will be short and informative.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: As the member for Davenport mentioned, we have conferred about the timing arrangement. My officers and I are agreeable with the timetable. There are no developments within the Transport portfolio that are out of the ordinary. In line with the overall State Budget the Transport budget has been drawn up with considerable financial restraint. However, with prudent management we have been able to sustain existing programmes and add several new initiatives. These initiatives embrace road safety, arterial road development (south and north east of Adelaide) and fleet upgrading within the State Transport Authority.

Within the limits of the budget there have been increases in expenditure where programmes have required it. However, the apparently large increase in the Transport vote is the result of a transfer of items from the Miscellaneous lines. In the past there has been some confusion at times in following the various documents that cover the Estimates. This is the first year in which our programme documents follow the Estimates line by line. Therefore, although our agenda will proceed line by line through the budget, it may help the Committee to concentrate on the programme documents, because they contain more detail and will allow further explanation. However, should the Committee wish to raise questions in any order, we will be happy to respond. Mr Chairman, I ask you to note my suggestion that we deal with the actual programmes, which is the new arrangement, because the earlier part of the budget does not provide any figures. More figures and detail can be found in the various programmes. I ask the Committee to consider that.

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

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My first series of questions relates to the long-term planning for transport within the metropolitan area. What is specifically being done by the Department in terms of transport planning, both in relation to the Highways Department and public transport? What studies or plans are available: are they publicly available, so that the public and the various groups within the community can have a clear understanding of the future plan for transport?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The transport planning loan budget for 1984-85 shows quite a programme at which the Department is looking. First, there is a review of public services study, which we estimate will cost \$30 000; then Hallett Cove to Hackham railway study; parking policy options; new Adelaide Airport; Independent Air Fares Committee; regional airport maintenance and development; transport infrastructure working study; transport future study; South

Australian Road Transport Industry Training Committee; taxi-cab licensing and administration; urban structure, economic and social impediments to Public Transport in South Australia, Adelaide strategic transport planning; Adelaide road use and management study; consolidated manual for residential street management; the transportation of dangerous goods; transport of radioactive material; scholarships and fellowships; transport courses, lectures and information kits; conference attendances; review of planning and analyses techniques; public transport costing models, telecommunications and transport; interdepartmental Forecasting Committee; a review of transport and related data; data base overview; data base maintenance and development; household activity travel simulator; urban blight, social impact of transport policies on elderly and handicapped; social impact of transport fuel disruption; inner Adelaide walkways plan; the State Bicycle Committee; State Control Centre, management course; Department of Transport corporate plan; and transport indicators.

This is a wish list, totalling about \$900 000. I did not read all of the figures and the approximate cost of the transport planning requirements, but they will cost about \$800 000.

Dr Scrafton: That large group of activities fits into about four topic areas. One is transport economics, which we believe to be fundamental to the problems that we face in this State, so we always try to keep that work moving. It does not always help. We try to apply that research in things like the economics of the State Transport Authority and the need for fare increases and so on, but we believe that without undertaking that work we will never be able to determine the difference between what it really costs to perform these services and what we are able to charge for them.

The second area is the transport review of the metropolitan area, which is fundamental to the honourable member's question. Something like 20 of those subject areas to which the Minister referred fall into that category, which is the biggest single component of our work. Then, there is a more general research area into land transport, which includes such things as the policies on the elderly and the handicapped and the social impact study—things like that to which the Minister referred. The last one is a series of projects relating to State development, such as the airport, road transport, training and so on, which have broader State-wide development implications.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Auditor-General's Report (page 204) refers to the fact that in the past year \$53 000 was spent on a futures study, but the Minister did not mention that. Is that just a general coverage? I presume that that study was completed at the end of the 1983-84 financial year. I note from the Auditor-General's Report that \$129 000 has been spent on that study overall. What is the study about, and can the Opposition have a copy?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Yes, we will make that study available to the honourable member. Mr Hutchinson will elaborate further.

Mr Hutchinson: The study looks a long way into the future rather than a 10 to 15 year time frame, on which projections are based. It is aimed at the future shape of social scenarios, and so far 14 prospects for the development of technology have been examined. The honourable member may recall approving some of the earlier work when he was Minister. Those papers have been prepared and can be released. However, the study is only about one-third to half-way through the total process: it will take about four years to complete. We will make the documents available as soon as possible.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Director-General referred to the metropolitan transport plan. From page 19 of the

yellow book I note that a review of that plan is one of the major tasks, if not the main task, for this year. How much will be spent in that regard? I realise that a number of different studies are involved; how much will be spent on the series of studies relating to the review of the metropolitan transport plan? Can the Opposition have a copy of the original plan that is now under review? Will it be made available publicly?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The proposed total recurrent expenditure for staff and contingencies is \$623 000, and the proposed capital expenditure is \$797 000. Of that, about \$350 000 will be spent on the metropolitan plan. The Director-General will elaborate.

Dr Scrafton: Of the capital amount, about \$350 000, representing about 40 per cent of the total allocation for the planning division, will be spent on the metropolitan plan. The main work will relate very much to the updating of the strategic transport plan for the metropolitan area building upon work done in the past year on the northern and southern roads and the STA regional plans. It is aimed to put that together to produce a plan that is similar to that released about 10 years ago.

The plan would also need to incorporate some aspect of transport planning that are outside the jurisdiction of the State such as some of the local street planning of, in particular, the inner suburbs of Adelaide and would also need to incorporate all of the planning that covers areas such as those relating to the elderly, the handicapped, air transport and some aspects of marine transport planning in this State. One area in which we will not be able to make much progress in the present financial year relates to long term planning for railway services in South Australia. I believe that that will be in a considerable state of flux during this year. We might have an opinion on this matter from a State point of view, but I do not think that we will be able to make a very definitive statement about it because progress in that area depends upon Australian National and the Commonwealth Government. Other than that, I think that we will try to cover as broad a spectrum as we can. We will try to complete it within this financial year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My specific question is whether the Strategic Transport Plan will be made available to the Opposition?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Yes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: There is a comment, I think, in the Auditor-General's Report, that it has been decided to defer the on-line computer operation until the Justice Information System is established on a computer base for the Attorney-General. Can the Minister say what is the schedule for the operation of the on-line computer for motor vehicle registration; when he expects it to be operating; and what will be the cost saving in one year once it is operating?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Department and I are not happy with the way the on-line computer operation is proceeding. It is not proceeding fast enough, as there have been delays. However, we hope that it will be in full operation within 12 months. I ask Mr Collett to answer the remainder of the member's question.

Mr Collett: Progress of the on-line system is at a stage where we will shortly be calling tenders for both hardware and software. Assuming that a tender is let, we would look at implementing the scheme 12 months from now. We will work with the Attorney-General's office on the Justice Information System, but that factor will not influence us one way or the other as to whether or not we have the computer on-line. We will co-operate, but will not be dominated by that other system.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What will the cost saving be?

Mr Collett: About 100 staff would be redeployed as a result of the on-line system resulting in a saving of \$1 million a year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Therefore, we can expect a saving of \$1 million a year once those staff members are redeployed. I have been very concerned about the delay in implementing this system, because I can recall when a member of the Budget Review Committee giving final approval for the implementation of this system in early 1982 or 1981. I think it was due to be operating within 12 months when that approval was given. Therefore, it appears that this State has lost about \$1 million a year for two years because of the delay in implementing this system. I see that we are about to lose another \$1 million, which concerns me because of the statement in the Auditor-General's Report that the matter will be further delayed because of the Justice Information System now required by the Attorney-General's Department, and that the two systems cannot operate until they operate on the same basis. I am reassured, because I understand that the Justice Information System might be up to four or five years away at this time.

I am reassured to hear that this on-line computer will operate within the 12 months rather than continuing to waste \$1 million a year on what is basically an outmoded administrative system. At the time of the Budget an article appeared in the *Advertiser* which said that concessions for primary producers' vehicles would be abolished in certain cases—specifically, hobby farms. Vehicles had to be more than two tonnes to get a concession, with only one concession per farm. The article was written as if there had been a final decision which was being implemented. There was no mention in any Budget paper of that decision. Has the Government made a decision and, if so, when and where was the formal announcement made? If no decision has been made, when does the Government expect to make it?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: No decision has been made. The matter was mentioned in the concessions report that was released publicly for comment, and no move will be made until the Government has analysed the information it receives. It will require an amendment to the Act and there is nothing in process in order to do that at this time.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am somewhat reassured by the Minister's statement because the article that appeared in the *Advertiser* and some of the other press was written up as if a decision had already been made. I have been approached by quite a few people criticising that decision when, in fact, it would appear that no decision has yet been made. The Minister should put out a statement clarifying the situation as there are a lot of primary producers in this State who believe that they are about to lose their concessions or, in fact, that they have lost their concessions and that it is only a matter of waiting until their vehicles are re-registered. I refer the Minister to the article that appeared at least in the country edition of the *Advertiser* which wrote up the matter as a *fait accompli*. That situation should be corrected.

The Minister, in listing the various studies presently under way, talked about the study to find a future site for the Adelaide Airport. Is the Minister taking this matter seriously? If so, how seriously is he taking it and what resources are being put into finding another site for the Adelaide Airport? What is the most likely site? Is a committee operating to establish this new airport? When does the Minister expect to purchase the land, and start the planning and construction of the new airport?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Concerning concessions, I think that the statement that the member referred to was in the media at the time the report was released: it related to that report. I reiterate: the Government has made no decision on any of the recommendations at this point in time. If the

Government decides to proceed in this matter, it will require an amendment to the Act and will come before Parliament.

The State Government is working together with the Commonwealth Government to identify an alternative airport site in the Two Wells area. A joint Government advisory committee recommended some years ago that such a site could be reserved to serve the long-term needs of the region. Action is now being taken to ensure that this opportunity is not lost. The cost of developing an alternative site, or any other site for that matter, will be extremely high and, therefore, it will be necessary to maintain a constant overview of all the alternatives.

Other proposals that have been put to us include land fill, either off the metropolitan coastline or in the Port Adelaide area, for example. These have been investigated and found not to be warranted, even though they would be close to the centre of Adelaide. In view of the high additional cost of recovery of the land using existing dredging techniques etc., officers continue to monitor changes in technology that might swing the balance in favour of a new airport development in such an area. The objective is to be satisfied with any new airport site and to ensure that the other existing airports, that is, Parafield and Edinburgh, can continue to function satisfactorily, but also subject to very serious air space use limitations because of the proximity to Edinburgh and Parafield. However, aircraft technology and air traffic control technology may change sufficiently in the next decade or two to overcome this problem, and such changes will be monitored. If and when the existing Adelaide Airport site is released for redevelopment, its proximity to the city and to the central part of the total metropolitan area makes it essential that an existing comprehensive development is planned. It would also eliminate the problem of noise from aircraft overflying significant parts of the metropolitan area, a major reason for relocating the existing airport. Mr Hutchinson is involved on the airport committee and might like to add to what I have already said.

Mr Hutchinson: The State Airfields Committee, which followed on the joint Government advisory committee that the Minister mentioned earlier, has been established amongst other things to identify an alternative airport site. In deliberations last year or about 18 months ago the Committee determined that of the range of sites that generally spread from the north of Adelaide further north, the Virginia-Two Wells area, a site in the vicinity of Two Wells was to be preferred. The specific identification of the site depends on Commonwealth Government staff resources being available and, until recently, they had not been available. It was indicated to me by telephone as recently as two or three days ago that engineering staff of the Airports Branch are now starting to work on identifying boundaries for that site, and I expect that it will take between six to eight months to complete.

Mr HAMILTON: In regard to road safety and education, I refer to the First Report on Road Safety by the Victorian Social Development Committee, which states in part:

Casual statistics—

that is, talking in terms of children—

show that in Australia approximately 700 children aged six or less die from accidental causes each year, four hundred of these resulting from road related accidents, and the remainder from domestic accidents.

It points out that road related accidents account for the majority of deaths; about 57 per cent of fatalities are due to accidents in this age group. The report further indicates that in Scandinavia and other European countries experience has shown that the establishment and operations of children's traffic clubs have been very effective. In Scandinavian countries children are enrolled in traffic clubs by their parents

at the age of three. The report further points out that this helps not only parents but also assists in the guidance of the child's development in terms of road safety. What considerations are being given to this aspect as I understand that the evaluation of the Norwegian traffic club showed a 20 per cent lower casualty rate for members within that age bracket?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Government is placing a high priority on road safety. It has taken some major action in road safety. It has been our impression that this area has been given insufficient attention and has lacked co-ordination in the past, and one of the major deficiencies has been in research. There has been a critical lack of data on which to base decisions on effective road safety programmes. My Department has developed a programme of road safety research that will provide a solid base for future major efforts, and I will refer to some of those programmes and some of the studies that the Department is undertaking. However, there is a need to take more immediate action. All members are aware that the Premier hosted a road safety seminar in March this year. It gave valuable impetus to road safety activity, and produced some potential initiatives that need not wait for extensive research before implementation.

Of course, the Premier has already announced that road safety package. It included zero blood alcohol for novice drivers, and this will be introduced along with any amendments to the Act required as a result of the inquiries into random breath testing. Also, to reduce the open road speed limit from 110 km/h to 100 km/h, with a campaign of education and enforcement. Extensive evidence shows that such a reduction can produce worthwhile falls in the accident rate, but at present we are considering the most effective ways of introducing any new speed limit. We are liaising with the Federal authorities on this issue. It includes a driver's intervention programme, and we are investigating details of a practical scheme. It also includes motor cycle driver training, and the use of headlights and helmets on cycles is being investigated before its introduction. My Department is also investigating a feasible graduated licensing scheme. Greater limitations on new licence holders can produce substantial benefits. As a package these initiatives provide the intensive moves in road safety seen for years. The programmes are being developed for the earliest implementation, and we believe that they will have a sustained impact on the road toll.

In this Budget the Government has made an additional \$150 000 available for road safety research, and some of the programmes that we are studying include first-aid training; a review of the road safety centre; guidelines for road safety promotional activities; seat-belt usage; child restraint usage (which the member referred to); crash helmet use and bicycle safety; high centre mounted auxiliary brake lights; the role of alcohol in road traffic accidents; alcohol related countermeasures; driver information file construction; a graduated driver's licence scheme; driver offences and road safety; road safety measures for young drivers; survey of road traffic accident victims for cannabis; motor-cycle safety; road delineation and safety; evaluation of red light violation cameras; road accident data base; road accident indicators; rural road accident study; a review of road safety activities; and road safety meetings and conferences. That is quite a list, but the cost of those activities total \$210 600. The Government has provided about \$150 000 for this research in the road safety budget, and I believe that this will provide a sound basis for future budget allocations on road safety expenditure. It is premature at this stage to refer to a programme covered by the Highways Department in regard to road safety, and I prefer to leave that until we get to the Highways line.

We are also spending \$197 000 on school and child safety services. This programme covers child road safety centres manned full-time at Oaklands Park and Elizabeth, and part-time at Port Pirie, one week in four; Whyalla, one week in three; Tea Tree Gully, one week in four; and Millicent, one week in four. This is in first and third terms only, as well as field officers visits to primary and secondary schools for theoretical training.

Mr HAMILTON: Should this road safety question be left to another line?

The CHAIRMAN: If part of it comes under the Highways line, we will deal with it under that line.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to pre-driver education. Information provided to me shows clearly that novice drivers have a disproportionately high casualty accident rate compared to first year drivers with more than four times the rate of accidents of drivers with at least three years driving experience. Learner permit and probationary licence holders represent 23 per cent of drivers involved in casualty accidents in Victoria in 1980. What is occurring within and outside the education system in terms of driver education?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Mr Collett will answer the question.

Mr Collett: The Road Safety Centre at Marion conducts courses during the school vacations to train new drivers. This is being well patronised, and we think the results are very encouraging. It is also clear that those drivers who have professional driver training before obtaining a licence have a much better accident free record than those who do not.

Mr HAMILTON: The Minister will recall that I recently expressed concern in Parliament in relation to the licensing of motor cyclists, particularly for 250cc and 260cc machines. It is possible for anyone to walk in off the street and purchase a motor cycle without first producing a licence as to competency. I know from discussions with young persons in my community that many teenagers can purchase a 1 000cc motor cycle without being questioned by some resellers. I find it rather disconcerting that this is allowed to happen in the community.

I am also well aware that some 250cc motor cycles are as powerful in terms of road speed as 1 000cc machines. Nevertheless, the present licensing system dictates that, for the first 12 months of the licence, teenage drivers can only drive a motor cycle up to 250ccs. I am concerned that this restriction is being breached. Has the Government considered this question, which could encompass the issue of photographs on drivers' licences not only for motor cyclists but also for many other vehicles that are driven on our roads?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I can only agree with the honourable members' comments. It is a matter of concern that anyone can walk in off the street and purchase a high powered motor cycle. However, I think that is more an issue for consumer affairs than transport. The Motor Cycle Riders Association is conducting an open day next Saturday at the Oaklands Park Road Safety Centre and all motor cyclists are invited to attend. The Department intends introducing additional motor cycle training schemes. I think everyone is aware of the very high accident rate among motor cyclists, and this comprises a major part of the road toll in every State. Much more must be done in relation to the training of motor cyclists. I will attend the open day next week, giving those in attendance as much encouragement as I can. We are concerned about the matters raised by the honourable member, and we are doing our best to assist in providing more safety in this area. I am reminded that we will begin a new voluntary scheme in the new year. The issue of photographs on licences is still being considered by the Government.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am delighted that the member for Albert Park has raised the matter of road safety. The

Minister indicated that at least in his impression the Government is increasing its effort in relation to road safety. I support that. I believe that road safety is one of the prime issues that should be tackled in our community. I do not know whether the Minister saw a recent *Four Corners* programme on the problems faced by people with brain damage caused by road accidents. Frankly, I think every new driver should be forced to watch that half hour programme before being issued with a driver's licence. I think they would take a more sober approach to driving for some years after seeing that type of film.

Unfortunately, that type of film is often not seen by young people. Let us face it, not too many young people would watch *Four Corners* on a Saturday evening. Unfortunately, they are probably out being brain damaged, as depicted in the film. The Department of Transport might consider obtaining copies of that programme on road safety and replay it fairly extensively.

I bring to the attention of the Minister a letter I received last week from the Secretary of the Memorial Oval Primary School Council at Whyalla. The letter is addressed to me as Shadow Minister of Transport and reads, as follows:

Dear Sir,

We have been informed that the hours of the Road Safety Centre instructor in Whyalla have been cut by one-third. This means that our impressionable young children will only be able to attend Road Safety lectures and demonstrations once in two years. We are lucky to have a fully equipped, well set-out centre which children are able to use 'as is' whenever they like. But, they will only receive the benefit of the centre being fully operational e.g. traffic lights, equipment, etc., once in two years. Surely, in the current climate of road safety awareness, this action is not in the best interests of our children.

Yours truly, Mrs. V. Liddicoat, Secretary, Memorial Oval Primary School Council.

I find it amazing that, after listening to the Minister refer to an increased effort in road safety, we find that where it really counts among school children (as just mentioned by the member for Albert Park) the time available for road safety instructors will be slashed by one-third. Furthermore, the children at Whyalla will have access to the Road Safety Centre only once every two years. As I think that is totally inadequate, will the Minister reverse that decision and ensure that, first, the time for instructors at Whyalla is maintained at its present level (if not increased), and, secondly, that the children have access to the centre at least once a year, if that is what the school needs?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I did not see the *Four Corners* programme mentioned by the honourable member. I agree with the honourable member's suggestion, and we will certainly try to obtain a copy of the programme and publicise and replay it as often as we can.

With regard to the Whyalla issue, according to my information the programme covers child road safety centres manned full-time at Oaklands Park and Elizabeth and part-time (one week in three) at Whyalla. I am not aware that there has been any reduction; I will be happy to make an inquiry. I agree with the comments that the honourable member has made that we are putting more effort into road safety and we should not reduce that effort, within the country in particular. I will inquire into the matter raised and respond to the honourable member when I get the information.

The CHAIRMAN: I neglected to advise the Minister and his staff that if the Minister is to get replies for the Committee (and if he is to provide replies for the member for Davenport he should provide them for the Committee), there is a time limit on the provision of that information. It is to be provided to the Clerk of the Committee. The closing time for answers that the Minister does not have readily available but will provide the Committee is 19 October.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would certainly appreciate the Minister's investigating this matter of the cutting of the hours at Whyalla by one-third. The Minister was sent a similar letter, and I understand that the Premier was as well. I am surprised that the Minister has not responded already and carried out an appropriate investigation to see whether the claim in the letter is correct. It would appear, though, from reading the letter, which is from the secretary of a school council, that it has been done on the basis of definite advice from the Road Safety Centre.

Who decided to transfer the Road Safety Council from being served by the Department of Transport, and therefore directly responsible to the Research Section of the Department of Transport, to the road safety centres? I know that this used to be a bit of a hobby horse of a former Minister of Transport in this place (one Mr G.T. Virgo); I wonder whether the Minister is under the influence or guidance of Mr G.T. Virgo. Did he make a recommendation to the Minister on the transfer of the responsibility of that Road Safety Council?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The decision was made by the Government in accordance with our election policies. We made clear in our election policy that we would reinstate the Road Safety Council charter that the former Government, when in office, withdrew. That was an election promise that we carried out within 12 months of being in Government. That is the position at the moment. We are currently looking at upgrading the Road Safety Council in accordance with the reorganisation of the whole question of road safety and our road safety programme to which the Premier has referred.

There has been a lack of co-ordination between Government departments. Four or five Government departments are responsible for certain road safety issues. We want more co-ordination between the departments to upgrade the whole road safety area so that there is more co-operation and so that we can do more to reduce the road toll. I am thankful that the road toll is coming down. It is something like 31 less now than it was at the same time last year. I know that everybody would like to see it fall even further than that. We cannot become complacent; more needs to be done, and we are making every effort to do that.

The Hon. G.T. Virgo happens to be my representative on the Road Safety Council. However, he had nothing to do with our election platform or policy. We agreed to restore the road safety charter to the Road Safety Council; that has already been done. The Road Safety Council is full of enthusiasm at the moment. Its members are working extremely hard at the centre and are assisting the Government no end to improve our road safety effort.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Who specifically made the recommendation to the Minister or to the Government that one of the key priorities in road safety should be to reduce the speed limit from 110 km/h to 100 km/h, and what evidence does the Minister have of specific studies that such a reduction in the speed limit from 110 km/h to 100 km/h will reduce significantly the road toll in this State?

I am familiar with the information that the Minister gave to the House of Assembly when I asked for the evidence to support that decision, but that evidence related almost purely to overseas experience where there was no previous speed limit whatsoever and where a speed limit in many places of only 90 km/h was introduced. The Minister quoted figures from the United States of America, which went from having no speed limit to having a speed limit of 90 km/h.

Mr OSWALD: It was to save fuel, too, wasn't it?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes, it was to save fuel, primarily. What specific information or studies has the Minister to show that a reduction from 110 km/h to 100 km/h will reduce the road toll? The information I have is that a study carried out in South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria,

and New Zealand, with speed limits ranging between 110 km/h to 90 km/h in New Zealand, showed that radar surveys on the open roads indicated that vehicles travelled at almost identical speed in all four locations. Therefore, regardless of the legal speed limits, it appears that drivers, at least in those four locations, of which this State is one, drive at the same speed. So, it appears from that available evidence that no reduction in the road toll will be achieved through a reduction in the speed limit.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: In answer to the honourable member's direct question as to whose decision it was, the Government, under the Premier, formed a Road Safety Committee with a number of road safety experts on it. This was one of the recommendations that came from that committee. With regard to the specific information, I made a comment during a holiday period (I think around Easter), when there was quite an uplift in road deaths. The media contacted me and asked for my comment about the high road toll at that time. I said that most of the accidents had occurred in the country and that it might be that we would have to look at reducing the speed limit from 110 km/h to 100 km/h, which is the limit in the Eastern States of Australia. I simply said that maybe we would have to look at that, but I had no detail of any of those accidents at that time. I think that it was picked up from there. The Premier's committee subsequently made a recommendation that that should occur. Since then, I have been in touch with the Office of Road Safety in Canberra and with the Federal Minister. I have mentioned in the House that I believe in uniformity.

The matter will be discussed by ATAC, in conjunction with all the other Ministers, to try to achieve uniformity. If we decide that the general limit should remain at 110 km/h, the limit may be reduced to 100 km/h on certain arterial roads. It may well be that the limit on the open highway will remain at 110 km/h, being reduced to 100 km/h in some areas. From the information I gave in the House relating to a number of countries it was quite clear that a significant reduction in the road toll resulted from a reduction of the speed limit, even where the preservation of fuel was a consideration. The Government believes that that matter should be considered.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Minister would be aware that my district borders the Adelaide Airport. Over the past three or four years the number of light planes using the airport facilities has increased. Most members whose districts border the airport and I have been greatly concerned, first, because it seems that the smaller the plane the noisier it is and, secondly, because the safety record for light aircraft is not as good as the safety record for domestic flights. The Minister would be aware that four or five months ago a small plane crash landed at the airport. That plane was diverted from Victor Harbor to Adelaide, and I was amazed that it was directed to land in a settled area. I asked questions about that in the House.

Does the Department have any plans to reduce the number of light planes that land at the airport and to encourage them to use the Parafield Airport or other airports outside the metropolitan area? I know that this is a Federal matter, but the State Transport Authority would have some responsibility.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Mr Hutchinson will respond.

Mr Hutchinson: The provision of funds for airport planning relates to the small cost of participating in the State Aviation Committee. Such matters are addressed through that committee. The State has made no representations about rearranging the use of the airport by small aircraft. It is for the Commonwealth Government to decide. The State Government could make representations, but it has not done so.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I note from the documents that one of the key responsibilities of the Department of Transport is to look after the State's interests by ensuring that this State has a suitable domestic and international airport and that the facilities meet the needs of the community. I draw the Minister's attention to the fact that Adelaide Airport is the only major airport in Australia and one of the few in the world, considering the number of aircraft and that it serves a city of one million people, that does not have passenger loading tunnels.

I realise that the airport comes under the control of the Federal Minister, but it is about time Adelaide Airport had decent facilities. Cities overseas with populations of 250 000 (one quarter of the population of Adelaide) have modern, up-to-date airport facilities, with passenger loading tunnels. Adelaide Airport is still back in the 1950s, if not further back: passengers must walk through the rain and the wind to board an aircraft for interstate flights. What plans does the State Government have to put pressure on the Federal Government to ensure upgrading so that suitable passenger loading tunnels are constructed at Adelaide Airport as a matter of urgency?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I do not know that there are any plans for upgrading Adelaide Airport, but I can certainly take up that matter with the Federal Minister. I am not aware of any development. Mr Hutchinson may be able to refer to improvements.

Mr Hutchinson: The recent upgrading of the domestic terminal was completed in essence about 12 months ago, and that is as far as it is planned to go with that building. It is anticipated that the next development for domestic facilities at Adelaide Airport will be in accordance with the master plan, which was published about 12 months ago, and which sites them between the existing international terminal building and along the driveway on that side of the entrance to the airport. Planning at that level does not detail whether aero bridges will be installed; it is a matter again where representations could be made through the State Airfields Committee. It would certainly be technically and financially difficult to incorporate that change after the change that has just been made.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I fear that there are no plans for passenger loading tunnels or aero bridges. The long term objectives may be a long way down the track—and we know how long that could be. From what has been said, I assume that such upgrading will not occur for 15 to 20 years, knowing the way in which the Federal Department moves. Looking through recent Federal Budgets, I have been astounded at how much money has been pumped into the new airports in Brisbane and Western Australia, the upgrading of facilities at Sydney Airport, and further expenditure in Melbourne, where a new terminal was constructed fairly recently—but Adelaide gets a few cents or dollars dropped out the back end as a peacemaker, never receiving the facilities of other airports in other capital cities. We should have passenger loading bridges. Will the Minister as a matter of urgency take up with the Federal Minister the lack of those facilities and the further upgrading of Adelaide International Airport? I will not go through the criticism that has been levelled at the facilities.

Mr HAMILTON: Do you support that criticism?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I believe that some of it is quite valid. The lack of seating is a perfectly valid criticism: passengers have to sit on rubbish containers because there is nowhere else for them to sit. That is a valid criticism.

Mr HAMILTON: It was poor planning.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I do not know whether it was poor planning. The international facility was encouraged by our Government: in fact, the plans were finalised and

achieved by the Liberal Government in office. I do not have to go into the history of the matter.

The point is that we have a facility that has been found to be deficient in certain areas during its two years of operation. It is about time something was done to upgrade it. Has the Minister approached the Federal Minister to ensure that there is an upgrading and expansion of this facility? I suppose that when the facility was first asked for and planned we were not sure how many international flights we would achieve. I think that we can be proud of the fact that during that two years the State has attracted more and more international flights. Has the Minister approached the Federal Minister about this matter, and what was his response in relation to further upgrading this facility? If the Minister has not approached the Federal Minister, will he take up the matter immediately? It is an embarrassment to tourists coming into this State, particularly at the end of Tourism Week, to enter a facility and find that it cannot cope with one 747 arriving in Adelaide, let alone two arriving at the same time, and I understand that that now occurs on a regular basis.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will certainly take up the matter with the Federal Minister. I have not done that yet. There have been discussions about the teething problems, which I guess we could call them, since the Adelaide International Airport was opened. There may be room for improvement in the areas that the member has mentioned. Mr Hutchinson is a member of that committee. I do not know whether it has decided to approach the Federal Minister, so I ask Mr Hutchinson to comment.

Mr Hutchinson: I believe that the matter has been taken up recently with the Federal Department of Aviation. I do not know the content of the reply, so I cannot comment at this stage.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister make that reply available when it arrives? I turn now to bicycle paths. It is the responsibility of the Department, now that the bicycle plan for Adelaide is completed, to construct as many bicycle paths as possible. How many such paths have been constructed in the past year, what money was spent on them, and what money is to be spent on such paths?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: That is a Highways Department matter and can be dealt with when we come to Highways.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I will raise the matter then, even though I see in the programme papers that bicycle paths are mentioned under Department of Transport. I give notice that I will ask this question when we deal with the Highways Department. The Department is responsible for negotiating additional international flights into Adelaide International Airport. What moves have been made by the Minister to establish direct flights from Japan to Australia, perhaps stopping in Hong Kong? Can the Minister give an indication when such flights are likely to be inaugurated in South Australia? The Minister smiles, but does he realise that his Federal colleague has reached agreement with the Japanese Government to substantially increase the number of flights between Australia and Japan, which number is, I think, to be doubled during the next year? My fear is that all of those flights will be out of Melbourne, Sydney and perhaps one out of Brisbane and that Adelaide will miss out on this golden opportunity, the first in 10 years, to get one of these additional flights. I also understand that freight flights are likely to be doubled during the next 12 months.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I am aware of those increased flight numbers that the Federal Minister announced. However, this is a Federal responsibility, so I am not sure whether or not any of these direct flights from Japan will come to Adelaide, or whether flights from Adelaide will go directly to Japan. I will be happy to take up this matter

with the Federal Minister. The Director-General has some comments to make on this matter.

Dr Scrafton: There is machinery available through the Australian Transport Advisory Council for the State to input its requests regarding both airport improvements and domestic and international transport in general. This whole issue of flights to and from Japan was raised at the last of these meetings, which was held in December 1983. In fact, most of the agenda of that meeting related to Japanese flights. Although it is highly desirable, as the honourable member has said and the Minister has agreed, for those flights to come directly to Adelaide, I think that the conclusion is that it is unlikely that they will. Certainly, there is no possibility of Adelaide being the first stop in Australia.

However, there is the possibility of one or more of these flights, in due course, making Adelaide a second stop. If there is lay-over time with a flight, that time may be used for a Sydney to Adelaide leg rather than a Sydney to Melbourne leg. The real thrust was for Japan Airlines to get to Melbourne, which it has not done before. It is one of the few international airlines whose flights have gone out of Sydney only. The pressure from Japanese interests has been to get into Queensland and to have direct flights to Melbourne. I think it is probable that one of those flights will have a first stop in Queensland, but not necessarily in Brisbane. It may stop in Townsville, rather like the northern Pacific flights where there is a big demand by tourists to go into the North Queensland locations. The ATAC machinery provides this avenue, but the final decision, as the honourable member knows, is made in Canberra and is subject to intense diplomatic activity as well as transport issues being debated.

Mr HAMILTON: I wish to follow up on the question of speed limits. The Minister commented that the Government will investigate the whole question of speed limits; that was of great interest to me. I have statistical evidence from overseas which shows that the speed limit in Finland was reduced from 100 km/h to 80 km/h, resulting in an accident reduction of 43 per cent; in Sweden the speed limit was reduced from 110 km/h to 90 km/h, resulting in an accident reduction of 30 per cent; in Denmark the speed limit was reduced from 90 km/h to 80 km/h, resulting in an accident reduction of 17 per cent; in West Germany, where there was no speed limit, the speed limit was set at 130 km/h, resulting in an accident reduction of 11 per cent. The Swedish data is important because it has been suggested that it may be the most appropriate country to compare with Australian conditions. In the few instances where speeds were unaffected there was no appreciable change in the number of accidents. Where a limit was removed, speeds and accidents both subsequently increased. Accidents were not only fewer but less serious with speed limits in operation. One of the major problems in assessing the effects of these changes in speed limits was that the majority of the studies considered short-term changes only. Can the Minister say when it is anticipated that the study into road speed limits will be brought before the Parliament?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: There will be a special Australian Transport Advisory Council meeting in November this year specifically to deal with road funding following the NASRA and BTE reports. The standard ATAC meeting, scheduled for February next year, is when I expect the study to be considered. It should be concluded by February.

Mr HAMILTON: What consideration has been given to bicyclists and motor cyclists wearing iridescent bands? Whilst recently overseas in the United Kingdom I observed that the wearing of iridescent equipment by cyclists, both motorised and otherwise, was quite common. I understand that this had a dramatic effect on the reduction of injuries to people using these bands. Will the Minister advise whether

or not helmets for bicylists have been considered on a compulsory or otherwise basis?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: My Department is aware of the calls for greater safety for cyclists. Head injuries are a major worry. Making helmets compulsory is a matter presently under consideration by the Government. Researchers have found that compulsion is not effective until about 30 per cent of the target group voluntarily accept that safety device. Therefore, we are considering a promotional campaign aimed at increasing the voluntary wearing of cycle helmets above that 30 per cent mark. When that is achieved we can then consider making helmets compulsory.

One of the problems considered with the compulsion aspect was the fairly high cost to a large family with three or four children all riding their cycles to school. Of course, these helmets would have to be passed by safety authorities. Of course, the Government is not in a financial position to offer any subsidy. The Government is considering whether it can assist families if helmets become compulsory.

In relation to iridescent markings, the Road Safety Instruction Centre at Oaklands Park conducts courses in which it encourages cyclists to wear clothing and iridescent markings that will light up the cycle at night so that they are more obvious to motorists. Some courses at the Regency Park Instruction Centre are proving popular amongst the schools that attend.

Mr HAMILTON: Concerning driver awareness of motor cyclists, I have been advised that studies have found that in 75 per cent of reported motor cycle/car collisions the motor cyclist had the legal right of way. Has the Government given this any consideration and, if so, what programmes are in place to make motorists aware that motor cyclists are on the road? I understand that low motor cycle conspicuity has been identified as an important cause of road accidents.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This matter has been referred to the Road Safety Council so that it can compile a programme and make a recommendation to the Government. To this point in time we have not received that. I will let the member know when it arrives and make it available to him as soon as it is about to be put into operation.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister for Environment and Planning eventually answered a Question on Notice I asked in May, and I read his letter to the House recently during a debate on road funding. In that letter the Minister indicated that all the land in the north-south transport corridor between Regency Road and the Glenelg tramline, south of the Anzac Highway, had been transferred to his responsibility. Will the Minister confirm that?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: All the land in the western programme, with the exception of the land required by the Highways Department, has been transferred to the Minister for Environment and Planning. The only land retained by the Highways Department is that which is required for future road programmes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I find that answer rather confusing. The Minister for Environment and Planning said that all the land in the north-south transport corridor between the Glenelg tramline and Regency Road had been transferred to the Department of Environment and Planning from the Highways Department. Now, the Minister is qualifying that by saying that only those parts not wanted by the Highways Department have been transferred. Will the Minister list for me in a prepared answer (that he will obviously need to obtain) all the land in that corridor that was not transferred to the Department of Environment and Planning and has been retained by the Highways Department?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Again, this is really a Highways matter. I do not have at my fingertips the land that is still required by the Highways Department. If the honourable

member leaves it until we get to the Highways vote I can provide that information for him.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Who made the decision on the scrapping of the north-south transport corridor? Last year we discussed this matter under the Minister of Transport lines. This is part of that same line. We wish to now proceed with a discussion of the north-south transport corridor.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I ask Mr Hutchinson to comment on that question.

Mr Hutchinson: In essence, the land (that has been retained in ownership by the Highways Department and is either for known uses or may be required and is currently still under investigation) is land on, for example, Henley Beach Road, where the extension of the bridge may necessitate the acquisition of land. So, rather than hand it over and re-acquire it, it has been retained. Similarly, some land in the area north of the Torrens River and west of Port Road is being retained for a possible extension of the Grange Road arterial link into the city. We will provide a detailed answer probably today.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I think that everyone realises the land of the old Glenelg trainline comprises the vacant corridor parallel to and north of Anzac Highway. The information that I have received from the Minister this morning and from the Minister for Environment and Planning seems to indicate that that valuable corridor has been transferred to the Department of Environment and Planning. Will the Minister confirm that?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Department of Environment and Planning assumed responsibility for the land between Regency Road and the Glenelg tramline. Of this land, 82 allotments have been sold to the South Australian Housing Trust. Of the land that remains in the Highways Department control, no land has been sold or transferred. Further, 12 vacant allotments and 70 houses have been sold to the Housing Trust. All the properties are normal sized suburban allotments, except for one vacant parcel containing six allotments.

As at 30 June 1984 \$1 119 387 has been placed in the Highways Fund. The balance of that amount came late in June. The estimated total area of surplus corridor land disposed of during the last 18 months is equivalent to 113 allotments. All this land, with the exception of the land that is required by the Highways Department, has been transferred to the Department of Environment and Planning for the western region project development.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My question is specifically about the old Glenelg trainline. I presume from what the Minister has said that that was also transferred.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will ask Mr Hutchinson to respond.

Mr Hutchinson: I must check this out, but it is my understanding that the land comprising the old Glenelg trainline has not been transferred. Confusion arises because of the description given to the corridor. The word 'corridor' is generally used to mean that area formerly designated on a plan as a red line. The Glenelg trainline was not included in that category and to my knowledge it has not been transferred. I believe that it is currently under review by the Highways Department. I will have to check the facts and get back to you.

Mr HAMILTON: In regard to road safety, has the Government considered high mounted rear brake lights? I have noticed a number of taxi operators in Adelaide using high mounted rear brake lights at the bottom of the rear passenger compartment window and have found this to be an effective means of bringing my attention to the driver in front of me slowing or stopping his vehicle. In regard to vehicle identification, can the Minister advise what discussions he has had with his Federal colleagues or through ATAC about

vehicle colours allowed on our roads; for example, black is probably a bad colour in the evening, and I suggest that colours such as blue and green, depending on the type of weather, could have poor visibility in regard to oncoming vehicles, especially at intersections and so forth?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This matter is under consideration by ATAC. I can only tell the honourable member that it will be given full consideration by me and I will report to him on the outcome of those deliberations by ATAC. However, nothing is in train in regard to the colour of vehicles of which I am aware.

Mr HAMILTON: I understand that tyre standards were investigated some years ago by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Road Safety. Can the Minister advise what consideration the Government has given to introducing a minimum tread depth standard on tyres? As I understand it, once tyre tread is below 1.5 mm, the accident risk increases, particularly in terms of tyre disablement, wet skid resistance and aquaplaning. Has the Government considered this matter in conjunction with ATAC to introduce a minimum standard concerning the amount of tread on a tyre and a tread wear indicator to show when the tread depth is below a nominal figure such as 1.5 mm?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will have to get a report for the honourable member as to what stage this matter is at, because it is another ATAC matter. As soon as I get the report I will let him know what stage it is at, and I will certainly do so by 19 October.

Mr HAMILTON: In regard to cyclists, this is a contentious issue and fraught with dangers, but has the Minister in conjunction with the Minister of Local Government considered allowing cyclists to ride on foot paths? I recognise the dangers inherent in that suggestion, particularly for aged and other people walking on footpaths. Cyclists are prone to injury on our roads because of their poor visibility, and I believe that this suggestion is worthy of investigation. I hope that the Minister can have this matter investigated to see whether it is possible to implement it in some areas; perhaps in some country towns with busy rural roads carrying a high traffic density cyclists could ride on footpaths.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This matter has been looked at from time to time, and the Road Traffic Board has examined it recently. The Government has not decided or made any decision to proceed with permitting the riding of cycles on footpaths. There is much concern about elderly people walking on footpaths and getting knocked over. Unless one has wide footpaths with markings indicating where riding of cycles is permitted—more work needs to be done about that. The implementation of more cycling tracks is the area that the Government is proceeding with more than amending legislation to permit cyclists to ride on footpaths. An approach was made by the Postal Workers Union. Many posties ride on footpaths, but that has been the accepted practice through the years. It is probably illegal, but might be much safer for them to ride on the footpaths than riding on some of the major arterial roads where traffic density is high and the position is consequently dangerous for cyclists. The promotion of cycling tracks is the area in which the Government wishes to proceed further.

Mr OSWALD: I refer to the north-south corridor. Can the Minister provide me with population projections for the next 10 years—up to 1994—in regard to the suburbs of Trott Park, Sheidow Park, Reynella, Happy Valley, Morphett Vale East and Hallett Cove?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: No. I am not able to give those projections for the next 10 years. I do not know whether the Planning Division has looked at this matter, but I will ask Mr Hutchinson to comment further on the question.

Mr Hutchinson: I do not believe that the figures we use are available in quite the dissection required by the hon-

ourable member. However, they are available in a similar dissection and will be made available.

Mr OSWALD: I appreciate the figures being made available and, if possible, would like them broken down. Are 1982 figures being used for planning purposes at the moment?

Mr Hutchinson: I am sorry, I do not know precisely what the 1982 figures are. The figures we are using are the latest forecasts from the Department of Environment and Planning.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Could we have that information as to the latest figures?

Mr Hutchinson: Most certainly.

Mr OSWALD: I understand that the Department is using the 1982 projections for its planning on the north/south corridor. Since those figures were used to work out population projections in the southern region there have been several new announcements. It has been announced that there will be a big home development in Morphett Vale East. Those members who represent districts in that area would be aware that many thousands of new homes are projected over and above the 1982 figures. It is clear that over the next 10 years the number of people who will reside in the southern region will be tens of thousands more than the projection released by the Department of Environment and Planning in 1982.

In the consideration of the new \$45 million plan announced by the Minister for a new highway, which will come down from Reynella to Sturt Road (the southern part of the north/south transport corridor), how on earth can he expect roads in the vicinity of Sturt, Marion, Brighton and South Roads to cope with the traffic in 1994 (when he claims that the highway will be completed) when the population projections that he is using are already out of date? It is clear that there will be perhaps 100 000 more people in the area by 1994. While everyone applauds the idea of a second highway to bring the traffic down to Sturt Road, no consideration has been given to what will happen to those motorists when they reach South Road.

We now have hanging over our heads the fact that in ten years time there will be 100 000 more people living in the area, which means another 50 000 vehicles, perhaps. How will roads on the plains in the Marion council area, for example, cope with this additional traffic? What plans have been made so that roads in the Marion City Council area can cope with the additional traffic, bearing in mind the Government's decision to axe the planned corridor to carry the traffic through from Darlington to Anzac Highway?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Again, I think this relates to the Highways area, because it deals with the third arterial road. The Highways Department is currently working on the design of the third arterial. There has been criticism about the fact that the announcement of the third arterial will only transfer traffic one kilometre north. As I have reported previously, the Darlington bottleneck is the very problem because of the nature of the intersections and the other major arterials that lead into the Darlington area. Bypassing that area overcomes the problem, and it will disperse the traffic one kilometre north. With other designed areas prior to Sturt Road, traffic will be able to leave the third arterial and proceed along other roads such as Marion, Morphett and others further west of South Road. I can say no more than that, because all of the work involved in the preliminary design study has only just been commenced by the Highways Department. The forecast will consider all the other factors. The Director-General of Transport will comment on this matter.

Dr Scrafton: I will make two comments. First, I confirm the Minister's comment that the forecasts obviously take into account subdivision growth. There is a great need to keep this in perspective. Subdivisions of the size of Trott Park or even Morphett Vale East are comparatively small

increases compared to the total number of the population and the total number of vehicles that would be added to the corridor. How the roads cope with that traffic is exactly the problem that we must face. If we intend to perceive those arterial roads as they are now with vehicles parked on them from time to time and do not intend to use them to help traffic flow, there will be a problem. However, there is a capacity in our existing arterial network to allow the traffic to distribute itself. If the traffic decides it does not want to distribute itself but will stick to South or Marion Roads, there will be congestion. The network has that capability, and the construction of a \$250 million freeway to alleviate the problem of comparatively small numbers of people and cars, despite the figures quoted, is really not justified at this stage.

Mr HAMILTON: I return to the extension of facilities at Adelaide International Airport. Members will recall that I was most critical when the International Airport was opened by the previous Government. At that time I referred to the question of overcrowding and the lack of facilities that were available to passengers arriving in or leaving this State. What consideration has been given to the extension of facilities at the International Airport? I refer specifically to the addition of another storey to the building to provide for passengers in transit. Some time ago as a result of Melbourne Airport being fogbound a number of aircraft were diverted to Adelaide. I understand that many passengers were unable to disembark from the aircraft because of the lack of facilities here. It is quite clear that there is a need to rectify these problems.

I believe that in-transit passengers should have the opportunity to disembark from aircraft, because much more money would be spent by those passengers using the facilities at the airport. Passengers do spend a big quid, especially when they come into Adelaide. Has that question been addressed in relation to horizontal or lateral extensions to the new building to provide additional facilities for passengers and visitors? People employed in the airline industry have informed me that each passenger has an average of three visitors.

Mr Hutchinson: Is the honourable member speaking about the domestic, international, or both?

Mr HAMILTON: International.

Mr Hutchinson: Consideration was certainly given to the need for space in the international terminal building at the time that the design was being done. It was constrained very tightly by the agreement reached between the two Governments concerned that the building would be more or less a replica of the Townsville building. The development plan of Adelaide Airport shows an extension of the international terminal facilities roughly to the north-west of the existing terminal building (in other words, straight down the centre driveway), but it is planned on the basis of expected regular loads rather than expected freak occurrences, which are the dominant ones that have just been referred to. If the Government wishes, we could take it up through the State Airfields Committee and the State Aviation Committee, but there would be resistance to the investment of funds for those sorts of peaks referred to by the honourable member.

Mr HAMILTON: I understand that adjacent to pedestrian crossings is a high incidence of injury to the aged and to the young. It appears that both these categories of people tend to ignore the pedestrian crossings and the stop lights. Has any research been carried out into an education programme, particularly for the aged where the incidence of the aged being injured at areas in close proximity to pedestrian crossings is of concern?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Pedestrian crossings are really a Highways Department matter also, if the honourable member

could leave that until we are dealing with Highways. The Highways Department adopts criteria for the establishment of pedestrian crossings. It is looked at continuously. We are establishing many pedestrian crossings where they are considered to be necessary in accordance with the resources that are available. I am not sure what number has been established in the past 12 months; I could get that detail for the honourable member if it would benefit him, and I could get the details of the programmes for pedestrian crossings for the next financial year.

Mr HAMILTON: On tow truck operations, can the Minister advise, given the recent criticisms in the press in relation to the tow truck legislation, what type of reduction there has been in complaints against tow truck operators and what is the current position in relation to the criticisms that have been levelled at the Government by a sector of the tow truck operators?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I have tabled in the Parliament the new regulations for the control of tow trucks in South Australia. This legislation was introduced by the former Government and the present Government has bent over backwards to try to accommodate that legislation by the regulations. It is anticipated that they will come into operation on 14 October. I am fully aware of the criticisms and some of the problems that some sections of the industry see. We have made a large number of changes to the regulations that were opposed on the previous occasion. We are hopeful that once the scheme is introduced it will settle down. When it does that some of the teething problems that may occur can be referred to the Tow Truck Review Committee for straightening out.

I read an article in the media recently when the tow truck legislation was introduced in Victoria. They had similar teething problems, but now everybody operating under the system is saying that there are no problems and that they are quite happy with its operation. There has been a lot of criticism about the matter of freedom of choice. Perhaps it adds freedom of choice when people can direct where they would like their vehicle repaired. Perhaps it takes away some freedom of choice for the tow truck operators, who have dictated where the vehicle will be towed.

We have bent over backwards to try to accommodate the criticisms. We have consulted with Opposition members. The legislation is fully supported by the majority of the industry; a small section of the industry does not like the scheme at all and has been very critical about it. I ask Mr Collett, who has been involved with the establishment of a number of the committees, to comment further on the current position.

Mr Collett: The position is very much as the Minister has outlined. The only other aspect on which I could comment is the fact that since the regulations have been proposed the number of complaints against tow truck drivers has decreased, which is because the tow truck operators have been behaving themselves in this area. The fact that the regulations were coming forward has resulted in much better behaviour at the scenes of accidents and amongst the operators themselves. It augurs well for the future once these regulations come in, which will be on Sunday week.

Mr OSWALD: I direct this question from page 15 to the Minister as against his officers because it basically is a political question. The Public Accounts Committee reported recently on the responsibilities of the Highways Commissioner in various areas, one of which was road safety. Which office does the Minister see as having the ultimate responsibility for road safety in this State? From the committee's report, it seemed to be a grey area. Some said that it was a responsibility within the Department of Transport and put it on the shoulders of the Director-General. Others said that it was in the area of the Commissioner of Highways; others

said that it should go to the Road Traffic Board; and other areas were suggested. Everyone seemed to have an input into it, but at no stage did someone specifically say, 'It is my responsibility to co-ordinate it.'

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Road Safety Council is responsible to me as the Minister. Any road safety matter in the Highways Department, the Department of Transport, the Motor Registration Division or the STA is my responsibility. The Education Department has a role in the road safety area, particularly in relation to schools and curriculum training.

The Health Commission has a role, particularly more so in the road trauma area: a committee was established by the Minister of Health to deal with road trauma issues. However, the Government believes that there is a strong argument for more co-ordination, and under a road safety authority we could get the whole act together so that there is no duplication of road safety work.

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

Mr OSWALD: Before the luncheon adjournment I asked who was the public servant presently responsible for road safety. The Minister itemised various departments that report to and advise him on road safety matters, but who is the supreme Public Service head presently responsible for road safety? I still believe that several departments have a contribution, but there is no co-ordinated head. The Minister said that he accepts advice. Is the Director-General the public servant who is responsible for road safety? I believe that there was confusion when Bruce Guerin chaired the road safety seminar. Does the Minister intend to shift this responsibility to Mr Guerin's court or is it at the desk of the Director-General of Transport?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Director-General, as head of the Department of Transport, is the senior public servant advising me on road safety issues. Mr Ivan Lees, the Director of the Road Safety and Motor Transport Division, and the Chairman of the Road Safety Council, Dr Donald Beard, are also involved. The council is an independent body on road safety matters. Mr Tom Chambers is presently manager of the Road Safety Instruction Centre. However, in relation to the Department of Transport, the senior public servant having complete control is the Director-General, Dr Scrafton. The Commissioner of Highways would be responsible for road safety issues relating to roadside furniture and so on, as the Director-General of the Education Department would be the senior public servant advising the Education Department, the Police Commissioner would advise the Deputy Premier, and so on. That is the best answer I can give to the honourable member's question. We are reviewing the organisational structure.

Mr OSWALD: I am pleased about that, because from the Minister's answer clearly no-one is specifically at the head of the pinnacle and ultimately responsible. The Director is responsible, but other senior public servants are responsible in other areas, and it is pleasing to hear that there will be co-ordination.

How much does the Motor Registration Division lose in revenue each year because of the provision of free drivers licences to the public sector? I refer not only to Public Service Board personnel but also to others employed in the public sector. How many licences does the Government subsidise each year and how many public servants or Government employees have their drivers licences paid for when they are no longer employed in a capacity that requires them to have a licence to perform their work?

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

Mr Collett: We do not subsidise or grant free licences to any person. The honourable member is obviously referring to a system whereby, if a Government employee is engaged on driving duties, the department in which that person is employed pays for his licence. I cannot say how departments handle a situation where a person is no longer engaged on driving duties but where the licence was paid for. I cannot say what sort of refund is made. Certainly, this is a Government scheme and is not a motor registration concession.

Mr OSWALD: How many free licences are issued in the public sector, because I believe it runs into thousands? What is the loss in revenue? I acknowledge that this is an industrial matter to some degree and that some people need a licence to perform their task. I do not argue with that, but the licence of some people is paid for when the work that required them to have that licence has been finished for months or perhaps years.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I understand that the Chairman of the Public Service Board is responsible for these concession schemes, and I will refer the matter to him. It could take some time to ascertain that information. In respect of road safety funding, I can only say that one-sixth of drivers licence fees brings in about \$1.2 million per annum and the personalised number plate scheme brings in about \$250 000 per annum. All those moneys are dedicated for road safety.

Mr OSWALD: I would be happy for the Minister to put the matter to the Public Service Board. It would be an interesting exercise to ascertain how many licences come under this category.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Minister would be aware that I have been concerned about road safety in relation to people who travel in taxis. People who do not wear seat belts are liable to a penalty. However, only the front seats of cars are fitted with retractable seat belts and some of my constituents have complained bitterly about this. Some people have to use taxis every working day, and they and their children who travel in the back seat have found that is practically impossible to wear a seat belt. They are lucky if they can find the seat belt quickly, but under the law they can be penalised for not wearing a seat belt. If the wearing of seat belts is compulsory, better passenger seat belts should be supplied. Does the Minister have plans to ensure that all taxis are equipped with adequate seat belts? What arrangements have been undertaken?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It is compulsory to wear seat belts in taxis, and all other vehicles. Taxis are inspected on an annual basis and a close watch kept on this facility. Taxi cabs licensed by the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board are normal sedan type vehicles and, as such, are required to comply with the regulations under the South Australian Road Traffic Act. Australian Design Rule 4C relating to seat belts provides for inertia reel belts to be installed for the outboard front seat passengers only and applies to passenger vehicles manufactured and registered from 1 July 1976. Static lap/sash belts are to be installed for outboard passengers in the rear seats and static lap belts for the middle passengers in the front and rear.

Australian Design Rule 4D provides for installation of inertia reel belts for outboard seating positions front and rear in all vehicles manufactured and first registered from 1 January this year. Any vehicle manufactured and first registered after 1 January 1984 that is licensed by the Metropolitan Taxi Cab Board must comply with the requirements of Australian Design Rule 4D. All other vehicles must comply with the requirements of Australian Design Rule 4C. The Board does not require any taxi cab to be fitted with seat belts other than those set down by regulation. It has no objection to licensees replacing outboard static lap/sash belts with inertia reel belts, provided they comply with the Australian Design Rule relating to seat belts. Seat belts

in taxis are inspected by the Board at least twice yearly and if found to be faulty the owner is required to rectify any problem.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I turn now to the long awaited changes to the regulations relating to dimensions and weight of motor vehicles. Can the Minister indicate when the NAASRA regulations to bring us into uniformity with the rest of Australia will be introduced? Will he indicate whether, following considerable correspondence between me and his office, he will lift the maximum height allowed for articulated vehicles from 4.3 metres to 4.6 metres so that the bruising that occurs to livestock ceases? If he will not do that for all articulated vehicles, will he at least lift the maximum allowed height for livestock carriers so that the bruising of cattle does not continue?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This is a matter that I have referred to the Commercial Vehicle Advisory Committee. I have referred to that committee a number of matters related to the height, width and length of commercial vehicles. It is studying all these matters at the moment and has not yet reported back to me. We are anxious about those NAASRA and ERVL recommendations. That committee is representative of most of the transport operators in the field dealing with commercial type vehicles. People have expressed concern about all these dimensions in recent times. I am waiting for the recommendations of that committee as to what move is best for the Government to take. Hopefully, I will hear from that committee in the near future.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: An amount of \$41 000 is provided for community bus services in the metropolitan area. Can the Minister say how many applications the Government currently has before it in relation to metropolitan community bus services? A further \$58 000 or \$59 000 is allocated for community bus services in non-metropolitan areas. How many applications have there been from country areas for a community bus service? With only \$41 000 allocated for such services in the metropolitan area, how many of those applications does the Minister think he can satisfy this year? I know that in the area of Burnside people have approached me because they have been told that they are not likely to get a bus this year for the community bus service.

I understand that these buses cost between \$23 000 and \$25 000 each. Therefore, \$41 000 is only 1½ buses for the metropolitan area. Can the Minister say how long it will take to meet the backlog of applications currently before him relating to this matter?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The community bus scheme was introduced seven years ago with the idea of providing mobility for people who have no reasonable alternative means of transport. The grant covers the purchase price of the bus and registration and compulsory third party insurance for the first six months. No guarantee is given that funds will be available in future to replace any obsolete vehicle. Councils are given the option of buying a bus or hiring one and using the equivalent grant money paid in three annual instalments if the hiring operation is uneconomic if, for instance, the bus is only required for one day a week, or something of that nature.

The metropolitan community bus expenditure for 1984-85 is as follows: Walkerville, \$5 500 for operational running costs; and Brighton council, \$17 000—it intends to purchase a bus. The figures relating to the country town bus subsidies are as follows: Beachport is purchasing a bus and received a grant for 1984-85 of \$12 700; Berri council, which is purchasing a bus, received \$18 500; Wakefield Plains council, which is purchasing a bus, received \$22 600; Loxton, which intends to purchase a bus, received \$18 200. This is a total of \$72 000 to be spent in country areas. There is \$100 000 available in this Budget for this purpose. Next year we hope to increase this line considerably because of the number of

applications we are receiving from metropolitan and country areas.

I know of a few councils in the metropolitan area that are interested in implementing such a service. One such council has not yet made an application for a grant, but we have encouraged it to get its application in as quickly as possible so that it can be taken into consideration during the next financial year. An amount of \$100 000 has been allocated to this line for a number of years. The Department thinks that it is time that this amount was increased considerably so that we can accommodate the requests for these grant.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister supply a list of the applications presently before the Department in relation to this scheme?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Yes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Has the Department investigated the safety aspects of seat belts being installed in passenger buses? I suppose one would need to consider three categories in relation to this matter. If one leaves out State Transport Authority buses one is left with tourist buses and buses on specific country routes. If the Minister has had this matter investigated will he say whether it warrants the compulsory installation of seat belts in buses and their wearing on a voluntary basis?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This matter has been considered by some of the ATAC committees, but no firm recommendation has been forthcoming. I understand that there is an anchorage problem in many of the buses which is causing some concern and difficulty in making a firm recommendation. I agree with the honourable member; I think that on a voluntary basis it is an issue that is worthwhile promoting. I will certainly do that when it next arises at the ATAC conference.

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister advise what discussions his Department has had with local council authorities concerning the usage of community buses after normal working hours? It is my understanding that most of these community buses are not used after normal working hours and lie idle until the following morning and, indeed, over the weekend. The Minister may recall that some years ago I suggested that these community buses could possibly be used by a group of local hoteliers to try to cut down on the incidence of drink driving; that is, five hoteliers could hire a bus which, in the specific area, could travel clockwise each even hour and anti-clockwise each odd hour to encourage people to utilise the bus service rather than jump in their own car and be subjected to RBT detection. Will the Minister look at the usage of these buses after hours by a group of hoteliers to encourage people not to drink and drive?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I think that it would be in the interests of the hoteliers to provide their own community bus for that purpose. Local councils rarely have full control over how they operate their community bus. The Government is responsible for making the grant to help them purchase their bus and all councils have different schemes under which they operate. Once one gets into the 'after hours' area one then starts to get into the charter area; one needs to be very careful that there is no breach in that respect. I see nothing necessarily wrong with any council providing assistance to various groups. We will keep our eye on it. If there is a possibility then we can promote it.

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister advise me what the Government has done concerning peak spreading strategies? I was supplied with a booklet *Adelaide Into the 80s: Strategies and Directions for Transport Policies*, issued in 1980. This is mentioned on page 25 and page 27, where it states:

Parking policy should be used to encourage transport system effectiveness in urban areas. Additional preparatory work is needed

before detailed directives can be developed in Adelaide but the first step should be to ensure that agreement is reached, that an effective strategic parking policy is needed and that it should interface with the city and the region's development policy.

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

Dr Scrafton: In the last financial year we completed a project which picked up the point raised by the member for Albert Park. We would be more than happy to give him a copy of that report. It is actually entitled *Contingency Planning*, but it embraces the areas that he referred to. One problem is that very often good ideas such as the ones he referred to are very difficult to implement because of institutional constraints. But, when one has a fuel shortage or some disruption to the transport system for whatever reason, it gives one the opportunity to implement some of these innovations. That is what this report is all about and we would be very happy to make a copy available to the Committee and, through the Committee, to the member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I rise on a point of order. Dr Scrafton said that a copy will be available to the member for Albert Park through the Committee. If there is only one copy and it cannot be included in *Hansard* (which obviously it cannot), perhaps a separate copy could be made available to the Opposition.

Dr Scrafton: Yes.

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister advise what the Government has done about peak spreading strategies?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Director-General said that it is all covered in that area.

Mr HAMILTON: Concerning line closures, which comes under the item 'Planning and Co-ordination of Land Transport', will the Minister advise what lines or passenger services are under threat and what discussions he has had with Australian National and the State Transport Authority regarding threats or intentions to close lines or services in South Australia.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Concerning the State Transport Authority, there have been some suggestions to the Cabinet subcommittee (the Resources and Physical Development Committee) to look at areas where the State Transport Authority can become more efficient in its operations in an endeavour to keep its deficit to a minimum level. There are several areas that that committee is looking at. No final decision has been made, but one that comes to mind is in relation to the Port Adelaide/Dry Creek line, which is very poorly patronised. Several lines are poorly patronised and the endeavour will be to try to use bus transport to cater for those areas and to look after the areas that really need additional services.

As far as Australian National is concerned, it is looking at the Victor Harbor line closure. Of course, the State Government has taken a decision to take that matter to arbitration. We, as did the previous Government, strongly opposed the closure of the Victor Harbor line. We have agreed with the Federal Minister on the terms of reference that will go to the arbitrator. We are presently awaiting a hearing date to be set. We were of the opinion that, when Australian National approached us about this and indicated that it would cease passenger services, the line would remain open for other purposes, such as freight. However, Australian National indicated that it was its intention to close the whole line. We disagreed with that, but have reached agreement on the terms of reference. We intend to argue that the line be retained for both passenger and freight services from Adelaide to Victor Harbor. I cannot say what the date will be. We are waiting on that advice from the Federal Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: I advise the Committee that we have now reached the time agreed for the closure of debate on this line. Are there any further questions?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I ask the Minister to make available to the Committee the terms of reference of the arbitration. From what the Minister has said I understand that the Government has agreed to the stopping of passenger services on the Victor Harbor line but has not agreed to the closing or ripping up of the line. The Government is asking that the line be kept in place but it has agreed to Australian National's no longer continuing the service?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: We did not agree to anything. When Australian National indicated that it wanted to cease the passenger service we said that we would agree provided that we could conduct an inquiry into the question of a tourist facility and, depending on the outcome of that inquiry, we would determine our position in regard to the closure of the line. Australian National ceased the passenger service on 30 April. The Commonwealth gave the State until 1 September to investigate the possibility of a tourist railway operation and to determine its view on the permanent closure of passenger services. A tourist railway review by a committee under the aegis of the Minister of Tourism determined that a tourist train between Victor Harbor and Goolwa was seen as the most likely successful tourist operation. It would require that Australian National hand over all equipment and improvements on the line beyond Strathalbyn, as well as establishment costs of about \$855 000. An annual injection of \$200 000 would be required to cover running costs, even allowing for the free voluntary labour of most staff. Australian National's value of equipment, that is, the rails, signalling and level crossing protection gear and buildings is about \$800 000. The committee reported and suggested that 40 000 passengers annually would be likely on such a service, involving 356 train trips a year.

Australian National agreed with Australian Railways Historical Society to the operation of 10 Steam Ranger Sunday excursions from Adelaide to Victor Harbor, the tenth train to be diesel. The State Government confirmed its position then with the Federal Minister in regard to the cessation of passenger services, forcing the Commonwealth to put the matter to arbitration. We tried to force the Federal Minister to take us to arbitration, and the terms of reference have been agreed and a mutually acceptable arbitrator has been approached to call for submissions and make his determination by 1 November 1984. I am willing to make those terms of reference available to the honourable member. It is expected that South Australia's case will rest entirely on the train services as a tourist attraction.

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

Works and Services—Department of Transport,
\$800 000—Examination declared completed.

Works and Services—State Transport Authority,
\$19 000 000

Chairman:
Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:
The Hon. D.C. Brown
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr J.K.G. Oswald

Mr K.H. Plunkett
Mr W.A. Rodda

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Dr D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr K.J. Collett, Assistant Director-General, Department of Transport.

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

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

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

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In this line we are dealing with \$19 million for the State Transport Authority and are dealing with the capital side and then we will come back to deal with the miscellaneous line in regard to allocation to the STA in terms of recurrent expenditure. I ask that there be some flexibility because basically we are dealing with the STA and if we can deal with the two areas in a flexible manner it would be of great benefit.

The CHAIRMAN: I agree with what the honourable member has said. There can be flexibility. Last year we had flexibility and the procedure worked well. This line deals with the works area of the STA and involves \$19 million, but I assure the honourable member that I will not be harsh as to questioning.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In 1983-84 the State Government underspent the allocation on the north-east transport system—the O-Bahn busway—by \$2.5 million. In 1982-83 it underspent the allocation by \$2.6 million. In the past two years, although this Parliament has actually allocated the funds by voting to allocate the funds and has created the expectation at the request of the Government that money would be spent on the O-Bahn busway, we find that it has been underspent by \$5.1 million. At the same time we have had the Minister talking about how it has been necessary to defer the completion of the O-Bahn busway as a result of lack of funds. Can the Minister explain why it was not possible to spend those funds actually allocated? Obviously, it is not due to a lack of money. The money was available. I have talked with people involved in the construction industry and they assure me that it was quite feasible to have spent that allocation of \$12.6 million. Indeed, they could spend considerably more than that. So, there is not a physical impediment to spending the money. Therefore, it appears that money has been underspent at the specific direction of the Premier or Minister of Transport, because there is no other reason that I can see, and I ask the Minister to explain why this money has not been spent.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It has been stated that the funds allocated for the busway construction were not fully expended in the past two financial years. It has also been stated that this indicates that if expenditure had occurred as planned the busway could have been finished to Tea Tree Plaza by 1986. The first statement is correct: the actual expenditure in 1982-83 and 1983-84 was less than that allocated for various reasons. The second statement is not correct: the extent of underspending was not sufficient to provide funds for construction between Darley Road and Tea Tree Plaza prior to 1986, nor was it possible to divert any surplus funding to that section.

In 1982-83, \$12.5 million was allocated; the funds spent amounted to \$10.7 million, which means that \$1.8 million was underspent. In 1983-84, \$12.6 million was allocated; \$10 million was spent, which means that \$2.6 million was

underspent. The estimated cost of the Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza section is \$17.9 million. The underspending was not a result of deliberate policy to reduce expenditure. The actual position is that since early 1983 the project construction programme has been based on completion of the O-Bahn busway to Darley Road by 1986, and funds have been allocated on that basis.

Allocated funds have not been fully expended for the following reasons: elements of the project, for example, bridges, earth works and landscaping, have cost less than expected due to economies in design and a favourable tendering climate. Delays have also occurred in the programme due to unexpected factors, for example, weather, site conditions and difficulties in obtaining private land. Funds allocated in 1984-85 are sufficient to cover work delayed from the previous years. The work delayed previously will be undertaken in the period up to the programme construction date, which has not been changed. Whilst the Government has nominated that the busway will be operating to Darley Road by 1986, if it is at all possible between now and then to speed up the project even further, we will make every endeavour to do so. We require \$17.9 million for the outer section from Darley Road to Tea Tree Plaza, and that is a considerable amount of money. If the honourable member can suggest where we can find additional money to that extent, it may be possible to complete the project more quickly than is planned.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Based on the figures provided to Parliament, the project has been underspent by \$5.1 million in the past two years, which is almost a third of the way to the \$17 million required. In 1982 the then Government allocated funds on a permanent basis right through until 1986 to complete the busway by some time in 1986. It has been a conscious decision of the present Government apparently to syphon off those funds and put them elsewhere. It appears from the Auditor-General's Report that the actual cost of completing the O-Bahn busway will be \$6 million less than was predicted two years ago.

We have the incredible situation that it is now \$6 million cheaper, which is good to hear and we all welcome that. However, the Minister himself has acknowledged that tenders have come in under estimate, which has resulted in savings. However, it will take two years longer than expected to complete the project. The one argument that the Minister has consistently used in putting that forward and justifying the delay has been a lack of funds. I point out that there is no lack of funds, apart from the fact that the Government has decided to use the funds allocated to the project for other purposes. I want an honest statement from the Government admitting that fact so we know exactly where we stand, rather than a fudging of the issue as to why the delay will occur, from 1986 to 1988. The facts are there. I will not ask any further questions on this matter today.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Plunkett): The member for Davenport has not asked a second question; he has merely explained his first question. I point out to the honourable member that he is wasting his own time, so he should ask his second question.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I think it is appropriate to clarify some of the details as to what money was allocated for the O-Bahn busway. I come now to a reference in either the yellow pages or the Auditor-General's Report which states that the State Transport Authority is leasing (I presume not purchasing) computer equipment costing \$742 000. What equipment is being leased, for what purposes, and was the approval of the Data Processing Board obtained before that decision was made?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Chairman will respond to that question.

Mr Rump: Approval of the Data Processing Board was certainly obtained before that occurred. The actual detail of the items that are covered will be enumerated by the General Manager.

Mr Brown: The computer referred to in the report is an IBM 4341, which was purchased about two years ago to replace an obsolete and ageing facility owned by the Authority. The full support of the Data Processing Board was obtained prior to the purchase of that facility.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I did not want to ask another question on this area, but I think the Auditor-General's Report or the yellow book refers to a lease rather than a purchase.

Mr Brown: The equipment is being leased, because that was the most economical way for the Authority to enter into the contract with the supplier. That was done with Treasury approval.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer to an allocation of \$7.4 million for rail services. I presume that is for the purchase of new railcars. When will the new railcars be purchased? What is the anticipated approximate cost per unit? Who will construct the new railcars? I understand that tenders were closed at the end of May this year, and I presume the STA has now had a chance to consider the tenders and make some firm decisions.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Tenders for the new rail cars have been called, and they are currently being considered by the Authority. The Chairman will provide information on the cost of each vehicle.

Mr Rump: As the Minister outlined, we have called tenders and they are being evaluated. Whilst the tenders have closed, it would still be inappropriate to indicate the value per car because it would convey an indication of who the successful tenderer may be. As soon as we have finished the evaluation a report will go through and the Government will decide whether or not to proceed with the procurement. The line referred to by the honourable member is not really for railcars; it is a major amount for signalling this year. A small sum of money will start to come in for railcar design, but the bulk of the purchase of railcars will start next year or the year after.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister give me a progress report on the reduction of made-available staff to the State Transport Authority? What is the intention of the Government in relation to the numbers it wants from Australian National? Has agreement been reached with the various unions within the rail section of the State Transport Authority in terms of the conditions of employment such as superannuation and concessional travel that will be applicable to their members?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The employment figure in the 1983-84 Estimates submissions to 30 June 1983 was 3 486; to 30 June 1984 it is proposed that that number be 3 546. The 1984-85 Estimates submission to 30 June 1983 was 3 540; to 30 June 1984, 3 573. It is proposed that that number at 30 June 1985 be 3 566. The actual staff at 30 June 1984 was 3 415; the target figure for 30 June 1985 is 3 469, and that is the basis of funding for the labour component of the recurrent budget.

Mr Rump: We are now down to 750 made-availables; two years ago it was 1 100. There has been a progressive reduction in made-availables and some direct employment. To answer the question about certain classifications, we are still negotiating with the unions and with the Federal Government in certain areas to arrive at acceptable conditions to increase the number of direct employees and reduce the made-available staff numbers.

Mr HAMILTON: What specific areas are subject to negotiations? Secondly, can the Minister provide me with some details as to what progress has been made in the signalling

and communications area in terms of upgraded expenditure for next year? To what specific areas of signalling and communications will that money be allocated?

Mr Rump: The first question that the honourable member asked related to the conditions that were under consideration with the made-availables. The negotiations with the Federal Government relate to transferability and the need to arrive at a satisfactory position in relation to superannuation. We are pressing the Federal Government to finalise these matters and so facilitate the movement into our direct employ.

As regards certain conditions that the union is requesting, we are negotiating with it as to matters such as an appeals board because, currently, employees of Australian National have an appeals board and the union has requested that the same sort of facility be provided here. We are trying to reach agreement with the union to facilitate matters such as that.

As regards signalling, we have proposed to spend in 1984-85 \$3.6 million on resignalling. The current expenditure on resignalling would be involved in the central train control building that is currently under construction. We are in the process now of waiting on Cabinet approval for the letting of some major contracts for the actual physical signalling work.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 75 of the yellow book, under 'Specific Target/Objectives 1984-85', it says:

Development of a system for preparation of bus time tables.

What are the specific problems in that area, and what is the State Transport Authority considering in terms of upgrading and developing a system? What is the current system, and what has the State Transport Authority in mind in that statement?

Mr Brown: The Authority until today has been preparing time tables based on a manual system so that every time there is a change in rosters we have to sit down and rework the time tables manually. This is very time consuming and means that it is some time before the public has consolidated up dated time tables available to assist it with its travel. This system that we are developing is tied to our management information system and our new computerised rostering and scheduling system. So, we will be able as from this year to produce very quickly timetables directly from the computerised rostering and scheduling system, and have available for the public the updated time tables and additional information it needs to make better use of our system.

Mr HAMILTON: What sort of savings?

Mr Brown: The savings will be significant, but have not yet been finally quantified. There will be savings in manpower, obviously, because it will become a computerised operation.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Coming back to the purchase of railcars, which is at least being looked at this year even though the purchase does not take place until next year, how many railcars is it planned to purchase? What attempts are being made to make sure that South Australian content is maximised, particularly as heavy engineering (the Acting Chairman, Mr Plunkett, is a man of considerable experience in this area) is grossly underutilised at present? What attempts are being made to increase the South Australian content within those cars, without giving details of tender prices, etc.—I realise the sensitivity of that?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The 1984-85 programme provides for \$100 000 to carry out preliminary investigatory work associated with the purchase of 20 railcars to replace the ageing fleet of the 400-class railcars, commonly known as the 'red hen'. If they prove to be satisfactory after a thorough test it is anticipated that an additional 80 (100 altogether) will be required. The Government is aware of the need for local content in the purchase of these new railcars. My

understanding is that a number of South Australian firms have tendered and, hopefully, one of those will be the successful tenderer when a final decision is made. The Chairman may be able to elaborate.

Mr Rump: Hopefully, the tender for railcars will be let in the current financial year, but it is a fairly major project and we would not anticipate delivery before 1985-86. We have allowed that lead time for manufacture. Twenty cars were selected to properly evaluate their technical performance. We undertook a performance specification to ensure that the responsibility for standards was placed squarely with the manufacturer. Once the railcars have been evaluated, the Government can decide whether to acquire similar cars.

In accordance with standard procedure we have incorporated a clause under which there is preference to local manufacturers. While the local industry in its entirety is not really geared up to make railcars, the local content percentage is important and will certainly form part of our recommendation. I expect that a fairly substantial amount of the recommended tender when it goes forward will have a South Australian content.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is good news. On-the-spot fines were introduced earlier this year by the State Transport Authority. The member for Mitcham asked a question in the House recently about at least two on-the-spot fines, and from the details given it would appear that the complaints of his constituents were entirely valid. In fact, they highlighted my criticism of the scheme. Untrained people, certainly non-police officers, are involved. I appreciate that the State Transport Authority trains inspectors, but they do not undertake the four years of intensive training of a police officer, who is the only other person in this State with the power to hand out on-the-spot fines to this extent. It would appear that in both cases the fine was quite unjust.

I know from media coverage of my criticism that a person can take the matter to court, but he must face the inconvenience and expense. In fact, I had to take my wife to court and defend her against the police: it cost me \$95. We were entirely successful. I was a Minister at that stage and I was very conscious of ensuring that I did not make any requests of the Minister responsible for the police. The police officer grossly overstepped his powers, and the courts agreed. There is a similar situation, apparently frequently, in relation to on-the-spot fines. One edition of what was referred to as a grubby little newspaper, at page 11, under the headline 'Allyson Fights Unjust Fine', outlines details of an on-the-spot fine. The person involved jumped on to the train at Gawler one morning and, because she woke up late and was in a hurry, she intended to buy a ticket on the train. She and other people had bought tickets on the train before, but suddenly that practice was discontinued. A \$50 fine was imposed. I will not go into the other events that occurred except to say that that person had reported offences of unseemly behaviour on the train but no fine was imposed.

I am concerned that in a democratic society people have to pay \$50, \$60 or \$100 to go to court and prove their innocence when no fine should have been imposed. That is one of the problems relating to on-the-spot fines—they can be handed out willy nilly and, frankly, it is cheaper to pay the \$60 fine than to go to court to prove innocence. The STA should at least counsel inspectors on how to impose these fines and consider whether or not a more lenient approach could be taken before such fines are imposed, otherwise there will be a nasty backlash against the Authority because of the fining process.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: These infringement notices were introduced initially to try to overcome vandalism and fare evasion in particular. The Authority has the power to issue on-the-spot fines for other infringements. I am a little concerned about the number of approaches I have received

from people who have been fined, and the Chairman advises that he has undertaken action to try to reduce the overzealousness of some inspectors. We are taking action to have inspectors watch for those infringements that no-one supports—the damaging of Authority vehicles and furniture, and fare evasion.

Of course, none of the offences are new: they have been on the Statute book for decades and were previously and still are prosecutable offences. The \$50 on-the-spot fine is an expiation fee similar to the fee for a parking offence. I fully support strong action to stop fare evasion and vandalism; however, I am concerned at the number of people who are reported for crossing railway lines other than at marked crossings. In the past many people developed a habit of taking short cuts, and they should be given proper warning that that is an offence. I am sure that we are all concerned about the number of fatalities involving pedestrians on railway tracks, and members will agree that some action is required to tighten up this area.

There is always concern that penalties will be enforced harshly or overzealously. I have asked the Chairman to review this matter, and he has assured me that he is undertaking that review. Members will be aware that many warnings were issued in the first three to four weeks of the initiative and wide publicity was given to this matter by the Authority and the media. We do not intend that the inspectors, the Authority or the Department should be little Hitlers: we want to be as fair as possible. People have 21 days in which to appeal, and they can approach the Authority if they believe that they have been treated harshly. The Authority has reviewed a number of cases. I cannot say how many infringement notices have been issued, but I have given reports on the situation up to a few weeks ago. Mr Rump may be able to elaborate.

Mr Rump: I cannot say how many notices have been issued or withdrawn, but I can obtain an up-to-date figure. We withdrew some infringement notices when we believed that a genuine case could be proceeded with, on the basis that we would try not to confront any person or offend the public if we could avoid it.

We hope that our attempt to have employees act in a more sensible way in their approach, and the direction to be not quite so zealous, will achieve a reduction in the number of complaints from people receiving fines that they do not believe are justified. I withdrew a fine the other day. The person had crossed the railway line, and there was no way in the world that he did not know he was doing the wrong thing. One would think that the person would have had to be wearing overalls to cross where he did. We withdrew the fine because we believed it would not achieve a great deal of good. We have noted on looking at our revenue figures that we are achieving a greater percentage of people paying fares than in the past. It is amazing how many people have been cheating the system. We hope that if we can avoid unnecessary embarrassment to people we will achieve worthwhile results from the introduction of these expiation fees.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: When he supplies that information, will the Minister give details of the total number of on-the-spot fines so far issued, how many have been withdrawn and how much revenue has been raised by these fines?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will provide that information to the honourable member. Does he want it as of today?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Whenever it is convenient—that does not worry me greatly. Can the Minister say what is the anticipated additional cost of introducing a 38 hour week into the State Transport Authority? I would like that cost given in terms of extra wages and to know what trade-offs were achieved as part of that agreement.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The trade-offs amounted to approximately \$530 000 per annum in total cost savings. Those savings will be ongoing. The additional estimated cost of introduction of a 19 day month is \$1.7 million per annum. Therefore, the cost to the Authority to introduce the 19 day month, in accordance with the package achieved, is \$1.7 million per annum or 4.2 per cent of the total annual labour cost of \$27.6 million per annum. The trade-offs, which were ratified by the full Bench of the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission, were: withdrawal of inspectors from the Noarlunga interchange; STA free to allocate buses to depots; collection and recording of passenger statistics, thereby avoiding the hiring of additional staff; increased numbers of standee loads for various routes; the operation of busway buses in streets and guideways—avoiding the changing of buses, additional penalty claims, etc. I point out that these relate only to the Bus Division and not to the railway operators at this time.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister advise me of the experience in other States in relation to the amount of money saved where infringement notices have been introduced? I would like a comparison of what happens in other States because, as an ex-employee of the State Transport Authority, it has been my experience that many people go to extraordinary lengths to evade the payment of a fare. In fact, they even go to the extent of assaulting employees. Can the Minister give the Committee information about the number of assaults on members of the State Transport Authority in buses, trams and trains? I note from past experience as President of the South Australian Railways Union that many employees are subjected not only to abuse but also to indecent acts such as being spat upon. I find it horrendous that there are the sort of people—albeit a minority—in the community who are prepared to subject to employees to such abuse. Can the Minister advise me how successful the two-way communication system in trams, trains and buses has been in reducing the number of assaults on employees?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I am not able to give any information on interstate comparisons. We can get that information for the honourable member. I do not have figures for the number of assaults on STA employees, but will obtain that information for the member.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister advise what is the programme for the introduction of ticket validating equipment, particularly in the Railway Division, and over what period will it be introduced? What likely effect is this expected to have on the number of employees employed, particularly at suburban railway stations?

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

Mr Rump: We anticipate that the equipment will be installed and operating by December 1986. It will have no effect on railway employees at metropolitan stations. It will be introduced after close discussions with the unions, which form part of the working party involved with the evaluation and selection of the final design.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister give details about the Government's intention in relation to the catering and trading services of the STA when the redevelopment of the Adelaide Railway Station and the proposed tunnel under North Terrace are completed? What will be the leasing arrangement for shops in that area?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: All the STA concessions will be retained. They will be offered accommodation in the new development of the concourse. A number of them will be attached to the underpass under North Terrace that will connect with the new STA headquarters on the corner of Bank Street and North Terrace. All the other owners of small business shops in the railway building will also be

offered alternative accommodation in the new complex. So, it is the intention to retain all those who choose to stay. All the STA concession shops will be retained and accommodated in the new facility.

Mr HAMILTON: What are the anticipated commencement and completion dates of that development?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I would have to ask the Chairman to give those dates.

Mr Rump: The announcement that the council had agreed to our request to construct an underpass has only just been made in the last day. To answer the question as to how quickly the building will be constructed, I point out that no official announcement has been made. The unfortunate part is that every time one makes a submission to the city council or the City of Adelaide Planning Commission the media are present and start to publicise matters not really ready for release. The situation is that, hopefully, the council will ratify, under the terms that we are prepared to accept, the underpass, which will not be ratified by the council until 22 October. When we have the decision of the council agreeing to the terms that have been recommended by its subcommittee we can then plan and proceed to construct an underpass and a new office building. A lot of agreement still has to be finalised in that regard.

As far as the concessions go, as the Minister stated, we will be rehousing in the ramp certain concessions. I also point out that certain concessions on the concourse, which has been changed to cater for ASER, will also be housed with either tenants or our own employees. The same would apply to the underpass. We are doing a complete property evaluation to ensure that we select, if the tunnel does go, the right concessions, so as to not interfere with shops that may be in the basement or ground floor of buildings on the other side of North Terrace. One would be foolish to have similar types of concessions competing with one another in too close a situation. This is being carried out by property consultants and will happen just as quickly as we can get it done. I would think that we are looking at two years away.

Mr OSWALD: Is the Government's decision to relocate the tram depot to Glengowrie now irreversible, regardless of the feelings of local residents? As the Committee would know, the STA is going through the formal planning processes at the moment with the prior knowledge that it has the legal statutory powers to push the plan through with the subtlety of a steamroller. My constituents have noted that money has been allocated in the Budget for this year and next year to complete the project. Bearing in mind the reluctant agreement by the SAJC for the land swap, the residents, despite the fact that they are holding public meetings and discussing it amongst themselves, would really like to know whether the decision by the Government is irreversible and whether they are really wasting their time airing objections. Can I go back to them and say that the Government does not care what they think and that it will bulldoze this thing through anyway?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The STA negotiated with the SAJC for quite some considerable time. It was endeavouring to determine which of the two sites near the racecourse was most suitable to everyone's needs. The STA believes that those two sites provide the best and only sites available to allow efficient operation of the trams. The Authority searched the whole length of the Adelaide/Glenelg tramline for an alternative site and they were the two sites that were considered to be best for the operation.

The Marion council and its residents want the authority to consider alternative sites and, if they can identify a suitable site, we would certainly look at it and give it every consideration. As far as the development of the tram depot is concerned, the STA will follow the normal requirements of the Planning Act. The Authority will notify the Planning

Commission of the development and, if it reports to the Minister for Environment and Planning that an environmental impact statement is required, he may direct us to provide one. If he does, then we will be happy to co-operate and provide an EIS.

One of the urgencies about the matter was the very large expenditure that would be required at the Angas Street depot in replacing a lot of the turning tracks. The Authority felt that with the outlay of money for that purpose it was far better to vacate those premises and get rid of a lot of the dead running time when many trams during peak hours and early starts have to travel from Angas Street in the city all the way to Glenelg before they can start their first run back to the city, and vice versa. So, it was felt that that was the most appropriate and efficient site. I met a deputation with the member who raised the question and we provided maps and as much detail as we could so that he could inform his constituents.

Mr OSWALD: I appreciated that.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The honourable member then arranged a meeting of the residents in the area and I co-operated by providing someone from the Authority to attend that meeting and answer questions.

Mr Rump: The matter outlined by the Minister is perfectly correct. From an operating economy point of view, relocating the tram operation closer to Glenelg and adjacent to the Morphett bus depot gives us a situation where we reduce one depot because the buses that operated out of the city have been relocated to Hackney and, in overall operating economies, it is an advantage to the Authority to eliminate what was formerly the city depot. In addition, the negotiations with the SAJC were quite amicable and I believe that it is now quite satisfied with the arrangements we made with them. The city depot, when it is disposed of, will provide a great percentage of the capital cost of constructing the new depot at Morphettville.

Mr OSWALD: Referring to the STA Roadliner operation, in a press release in the *Advertiser* of 9 May this year in response to a question in the House of Assembly, the Minister (referring to the catering service) said that it had recorded a \$99 000 profit in 1982-83 and a \$110 000 profit for the first nine months of this financial year. The Minister then referred to the tour service and said that it had recorded a \$4 000 profit in 1982-83 and a \$43 000 profit so far in the 1983-84 financial year. Does the \$43 000 profit so far this year and the \$4 000 profit the previous year take into account depreciation on the fleet? Does the profit figure exclude the capital in the form of profit set aside for the future purchase of new buses? Of that \$110 000 that the Minister announced as its profit for this year, is that clear profit after one has set aside capital for the purchase of future buses, or does that come from some other source?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The actual profit of STA Roadliners for 1983-84 was \$44 000. That sum includes depreciation as well as interest on the funds employed.

Mr OSWALD: Over how many years do you depreciate a bus?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will ask the General Manager to comment.

Mr Brown: Generally it is 10 to 12 years.

Mr OSWALD: Last year in the Estimates Committee and afterwards in the House I raised the question of research into the provision of a hydraulic retractable step on buses to assist elderly and incapacitated people. In January the Minister said that progress was being made and that we could have a world first here, but from my discussions interstate, the position seems to be the same and I am told that overseas some development has occurred. Can the Minister provide the Committee with an update on how we

are proceeding with the provision of hydraulic steps or the prototypes in the South Australian fleet?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Action has been taken to lower the step on new buses that have been ordered with Pressed Metal Corporation for the O-Bahn operation and also new buses for ordinary services. I understand that there are some difficulties with the hydraulic system, and I ask the General Manager to give further details.

Mr Brown: One of the problems with hydraulic steps in the front of the bus is that it requires a particular geometry with the chassis rails. Because of the location of the front door, it reduces the angle of approach by the bus so that when it goes through or over a dip the front of the bus does not come into contact with the roadway because of the location of the axle. If we install an existing hydraulic step, it reduces the angle of approach of the new fleet and means that we would be very restricted in regard to where we could operate the new buses. We have been researching with other organisations a solution to that operational problem and believe that something may be available, in particular, with the Seattle Metro, which has started to equip buses of a similar type to the ones that we have in Adelaide with a hydraulic step. They are working on a proto-type basis now and we are pursuing that.

Mr OSWALD: If we can put a man on the moon and provide that technology, surely some boffin somewhere can come up with a hydraulic step.

Mr Brown: It has to be level when it hits the ground—that is the problem.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I understand that in Seattle, which has a fleet about the same size as ours, about 800 to 1 000 buses, about 20 per cent of the buses have hydraulic platforms, and that it is planned within two years or three years to increase it to 50 per cent and then to 100 per cent, as advised to me by the Metro only two months ago.

Mr Brown: We have just received correspondence from Seattle that does not support those statistics, but I can make that correspondence available.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: We can discuss that later. In regard to the overall financing of the STA, which is the crucial point, for the last two years the State Government has contributed \$92 million to STA operating costs. That is partly deficit, partly concessions paid by State Governments Departments in lieu of fares collected, especially for pensioners and other aged people, and it is partly the remission of certain loans. Can the Minister indicate in view of the recently announced fare increases, which I worked out to be 11.8 per cent (I know the Minister comes to a different result), what he anticipates the overall State Government contribution will be this year to STA operating costs? Will the Minister give a breakdown between the contribution to the deficit, which in our Estimates is shown as \$74.9 million under the miscellaneous line, and can he say what the contribution will be through the fare concessions, and what other contributions such as loan remissions are likely to be to make up the total amount equivalent to the \$92 million of last year?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: First, in respect of fare increases, it is expected to add \$1.6 million to the traffic revenue in 1984-85, but with a full year it would have the effect of \$2 million. Traffic receipts are expected to increase by \$2.746 million over actuals in 1983-84. The Government reimbursements on concessional fares are expected to increase by \$2.705 million over actuals in 1983-84. The honourable member is aware of the details of fare increases. The Government is concerned about the escalating deficit of the STA, and it took a decision to try and retain the 1984-85 deficit at the same level as the previous year but, unless some of the measures that the Cabinet subcommittee are looking at are implemented, that will be difficult to achieve,

especially as the introduction of the 19-day month will have some effect on the overall budgetary situation.

However, Treasury has also acknowledged STA's concern that it may need funds quickly to cover any unforeseen circumstances. It confirmed its willingness to provide funds at short notice to cover such emergencies. More generally, Treasury has undertaken to make funds available to the Authority on a basis that avoids any problem of cash deficiency. We are taking steps to try to make the operations more efficient and to restrict the escalating deficit. The overall 1984-85 contribution to the deficit will be \$74.9 million; concessions will be \$19.13 million; the debt remission will be \$9.95 million; a total of \$103.98 million. I ask Mr Rump to provide further information.

Mr Rump: The debt remission of \$9.95 million is a figure that has to be agreed to by Treasury on an annual basis. It is to adjust our figures to cover the shortfall in their funding and, as they do not fund our depreciation and amortisation, they do, by agreement, reduce our total debt to Treasury. If they decided not to give us that this year, the total would not be \$103.98 million; it would only be \$74 million plus \$19 million. Assuming we get our debt remission, that takes it up to \$103 million.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister for the detailed information, which I appreciate. In summary, it appears that the State Government contribution to the operating expenses of the State Transport Authority will escalate from \$92 million last year to \$104 million this year, which is an increase of about 14 per cent. That is a fairly significant increase. I refer to page 457 of the Auditor-General's Report and I draw attention to 'short term investments and interest bearing deposits' under the line Current Assets. I assume that that line is for petty cash on hand that someone keeps under the table for a rainy day if extra money is required. I see that the allocation for that line has increased from \$12.67 million last year to \$20 million this year, which is an increase of \$7.5 million in short-term investments and interest bearing deposits. If the State Transport Authority is taking \$104 million a year out of State revenue, one way or another (and it is masked in how it is presented), how can the State Transport Authority suddenly increase its short-term deposits and investments by \$7.5 million?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Mr Rump will respond.

Mr Rump: Of that money \$9.5 million is deposited back with the South Australian Financing Authority. The balance is money that is invested and not deposited with SAFA. The progressive arrangements are that the money, when made available, is reinvested with SAFA. Over a period of years our total reserves are being reduced. No doubt the honourable member will recall that a few years ago we had \$40 million out on deposit and we were receiving interest on it. The guidelines from Treasury are that we are to be funded on a fortnightly basis, but no funding will be made available until our reserves have dropped down to \$2 million. We will then be funded on a basis of having only \$2 million in reserve. Our ability to earn income from funds made available to us over a number of years will suddenly disappear and that income will not be available.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: This is a significant change in the accounting procedures that have been adopted previously. No indication was given by the Premier in presenting the Budget that Treasury has issued such an instruction. You are saying that \$20 million has to be reduced to \$2 million. In other words, \$18 million will be drawn out of State Transport Authority reserves and brought into operation this year. Therefore, the State Budget will be \$18 million better off. I presume the \$18 million would have otherwise been paid over as part of the deficit or as part of the loan remission. The Budget before us has failed to take into account \$18 million which will be pulled out of secret

reserves. It is similar to a trick Neville Wran pulled a couple of years ago (although I think he had a few more noughts on the end amount). As I understand it, you are pulling in reserves and abolishing reserves before calling on the normal State Government contribution to the State Transport Authority.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I refer the question to the Chairman.

Mr Rump: The money that we have had for some years, which is now being used progressively, was given to us by Treasury for various purposes. It was standing there for future use. We have now been advised that the time has come to use that money progressively. This attitude has not come about this year; it has been a progressive movement over some years when people have looked at our funds and have decided that we will have to spend some of it on our capital programmes. Our capital programme this year has been funded by money given to us by Treasury over a period of time.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I realise that. However, a Budget has been presented to Parliament by the Premier (and at times it deals with amounts as little as \$4 000) and nowhere does it refer to the fact that \$18 million will be pulled out of State Transport Authority reserves. In other words, the Premier has been successful in getting his sticky fingers on that money. I highlight that fact and refer members opposite to the speech given by the Premier when summing up the second reading debate on the Budget. At great length on a Wednesday night the Premier spent about 45 minutes in the House talking about how the former Government ran down the so-called natural reserves that occurred within Government authorities and various Government departments. This is one of those reserves. We now find that the Premier is running down that reserve by \$18 million, having criticised that practice in the House and saying that he would do just the opposite. Why is there no mention in the Budget papers that this \$18 million will be pulled out of reserves?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I refer the Committee to page 174 of the Estimates of Payments, where it is detailed.

Mr Rump: I refer the Committee to the line 'Less: financed from internal and other funds' on page 174 of the Estimates of Payments.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: You are referring to the \$21 million?

Mr Rump: Yes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I highlight the fact that nowhere in his speech did the Premier mention that. That is the point that I make. This is completely contrary to what the Premier said in the House. That does not concern the officers, but it does concern Parliament because a speech was given stating one principal and we now find just the opposite is applying.

Mr Rump: This money was made available to us by Treasury on the clear understanding that we would have to use it when we started to spend money on some of our capital works programmes. That is clearly detailed on page 174 of the Estimates of Payments and in the published books that I presume are readily available.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I understand that, but I highlight the fact that nowhere was it mentioned in the Budget papers specifically that this reserve was being run down by \$21 million. I think that is a significant factor in the Budget before us.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Authority was instructed by the Department of Treasury that the planned balance in the reserves as at 30 June 1984 was to be \$2 million. It envisaged the \$40.3 million capital programme being funded from the following sources: \$18 million in State Transport Authority reserves, \$3.3 million from the sale of assets, and \$19

million as an advance from the Budget. Treasury wanted a monthly statement of the cash flow requirements based on that approach. That was an instruction from Treasury. As I have said, Treasury indicated that if there was any difficulty with the funds they would be made available to avoid any cash deficiency.

Mr HAMILTON: Under 'Motor Vehicles and Plant' there is a proposed expenditure of \$958 000 as against \$1.482 million-odd under the 1983-84 Budget?

Mr Rump: Again, we need to refer to page 174, where support services are now included, and one has to add support services into that 'Motor Vehicles and Plant' because it is a change in instructions from Treasury as to how we are to allocate the funding. If one adds them together the answer is not very dissimilar to the previous year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I realise that you probably do not have this information available, but I would appreciate it if you can get it. I understand that some of the 'red hens' on the Hills line have been breaking down occasionally, if not at an almost regular basis. Can the State Transport Authority provide information on how many occasions in the past six or eight months 'red hens' have broken down? One of my colleagues has reported that it has been known for goods trains to push 'red hens' into the next station and shunt them off onto side lines.

My other question is: why is the State Transport Authority reverting to the purchase of buses, as I understand it is under 'Bus and Tram Services'? I think that there is some mention in the Budget papers that you are reverting to the purchase rather than the leasing of buses. I understand some of the reasons why that has occurred under the blocking of the advantages as offered by the Commonwealth Government and its tax concessions. If, in fact, you are reverting to the purchase of buses, will you also revert to the purchase of railcars, or will they be leased, and is this an indication that the State Transport Authority has now adopted a new policy of purchasing all major equipment?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: In regard to the first question, it is true that there have been breakdowns and it is not unusual for an STA train to push another vehicle that may have broken down to a siding to allow the free flow of traffic. It is also possible that an Australian National freight train might have to push a train that has broken down, so the shunting of passenger trains by goods trains happens on occasions when there are break-downs. The following train can be used to push the disabled vehicle to a siding.

It is also possible that the State Transport Authority passenger trains could be pushed by a freight train to a siding. However, as I mentioned, that occurs very rarely. The 'red hen' railcars are rostered for work on the Hills line and many have been refurbished in recent times and are in excellent mechanical condition. The 2 000-class car recently has been withdrawn from the Hills service while a suspected engine problem is investigated. That problem is aggravated by the heavy load on the engine that is required when operating the train up the steep hill gradients of the Adelaide Hills. We are looking at that, and this is one of the matters that, with our new railcar contract, we want to test thoroughly to make sure that the engine is powerful and sufficient enough to haul the trains in the Hills area and right over the whole system. When breakdowns occur it is possible that some shunting is necessary to clear the tracks and have a free flow of traffic.

Mr Rump: As was indicated, because of the changes in the Federal Government taxation laws and requirements, alternative means of financing are being investigated and all sorts of schemes are being looked at. Cross-border leasing is one that may well be utilised for the railcars. We are out for proposals at the moment on buses and it may be that an alternative method of financing the buses may be arrived

at because of the lack of incentive now for the previous leasing. As members will recall, some years ago leverage leasing was the thing. That lost favour when the Federal Liberal Government changed the Act. Now the change in normal leasing has made us look at cross-border leasing and other overseas methods of financing.

Mr HAMILTON: What is this cross-border leasing arrangement?

Mr Rump: I am not an expert in this matter, but my Finance Manager just reminded me of some of the terminology. Cross-border leasing has not been decided on; I am not saying that it will be used. Cross-border leasing means that the ownership is overseas and the goods are leased in Australia. This provides the ability for people to provide overseas financing at interest rates that may be attractive. You have no doubt read in the press lately that people are borrowing Swiss francs and all sorts of things at 6 per cent, and overseas financing could become attractive to us.

Mr HAMILTON: Is the provision of a service into the Keswick terminal for STA services, which has been subject to a lot of criticism in the press, in vogue yet? If not, when will it be? Secondly, in terms of abnormal increases in demand, can the Minister advise, because of the deputation from the South Australian National Football League in relation to the major League matches, how successful was the cartage of patrons in the major round with the additional number of buses put on to League headquarters?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I am not aware of how successful the additional bus operation to Football Park on Sunday for the Grand Final was. I am meeting the President of the SANFL later in the week. We will be happy to provide that information. We want to assist the SANFL as much as we possibly can.

I have discussed the Keswick terminal with Dr Williams, the General Manager of Australian National, and he has assured me that action will be taken to rectify some of the present problems. It intends to build a pedestrian overpass and walkway from the southern end of the terminal platforms that will connect with Keswick Station and West Beach bus services. He wants to modify the mini bus service and to study the feasibility of diverting STA trains through the Australian National terminal. At present the 'red hens' are too wide. I do not know how far that study has progressed, but we could follow up that matter.

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

Minister of Transport, Miscellaneous, \$74 900 000—
Examination declared completed.

[Sitting suspended from 4.2 to 4.17 p.m.]

Highways, \$34 282 000

Chairman:

Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:

The Hon. D.C. Brown
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr J.K.G. Oswald
Mr K.H. Plunkett
Mr W.A. Rodda

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Mr M. Knight, Commissioner of Highways, Highways Department.

Mr J. McInnes, Acting Deputy Commissioner.

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

Mr R. Payze, Acting Assistant Commissioner, Planning.

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

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Auditor-General's Report (page 113) lists the State's contribution to the Highways Fund. I am sure that all members realise that the State has to contribute dollar for dollar in relation to the Federal Government's contribution. In 1980-81 the State's contribution was 50.1 per cent; in 1981-82, 49.3 per cent; in 1982-83, 47.8 per cent; and in 1983-84 it decreased to only 42.7 per cent—that is, in relation to the 50 per cent that is the dollar for dollar subsidy. The Auditor-General stated:

The legislation also requires the State to maintain in real terms its own expenditure on roads in order to receive its full share of available grants. If any shortfall is not made up in the following year, a proportion of the State's grants may be reallocated among other States.

Based on what the Auditor-General has said and on the figures for last year, it would appear that part of South Australia's Federal allocation of funds could well be allocated to other States. Will the Minister comment on that and say what action has been taken to ensure that we do not lose part of our share of Federal funds, particularly as our share is already below what we rightly should be getting? It is down to about 7.7 per cent of Federal funds, instead of a more appropriate level of 9 per cent to 9.5 per cent.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Every Government, both State and Federal, is concerned about the funding position for roads and transport. The name of the game is the best value for dollars available, and this State will play its part in maintaining the quality of service both in regard to roads and public transport. However, funding is mainly determined at a Federal level. The Roads Grants Act expires in June next year, and a special Australian Transport Advisory Council meeting will be held in Melbourne on 16 November. We will be fighting for our share of the cake at that conference.

There were two reports—the NAASRA report and the Bureau of Transport Economics report, which recommended a 25 per cent increase for roads. The decision to channel some of the funds into an urban renewal and development fund applied to the selling of Highways Department properties on the north-south corridor, and it is apparent from the result of the inner western suburbs project that the proceeds from the sale of surplus lands are considerably in excess of the market value that could have been obtained if those properties were disposed of by the Highways Department in the normal way.

We are transferring the original cost of those properties into the Highways Fund. We are also including any capital improvement that has occurred. My goal as Minister of Transport is to provide the best road network possible within the limits of our present economic circumstances. This involves fighting for priority in various arenas when the Budget allocations are restricting everybody's expectations. The South Australian road network has been admired for its quality in the past and I am sure that the member is aware that we need to fight to maintain this situation.

At present Federal road funding is a topic of particular interest because the Federal Government is considering road funding arrangements for the next Road Grants Act, which is to commence in 1985-86. It is necessary to input into the Federal road funding considerations the two major studies

that I referred to—the BTE and NAASRA assessments of the road system in 1984. To obtain increased road funding it is first necessary to establish that there is a strong case for increasing road funding above existing levels and then to convince the Federal Government that it should increase its funding allocation for roads. From South Australia's point of view, it is also necessary to ensure that this State receives a fair share of total Federal road funding.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I take a point of order, Mr Chairman. Has the Minister understood my question, because he has not yet touched on it? The question related to the fact that we fell \$9.1 million short of our dollar for dollar subsidy last year. Therefore, according to the Auditor-General, we face the prospect of Federal funds being diverted to other States. Are we likely to lose some of our Federal funding and what action is the Minister taking to make sure we do not lose that funding and that we maintain the dollar for dollar subsidy?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I was coming to that point. There has been a problem with the funding. If we are unable to match Commonwealth funding at the State level, the Commonwealth could withhold that money from South Australia. The Premier is discussing with the Prime Minister the level of matching required by South Australia. When those discussions are completed South Australia will know whether it has any shortfall reducing the matching requirement. If the Premier is not successful with the Prime Minister it will be my duty and responsibility to ask the Government to find that additional money so that the Commonwealth's matching grant is forthcoming.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister for his reply, but point out that it is exactly the same answer I got in reply to the same question last year. The Minister then told me that it was a matter of discussion between the State and Federal Governments through the Premier and the Prime Minister. Therefore, it appears that nothing has changed in the past year, except that we have dropped to only 42.7 per cent of our matching funds. The Auditor-General has warned that we are likely to lose money if this happens. The situation is serious if this State is to lose funds.

Page 111 of the Auditor-General's Report shows that on 1 July 1983, the beginning of the last financial year, there was a \$6.3 million reserve in the Highways Department. At the end of the year there was \$15.5 million in reserve, so the Highways Department, according to this report, under-spent its funds by \$8.9 million and now has a reserve fund of \$15.5 million. Why did the Highways Department under-spend funds allocated to it by this Parliament by the enormous amount of \$8.9 million? Also, why is it holding this enormous reserve of \$15.5 million when councils and everyone else are crying out for roadworks to be done and the Minister keeps saying to the House, even about simple things such as bridges, that we do not have the funds to build them?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The total expenditure of \$168.2 million was \$23.1 million or 15.9 per cent more than in the previous year to 30 June 1984. The balance of funds available as at 30 June 1984 was \$15.2 million, an increase of \$8.9 million over the figure for 30 June 1983. This was mainly due to a carry-over into 1984-85 of unspent Federal funds for national highways through contractors not performing at the predicted rate; an increase in the working capital paid by the Federal Government to the Department on account of ABRD in April 1984; and the additional motor registration and drivers licence receipts above that estimated in May 1984.

There was also additional income from land sales, mainly in the north-south corridor, for which payments were not received until late in June. There were also arterial and

local road grants to councils approved but not claimed as at 30 June 1984. I think in explanation of that comment that they were late receiving those funds; I went back to Treasury and argued for an additional \$1 million to which it finally agreed. However, it meant payments to councils to carry out the work related to that funding were late. Also, there was late delivery of plant items; that was another factor that added to the underspending.

Expenditure on construction increased by \$24.2 million or 31.3 per cent. Maintenance expenditure increased by \$4.7 million or 11.3 per cent. In relation to the significance of the size of the cash balance, it should be noted that in 1983-84, \$15.2 million represented four to six weeks expenditure by the Department, so it was a fairly fine line. That amount of money can be spent in the short period of four to six weeks. I also mention that it is not unusual for the Highways Department to have a carry-over of funds. This year that carry-over is exceptionally high, I admit.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In answering the next question, will the Minister indicate what he anticipates the reserve will be at the end of this current financial year? In other words, does the Minister expect that \$15.2 million to be run down considerably and, if so, by how much? The PAC presented a report to Parliament concerning the administration of the Highways Department. One of the recommendations of the report was that the Highways Fund should be abolished and that the Highways Department should come under the traditional method of funding of any other Government Department. Has the Government yet looked at that recommendation and, if so, what is its final decision?

The Minister indicated that he supports the retention of the Highways Fund. It appears to me that we are heading into yet another financial year with a big cloud hanging over the Highways Fund and, therefore, the Highways Department. If a decision was made this financial year to abolish the Highways Fund, it has enormous ramifications in the Budget under consideration. Has a decision been made? When will it be made if it has not been made? Does the Minister still uphold his original view that he supports the retention of the Highways Fund? What is the reserve likely to be at the end of this year?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The anticipated reserve likely at the end of this year is a \$2.37 million carry over.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So, it will drop from \$15.2 million down to \$2.37 million?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: What is anticipated is \$2.37 million; that could fluctuate, depending on the circumstances. In relation to the Highways Fund going into general revenue, I made my thinking and views clear on that. I believe that taxes taken from the motorist should be dedicated to the Highways Fund. The emphasis of the PAC report and its recommendations related to accountability: the accountability of the Commissioner to me as Minister and my accountability as Minister to the Parliament. That is the most important issue to come out of the report. At the moment it is being assessed, and amendments to the Highways Act will be forthcoming. These amendments have not yet been determined and I would expect that in the New Year certain amendments will be recommended to the Highways Act to accommodate a number of the recommendations of the PAC report to improve the accountability that I referred to.

Mr PLUNKETT: Concerning the MATS plan, does the Highways Department have any future plans for the upgrading or widening of William Street from Port Road to Grange Road?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This matter has been discussed. We have also discussed it with the Woodville council. I ask Mr Payze to give more details to the honourable member.

Mr Payze: The alignment referred to by the honourable member is an alignment that the Department has had as a

transport option since the MATS days. As part of the current strategic planning work we are doing for the western area of the metropolitan area, this is but one of a number of options that the Department is examining. So, it would be premature at this point to suggest that the Government has even considered whether that particular option along with a number of others would be implemented. It is one currently being examined in terms of the strategic road development options that are available in the western suburbs of Adelaide.

Mr PLUNKETT: What are the plans to begin work on the Bakewell Street Bridge, the Hilton Bridge and the section of road from South Road to the city?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Hilton Bridge is on the Australian Bicentennial Road Development Programme and it is anticipated that some preliminary work will commence this financial year. We have been negotiating with Australian National in order to try to obtain some financial assistance regarding some of the bridge structure and the underpasses necessary for the trains to travel under the bridge. There is a great deal of train activity along that fairly lengthy bridge with the Australian National terminal adjacent to the Hilton Bridge. We believe that Australian National should assist to some degree. That work will proceed this financial year and, hopefully, it will be completed within two or three years. The ABRD allocation is \$12 million, so quite a substantial sum is going into that necessary redesigning of the Hilton Bridge. I ask Mr Payze to comment on the Bakewell Street Bridge on Henley Beach Road.

Mr Payze: Concerning the Bakewell Street Bridge, there are no current investigations that specifically relate to the replacement or otherwise of it, but rather to the alignment in association with widening options for Henley Beach Road and that section of Henley Beach Road from the Bakewell Street Bridge to South Road and from South Road west to Marion Road. So, in terms of current departmental investigations, it relates specifically to the widening options for Henley Beach Road and the possible future alignment options for a replacement of Bakewell Street Bridge at some stage in the future.

Mr PLUNKETT: Many of my constituents, mostly elderly, with either rented or owned properties, do not know the future of their homes in close proximity to the Bakewell Street Bridge. This area has only just become a part of my electorate. When will the Highways Department commence work on the north-west bypass of the city?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: In regard to the question of the bypass, the north-west ring route, that project consists of Fitzroy Terrace from Main North Road to Torrens Road and Park Terrace from Torrens Road to Port Road at Hindmarsh. The project will upgrade the route to carry traffic around the north-west quadrant of the city and attract traffic now using local streets of North Adelaide, in particular, Barton Terrace, which Adelaide City Council desires to close to through traffic, and Prospect and Hindmarsh. Several years ago a Hindmarsh redevelopment study identified the upgrading of these two sections of road as a practical replacement for the old Hindmarsh Boulevard included in the MATS plan report. A major bottleneck at the North Adelaide railway level crossing will be replaced with an overpass on the Park Terrace alignment.

The report prepared by a working group convened by the Commissioner of Highways and with representation from the Prospect, Hindmarsh and Adelaide councils is now with the councils to obtain formal endorsement for the proposals. It is proposed to construct a four lane road with a wide median. Service roads will front the residential development along Fitzroy Terrace and Park Terrace, Ovingham. Construction work will be contained within the existing road reserve and it is estimated that there will be a net gain in

parklands area with the return of existing sections of road to parklands use.

We do have a tenant on some land that is owned by STA adjacent to the North Adelaide railway station, that is, a wood merchant with a large yard. However, his term does not expire until February 1986. We are trying to assist him in obtaining access to that area once the overpass is built, provided that Adelaide City Council has no objections to his continuing that woodyard operation. It is scheduled for work to commence at the end of this year with the demolition of the Hawker Street bridge and the provision of a level crossing at the site. Work will then progress on to Park Terrace and Fitzroy Terrace with the whole project from Main North Road to Port Road expected to be completed during 1986-87. Total estimated cost will be approximately \$7.5 million.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Referring to the level of funds, I pointed out previously that last financial year South Australia was \$9.1 million short from State sources to make up the dollar for dollar subsidy. Already, I have outlined in the House from answers given in a debate that about \$2.7 million that should have been transferred to the Highways Fund has now ended up under the control of the Minister for Environment and Planning from the sale of the north-south corridor land. I find in the Auditor-General's Report that in addition to the \$2.7 million, there is a further \$5.3 million, which has been owing for about four years to the Highways Fund from the STA for the O-Bahn busway. That is outlined on page 114 of the Auditor-General's Report. Putting that together, about \$8 million should have gone to the Highways Fund that has not been transferred in the last year alone. Why has the Government not ensured that those amounts have gone across to the Highways Fund to make up the shortfall of \$9.1 million and, therefore, safeguarded our Federal funds rather than possibly lose them? I would like to know when the STA is going to pay the debt of \$5.3 million to the Highways Fund. The STA has no right to hold back the money. It is legally the money of the Highways Fund and the people who use the roads who paid that money. When will that money be paid?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: In regard to the honourable member's first comment, the siphoning off of moneys to Consolidated Account clearly occurs under the fuel franchise legislation that was amended in 1983 whereby moneys collected from fuel tax was credited to the Highways Fund at no less an amount than the amount credited in 1982-83. The total amount collected in 1983-84 was \$38.5 million as compared with \$25.8 million in 1982-83. Hence, after allowing for \$100 000—the cost of administration—\$12.8 million was retained in Consolidated Account. Of course, that issue was debated fully at the time the Act was amended. There is probably no point in rehashing the issues involved in that decision—it was taken because of the serious financial situation facing the State, and the Government had no alternative but to implement a number of revenue raising measures. In regard to the honourable member's second question, I will ask the Commissioner to give further detail.

Mr Knight: I cannot give any detail, except to say that a certain amount of land was purchased by the STA for which no payment has yet been made, but there is an agreement that that payment will be made at some later date.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: How late?

Mr Knight: I cannot answer that question.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I highlight to the Committee that this money has been owing for some time. The Auditor-General has drawn attention to the fact that the debt exists. The Commissioner of Highways has outlined that the sale took place, but no money has been paid to the Highways Fund. The Committee deserves an answer as to when the Government intends to pay that debt, because it has a

significant impact on the State's Budget. If the money was paid this year the State deficit would blow out by a further \$5.3 million. In two successive years we have an attempt by the Treasurer of South Australia to understate the real deficit of the State by \$5.3 million, by not paying that debt. It is now a bad debt of two years and possibly up to four years. Indeed, if that occurred in private industry the Highways Department would have sued the State Government for \$5.3 million and probably put the Government into liquidation or at least receivership until it paid up. The Committee deserves an answer as to when that money will be paid.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will certainly undertake to try to find out when that payment will be made. At page 114 of his Report the Auditor-General said that the payment is to be made at a later date, and no other comment was made. I will try to find out. We may have to go back to the time of the former Government to ascertain why it did not pay it then. It has been a continuing thing, as the honourable member said, and I will try to establish when it will be paid.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My question now relates to the sale of land for the north-south transport corridor. Last year the Minister told the Committee how those funds were being used was a matter of negotiation between the State and Federal Governments through the Prime Minister and the Premier. I have seen a copy of the letter sent to the Minister by the Royal Automobile Association in regard to discussions between the Automobile Association of Australia and the Federal Government about the fact that at least one or several State Governments were not returning to their Highways Funds and road construction moneys obtained from the sale of land. I understand the matter was raised at the ATAC meeting of Ministers in February this year and that the Federal Minister made threats almost to State Ministers to return the funds to Highways Funds for road construction or else Federal Parliament would put through special provisions in the next Bill for road grants to ensure that they did that.

What has been the outcome of negotiations which the Minister said 12 months ago were taking place? Have they yet been resolved and, if so, has the Federal Government agreed to the fact that the State Government can keep \$2.7 million from the sale of Highways Department land to be used for purposes other than road construction under an entirely different Minister?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I think the situation at the ATAC conference was quite contrary to the information that the honourable member received. The Federal Minister endeavoured to help the States with their matching arrangements. He undertook to introduce amendments to the ABRD legislation. He was successful in some respects about certain amendments that gave us more flexibility in using our road gangs and trying to maintain employment levels, which was another problem confronted by the States. However, he was not successful with several amendments that would have further assisted the States, because at that time they were not accepted by the Senate. I think the Federal Minister bent over backwards to try and assist the States in the matching arrangements. The Commissioner will add further information.

Mr Knight: I understand that the initial purchase of the properties was raised in discussions with the Commonwealth. We were not able to establish whether State funds, Commonwealth funds or a combination were used. Therefore, I understand that the Commonwealth reply was that it would leave it up to the State to determine where the proceeds of the sale of the properties would go.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer to the replacement of the *Troubridge*. Earlier the Minister said that the new *Troub-*

ridge is due to commence operations by 1986. Has the design been finalised? Will the new vessel carry passengers? The Minister would be aware that the Kangaroo Island Transport Committee and others have recommended that the replacement vessel should not carry passengers. Will the new vessel be built in South Australia and, if so, at what cost?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: No final decision has been made in relation to the design of the replacement vessel. A committee has been established with Captain Roy Pearson from the Department of Marine and Harbours as Chairman. There is representation from Kangaroo Island on the committee. The Government is reviewing its earlier decision on the design of the vessel. We are currently looking at a no-frills version which will not include passengers at this stage. The committee has yet to meet and make a final decision. Cabinet considered a submission that I put before it as a result of representations that I received from residents of Kangaroo Island and the Stockowners and Graziers Association. In fact, Mr Grant Andrews informed me that he was concerned to help us overcome the huge losses that have been occurring over a number of years in relation to the *Troubridge*.

I understand that the new design includes facilities for truck drivers. If it is found to be necessary to include passengers, there will be no difficulty in adding modules to cater for them travelling from the port of Adelaide to Kingscote through the addition of one or two modular aircraft seats for passengers. In view of the Government support and the amount of work that is being done for *Philanderer 3*, it was felt that this is possibly the best way of attacking the question of a replacement vessel. The people of Kangaroo Island are very concerned about the cost recovery issue. The new vessel design could have a significant effect on that.

The new vessel will operate as soon as it is built, but at the moment I cannot say when that will be. Tenders have not yet been called. I hope that it will be built by a South Australian firm, and I know that Eglo is very keen to do the work. If South Australia is successful with the submarine contract, the building of the *Troubridge* by Eglo would be good experience for it. The Government is keen to have the *Troubridge* built in South Australia. The no-frills version will make it much cheaper. I think the original version was costed at about \$11 million or \$12 million. The no-frills version could reduce that cost to about \$7 million or \$8 million. I am only guessing, but it will be considerably cheaper.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Government announced in mid August its intention to proceed with the development of a third arterial road from the Sturt Road area at Bedford Park to the Reynella area. This road will overcome the Darlington bottleneck and provide for rapid population growth in the south. What is to be done, and when will it be done, to ensure that traffic continues to flow through Darlington in the lengthy period that it will take to complete the new routes? What action is being taken to implement the Government's decision on the new route?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Highways Department is currently financing designs for the reconstruction and widening of the intersection of Flagstaff, Marion and South Roads at Darlington in order to improve the operation of that intersection. The work is aimed at reducing delays currently being experienced by the users of Flagstaff Road during the morning peak period and on Marion Road in the evening peak period. Work to widen the existing narrow two-lane bridge across the creek on Flagstaff Road to five lanes is included. It is estimated that the work will cost about \$400 000 and that it will be carried out early in the new year. The Department is currently negotiating to acquire

the necessary land and the actual commencement of construction depends on that step. If we cannot obtain agreements on the necessary land and court proceedings are taken that could delay the start of this work considerably.

However, we are hoping that that will not happen. The Department is also designing improvements to the South Road-Seacombe Road intersection. This work is aimed at reducing the long delays on Seacombe Road in the evening peak period, but will benefit traffic generally throughout the day. It is estimated to cost about \$100 000 and will be carried out as soon as possible after the improvements to the South Road-Flagstaff Road-Marion Road intersection. No land acquisition is involved in that proposal.

As a further step, the Department is investigating the feasibility of additional at-grade improvements to these two intersections. These are intended to follow one to two years after the improvements that I have mentioned. This work will involve narrowing down of median width, wide footpaths and a limited amount of land acquisition. The implementation of this work depends on confirmation of feasibility cost estimates and the availability of resources. The cost of that project and its design is approximately \$500 000.

The combination of these stages one and two improvements to the Darlington intersection will provide a holding action to allow time to implement the third arterial road. I have directed the Highways Department to commence the detailed planning and design of that new arterial road. Because of the size of the project—nine kilometres of road, with a number of complex connections and intersections—the pre-construction activities will take considerable time.

Mr PLUNKETT: I notice that you propose a significant increase in expenditure on general maintenance and maintenance resealing. Why is this necessary? What strategies does the Highways Department have in relation to maintenance generally?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The general or routine maintenance is aimed at repairing faults such as potholes, as they occur. Resealing is a preventive maintenance activity aimed at delaying the structural degenerating process and, therefore, the forming of those faults. We all appreciate that the maintenance effort needed to retain any asset in good running order increases with its age. Road decay begins from the day of construction and increases with age. It is further accelerated by the effects of heavy vehicles and any past deferment of either timely maintenance or replacement.

Because of the disproportionately large number of roads constructed in the early to mid 1960s, the average age of the State's road and bridge network is increasing. This, when coupled with a previous slowing of replacement programmes and increases in the number of heavy vehicles, dictates that increased expenditure is not only necessary but essential in order to preserve the high investment in the State's road asset. This is not unique to South Australia, but is being felt Australia and world wide.

Taking into account the life expectancy of a road's sealed surface and the consequences of deferment, it has been assessed that there is a need in broad terms to reseal 8.5 per cent of the road network yearly. Because of previous restrictions, resealing has averaged 7 per cent, and there is now a need to increase reseal expenditure to catch up some of that backlog and maintain it at the needed level. A continual maintenance effort applied to roads following their construction will slow the rate of deterioration and increase the time before replacement is necessary. Reducing the maintenance expenditure can only accelerate the rate of decay, increase the need for replacement and worsen driving conditions for road users.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Continuing the question on the *Troubridge*, the Minister referred to the freight increases that had occurred, and the regime of freight increases that

he has announced will apply until all of the operating costs are covered by the revenue received. The Minister will realise that the member for Alexandra has spoken at length on this in Parliament. I read to the Committee a brief letter that was sent to the Premier on 25 September 1984. It is from the Kangaroo Island Transport Committee, signed by Paul Brown, Secretary (no relation of mine) and Councillor Meakins, Chairman:

At a meeting in July, the Kangaroo Island Transport Committee appealed to the Minister of Transport, Mr Abbott, to abandon the cost recovery proposals as they related to the Kangaroo Island shipping service. To date, there has been no response at all to this request.

This is on 25 September, some three months after the original meeting. The letter continues:

As the time for the next scheduled 12½ per cent space rate rise is fast approaching, the committee again wishes to inform your Government that the proposal is unacceptable to Kangaroo Island people. Attached is a document which sets out the main reasons for our opposition. The body of this submission is summarised on the sheet at the front of the document. We feel sure you will appreciate from this that the proposal is not only lacking in simple justice, but that it is also economically dangerous and impractical. Will you please give this matter your urgent attention and advise us of the outcome.

I highlight several points: although they met with the Minister in July, three months later they still had not had a response from the Minister. Secondly, they point out in the document that by increasing the freight rates at such a rate they are likely to destroy completely the *Troubridge* service because it will not be economically feasible for anyone to use it, at least on a regular basis.

Thirdly, they point out that they are required to subsidise a ship that is very inefficient in its operations. It is slow. The Minister himself has said that it is inefficient and costly to run, and that one of the main costs involved is maintaining staff on that ship or on standby for the ship for tourist facilities on Kangaroo Island, and the primary producers should not be asked to subsidise those costs. Therefore, it is unjust and certainly inequitable to impose on Kangaroo Island primary producers, who are the main users, the full operating costs of operating the *Troubridge*. Will the Minister admit that perhaps that was the wrong decision to have made to achieve cost recovery, and will he therefore urgently review the proposal to increase costs each year costs by 10 per cent plus the cost of inflation?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It is possible that this will be reassessed in the light of the new design of the vessel, but I cannot say what that is likely to be. Certainly, it will be taken into account; I can assure the honourable member of that. The honourable member said that the Islanders had received no response. I assure him that they are aware of our review situation. The local member, the member for Alexandra, is aware, and he is pleased about that.

The Hon. D.C. Brown: This is the review of the cost structure, not of the ship.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: As I mentioned, in the light of the new vessel it is possible that the cost structure will also be looked at. I have given an undertaking to do that: it will be looked at. I will not admit that we made a mistake in the initial decision. As you know, a committee looked at the whole question of the *Troubridge* operation because it was costing the Government in excess of \$3 million a year. I know that when the member for Victoria was in Government he was fully aware of that.

The Committee supported that recommendation, and I believe that we have been honest enough to indicate that perhaps some of those recommendations were not correct. We have undertaken to review the whole operation. Mr Abraham was Chairman of that committee and he may be able to comment further.

Mr Abraham: I would agree with the honourable member that the *Troubridge* is an inefficient ship, and this was recognised by the committee. The major share of operating costs relates to wages, and that was the case when the Government took over the ship in 1972. It is not true to say that the major portion of the wages bill is attributable to tourism, because facts indicate that only two or three extra staff were required for the tourist trade. It is not true to say that the farmers were paying for tourism. Paul Brown contacted me to discuss this matter, but before those discussions took place the previous Kangaroo Island transport committee, a committee of the councils plus representation from the United Farmers and Stockowners, disbanded because of a problem with the Local Government Act. A new committee was formed, of which Mr Meakins was Chairman. Mr Brown wrote to the Premier some weeks ago seeking an appointment; that letter went to the Minister and a reply was forwarded, but we have not seen that reply.

It was recommended that only the operating costs of the vessel should be met, the capital cost, interest payments and so on being borne by the Government. The increases which have applied this year and which were set to bring in an increased revenue of about 25 per cent over the full year are the first increases applied since March 1981.

The Hon. D.C. Brown: In relation to road funding, the Minister referred to the NAASRA report by the various Commissioners of Highways around Australia. I have read the summary of the report, which the Minister was kind enough to supply to all members of Parliament. I found it very interesting. I note that the South Australian Commissioner of Highways was a member of the committee that prepared the report. As the Highways Department supports or contributes to the views of that report, does the Minister agree that insufficient funds are being made available for road construction and maintenance in Australia and South Australia? Is our road network system being adequately maintained or is there an overall rundown in the standard of maintenance of roads?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It is interesting to note that the reports came to different conclusions, although basically the same terms of reference applied to both the committees. To some extent both reports reflect the biases inherent in their organisations. For example, the Bureau of Transport Economics report to Federal authorities is a more conservative and dry economic assessment, while the NAASRA report to a peer group of road construction authorities takes a more entrepreneurial view on wide criteria for determining needs and justifying expenditure. Those reports must be read with some qualification. However, with this in mind the reports can provide valuable information on which to base arguments for future road funding. Only the NAASRA committee examined the adequacy of the total level of road funding, and set out to provide a clear picture of the nature and conditions of the Australian road network and to illustrate the physical and economic effects of various levels of future road funding.

Some of the study findings on the nature and condition of the road network in 1981 (being the base year of the study) were as follows—and the honourable member would be interested in this: the total length of the Australian road network was 798 700 kilometres, of which 102 100 kilometres, or 12.8 per cent, was in South Australia. On national highways and rural arterial roads, almost a quarter of all travel was on roads with poor driving conditions. The total length of roads with poor driving conditions was 9 500 kilometres, of which 1 600 kilometres, or almost 17 per cent, was in South Australia. On urban arterial roads traffic congestion was widespread, with a quarter of all arterial travel on roads with severe peak hour congestion. The total length of roads with severe peak hour congestion was 800

kilometres, of which 41 kilometres, or 5 per cent, was in South Australia. In urban areas, 9 500 kilometres of local roads were unsealed, with 1 000 kilometres or over 10 per cent being in South Australia. In rural and outback areas, the length of unsealed local roads was more than 500 000 kilometres, of which 77 000 kilometres, or over 15 per cent, was in South Australia. The length of rural local roads with poor driving conditions was 11 600 kilometres, of which 1 900 kilometres, or more than 16 per cent, was in South Australia.

NAASRA concluded that in 1981 there was a large backlog of poor roads in Australia and found that a 25 per cent increase over 1983-84 funding, including the ABRD, indexed for inflation and sustained for the rest of the 1980s, would result in further benefits. However, I believe that everyone right across Australia has accepted that the 25 per cent recommended by NAASRA is totally unreasonable. We all agree that a large increase in road funding is required, but where will we find funds totalling an extra 25 per cent? We would have to treble registration and licence fees to achieve that. No matter what indicator we choose to use, they all show that we should be receiving a higher percentage than we are at present.

South Australia's bottom line must be the *status quo*, but we should be receiving funding of about 9 per cent and not the average 7.8 per cent that we are receiving at present. Taking any one of the indicators on a population basis, on the consumption of fuel, on the length of our arterial road system, or on any other indicator, one concludes that road funding from the Commonwealth should be a lot higher than it is. That ought to be our bottom line: if we are able to achieve more than that, we will have done well.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I certainly agree with the Minister that we need a greater share of the national cake. I realise that Standing Orders do not permit me to ask the same question of the Commissioner of Highways. I would be interested in his view on the need to increase funding for road construction, particularly as he is one of the authors of the NAASRA report.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member may be able to contact him by phone or letter later.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The member can ask the Commissioner through me, if he wishes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister has already responded. If the Commissioner would like to add to what the Minister said earlier, I would welcome that. Perhaps he can do that when answering my next question. First, can the Minister say whether the Old Belair Road will be resurfaced this year as promised two or three years ago and, if so, how much money will be spent on it? Secondly, what will be the allocation to local government for local roads this year? This is the area of funding reduced by 37 per cent last year.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will ask the Commissioner to respond to the honourable member's question.

Mr Knight: Is the member talking about the Old Belair Road from Blythwood Road to James Road?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Blythwood Road to Sheoak Road, because it needs resurfacing right to the top.

Mr Knight: We have scheduled funding for 1984-85 to carry out that work. Unfortunately, we understand that ETSA is considering the possibility of undergrounding some of its mains and that the Gas Company is considering a proposal to lay a gas main through that section of road. On that basis, we have to wait and see how they are going and whether those proposals will go ahead fairly soon, so that there is a possibility that these road works may be delayed.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What about the allocation to local government for local government roads, the area of funding reduced by 37 per cent last year?

Mr Knight: These are rural arterial road grants?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Yes.

Mr Knight: I do not have those figures to hand.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: We announced the rural arterial roads grants recently.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: They are local roads, are they not?

Mr Knight: It was rural arterial road funding that was last year reduced by \$1 million and then restored to the original level. From memory, this year the figure is \$2.4 million being allocated to rural councils for rural arterial roads.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: How much was allocated last year?

Mr Knight: Just over \$2 million, of which they underspent of the order of \$785 000.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The grants represent an increase of \$253 000 or 11.8 per cent over last year's allocation. Of the \$2.4 million, \$2.29 million was available for sealing unsealed roads. The remaining \$105 000 is for maintenance of unsealed roads in the rural arterial road grants section. We provided an additional \$115 000 this year to the Eyre Peninsula allocation. I visited that area, and strong representations were made to me and to the President of the Legislative Council (who lives in that area) in an endeavour to get the Elliston-Lock-Kimba-Cleve Road sealed. I must admit that they are rough roads and that with existing funding allocations it will take them a long time to do the bits and pieces from each end before the whole road is sealed.

We approached the Federal Minister, who visited the area, to ascertain whether we could obtain additional Federal funding. Nothing has yet been forthcoming federally. If we are successful in gaining more Federal money we will certainly make it available for many of those regions where there are a number of roads that have a gap in the middle that requires sealing to finish sealing the road from one town to the next.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister provide a progress report on the extension of West Lakes Boulevard? Can he tell me when it is expected that the plans in relation to this boulevard will become available? As the Minister appreciates, I have notified my constituents and kept them informed about what is taking place here. I am seeking specific information in relation to a number of properties or portions of properties that will be required in Pudney Street and along Clark Terrace. Also, can the Minister say whether or not consultations will take place with business houses and Telecom in relation to ingress and egress to the boulevard from business houses in the area?

It is important to these people that they have proper ingress to and egress from the area. I understand that on a concept plan ingress and egress were originally shown as being to Morley Road. However, I see problems in relation to that area which have been highlighted by some of the business houses in the area. I believe that it is important that this aspect be considered. Can the Minister advise me what properties, if any, have been disposed of to the South Australian Housing Trust? I think these are the houses in Gordon Street. Also, how many are left to be disposed of and have people taken the opportunity to acquire any of these properties not acquired by the South Australian Housing Trust?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The disused Hendon railway reserve will provide the link for the West Lakes Boulevard extension between Tapleys Hill Road and Clark Terrace which eventually links up with the intersection at Port Road. As part of its investigation to determine the most appropriate alignment, the Highways Department has defined a road reserve generally of 30 metres in width the purchase

of which is being undertaken from the State Transport Authority. The Department is preparing a draft concept plan which will form the basis of discussions with the Corporation of Woodville and the member for Albert Park in approximately eight weeks. Based on present constraints, construction of the extension could be undertaken in approximately two years, subject to the availability of resources. It is the intention that consultation take place with the residents and businesses in relation to this matter.

I do not think that we are at a stage where any design of the facility has yet been drawn so, in answer to the member's question on ingress and egress to various properties and businesses, I reply that is a matter that will be taken into account. In relation to the number of properties and their disposal, the South Australian Housing Trust is buying, or has bought, 14 houses at an estimated cost of \$762 500. One residence and three vacant blocks of land have been sold to private individuals. Three vacant blocks of land are in the process of being disposed of and two large land parcels are still to be looked at—that is, the South Australian Brush Company (SABCO).

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister provide me later with details of land that is to be disposed of in those areas? On what roads will the Adelaide co-ordinated traffic signalling system be implemented this year? Will the system be expanded in the future? I am concerned with the north-western suburbs, particularly the link along Port Road.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: There are 108 sets of traffic signals to be linked to the system this financial year at an estimated cost of \$750 000. These signals will be in addition to 98 signals connected, as at June 1984. The accelerated programme is being emphasised in the western suburbs and includes: the full length of Port Road; the full length of Torrens Road; Anzac Highway between Morphett Road and South Terrace, City; Marion Road from Burbridge Road to Sturt Road; Brighton Road between Seacombe Road and Anzac Highway, Glenelg; South Road from Torrens Road to Everard Avenue, Ashford; short sections on Greenhill Road, Glen Osmond Road, Cross Road and Fullarton Road. (I am sure that the member for Davenport will be pleased about that.) Another 72 signals will be connected in 1985-86 and 80 signals in 1986-87, making a total of 358 signals in this \$5 million project. Most of the important urban arterial roads in Adelaide will then be covered.

I believe that Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, with their co-ordinated traffic light systems, have the most sophisticated traffic systems in the world. Right turn phases are installed wherever there is a sufficient volume of traffic to justify them; otherwise, major delays can be caused to through traffic. The Highways Department and the Road Traffic Board are continuously upgrading intersections and installing the most appropriate traffic management devices. But, whatever type of traffic signal, there are still many motorists who disobey the signals, and we are attempting to upgrade as many as we possibly can.

Mr HAMILTON: What are the Government's proposals for the construction of rail overpasses in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The priorities for construction of rail-road grade separations cannot be divorced from overall road network and other considerations, as these crossings are but specific points of delay along various routes not unlike signalised intersections or tramline crossings. Taking all relevant factors into account, I point out that the current priorities for construction of rail-road grade separations in the metropolitan area are assessed to be the following: the South Road/Emerson overpass to be completed in 1984-85 (this is on schedule and should be completed around Christmas this year); Park Terrace, Hindmarsh (this is the north-

west ring route overpass which is to be completed in three years); the Salisbury Highway extension, Salisbury; the Torrens Road/Ovingham overpass that is planned to be implemented in three to five years, subject to the availability of funds). There are other overpasses around metropolitan Adelaide such as South Road, Croydon, which is very close to Port Road and creates a bottleneck specifically during peak hours when a lot of train traffic is heading from the city to Port Adelaide. Also, there is Morphett Road at Oaklands. As yet, these projects are not scheduled.

Mr RODDA: Concerning traffic congestion on the South-Eastern Freeway near Eagle on the Hill, sometimes the run can be as sweet as silk but there are times when heavy vehicles make it a slow grind and one can only sit in the traffic. What proposals does the Minister have concerning this situation? Obviously, nothing can be done immediately as it is a very steep part of the hills. Are there any plans in hand for passing lanes to meet this problem?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: This problem has been looked at. I am sure the member is aware of the condition of the road, especially from Glen Osmond to Eagle on the Hill. It may be a good idea to put a tunnel right through there, if we could find the money. That would be desirable in the long term. The heavy truck question creates a problem in some areas. I ask Mr Payze to add to what I have said.

Mr Payze: In terms of the traffic operations on that section of the South-Eastern Freeway it is very much dependent on the mixture of traffic; free flow is always available in general terms if the number of trucks is low and the truck traffic is not attempting to pass. As members are aware, there are two lanes in each direction; therefore, the justification for overtaking lanes seems limited. It is more a discipline of road use in terms of the space available. The Federal Minister of Transport has given his approval to the Department to undertake an investigation of the longer term options and it is fair to say that no one option, be it an upgrading of the existing facility or an alternative route, would be a low cost project. So, there is a significant amount of planning work yet to do before the Department can recommend to the Government what option should be developed in the longer term.

Mr RODDA: Is the Coromandel corridor, which I understand is well under way, near completion?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I ask Mr Payze to answer that question.

Mr Payze: The honourable member is referring to a study that we have been undertaking in respect to road developments through Coromandel Valley. It is a study proposal that we have been some time completing because it has changed in its relative priorities. At this time we are nearing completion to the stage of being able to discuss the various options with local government.

Mr RODDA: I have a supplementary question. I suppose that the ultimate availability of bus services to people in the Cherry Gardens/Iron Bank/Clarendon area is also part of that study?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Which road is it?

Mr RODDA: The service to the people of Cherry Gardens, Iron Bank and Clarendon.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will follow that up for the honourable member and get the information he requires.

Mr RODDA: I now refer to my own and my neighbour's bailiwick. There is great appreciation in regard to the upgrading of the Naracoorte to Mount Gambier road, especially with the great interest in tourism. Business people are spending large sums on the construction of motels in Penola and especially in Bordertown. I refer to the road from Bordertown to Dickinson's Corner and the road from there to Keith. Those two roads are rough, especially the Keith road. The tourist industry is looking to step up tourism

from Victoria and to encourage visitors from New Zealand to come through Melbourne and see that part of South Australia. The upgrading of the Dukes Highway will bring road buses here, but perhaps once down the Keith to Padthaway road they will not call again. What plans are there for upgrading those roads?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will ask Mr Payze to answer that question.

Mr Payze: I wish to clarify the roads to which the honourable member referred. Is it from Bordertown to Dickinson's Corner and Dickinson's Corner to Naracoorte?

Mr RODDA: I refer to Dickinson's Corner to Keith—the Padthaway road.

Mr Payze: I will have to take the question on notice. I think no specific provision is made in this year's Budget for upgrading those roads, and I am not familiar with any advanced programme that we have at this stage.

The CHAIRMAN: The deadline for material to be received to be included in the report is 19 October.

Mr HAMILTON: The Government's specific targets and objectives in 1984-85 are:

To devise and implement a computerised means of issuing permits for over-mass or over-dimension vehicles. To investigate improvements to lighting at weigh stations to enable all vehicle mass and dimension limits to be checked and enforced.

Similarly, I see some of the trends that are listed. There is a greater economic pressure on commercial vehicle operators to use larger vehicles to gain economies of scale. I understand that there was a proposal current for about 10 years in South Australia to reduce the 6.6 tonne front axle load to 5.5 tonnes. I understand that this new scale might be introduced in the future, although there are no definite plans for this. The South Australian law also provides that vehicles registered in another State must comply with the regulations pertaining to this State, and vice versa. I refer to speed limits in both South Australia and New South Wales in regard to commercial vehicles. I understand that it is 80 km/h. Can the Minister advise the Committee whether it is intended to increase the limit for commercial vehicles to that of ordinary motor vehicles?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will take the honourable member's question on notice and obtain that information for him, because I do not have it with me today.

Mr HAMILTON: I now wish to raise a more parochial question relating not just to my district but also to that of the member for Henley Beach in regard to the upgrading of the Frederick Road section between Trimmer Parade and Grange Road railway line. Often over the past five years I have received correspondence from Seaton High School. Recently in the local press the school headmaster gained some publicity in regard to the safety of children on that stretch of road. I do not deny him the right and I agree there is a need to upgrade that section of road to ensure the safety of school students. However, I recall that the criticism in the local paper was that the local government authority claimed that it was waiting for an allocation of State Government funds so that it could upgrade that section of road. Can the Minister advise the Committee about the current situation in view of the recent local Messenger Press criticisms?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I agree wholeheartedly with the honourable member on the need to upgrade that road which is classified as a local road and which is the sole responsibility of the Woodville City Council. It is all very well for that council to blame the Government for not making a grant available to it, but Woodville council receives grants under the grants formula that was decided by the Local Roads Advisory Council, and I suppose it is a question of priorities. Woodville council needs to get its priorities right and allocate some of its grants money for that road. There has been

much criticism in the local press about that road recently, but it is the responsibility of the council because the road is classified as a local road and we should encourage the council to allocate some of its finances to doing something about it. I ask Mr Payze to provide more detail.

Mr Payze: That section of road is currently maintained by local government. As recently as two or three weeks ago I have had discussions with the City Engineer of the Corporation of the City of Woodville in an attempt to produce a satisfactory road design plan for the upgrading of that piece of road and to discuss the possibility of staging any improvements in line, and commensurate, with the availability of funds either to local government or to ourselves.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister advise when the connection from Bower Road to Grand Junction Road—the Red Hill connector—will be officially opened? I have received a number of inquiries about this section of road that also relates to the area of the member for Price because of traffic flows in and around the West Lakes-Semaphore Park area. Many of my constituents are keen to see this section of road opened as they hope it will eliminate a number of problems in terms of traffic flow in the area. Also, can the Minister advise when the turn-right indicator at the Trimmer Parade and Tapleys Hill Road intersection will be switched on?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I understand that the extension of Grand Junction Road to Bower Road will be opened before Christmas, but I am not sure of the exact date. The work has been commenced with the use of concrete pavement, and should be completed in November 1984.

I am just not sure what the date will be in November, but I will inform the honourable member when it is to be opened. If there is an official opening he will receive an invitation to attend. We experimented with concrete on that road. There is a lot of interest in it for those reasons, because there appears to be a trend towards more concrete roads in relation to maintenance over a period of 60 or 70 years. In the long term, concrete roads may be more valuable than asphalt roads. I point out that there are more concrete roads around Adelaide than many people realise. I do not know how many people would realise that Frome Road is a concrete road with a bitumen covering over the top of it. Little maintenance is carried out on that road.

There are a number of concrete roads around Adelaide. They have not been developed further in past years because of the problem with service lines. Most service lines go along the centre of the roads and concrete roads make it difficult to get at the services. Future service departments can place their service lines on the side of the roadways, which will mean that we could see more concrete roads in South Australia. In relation to the turn right indicators, I do not think anyone knows the date of their implementation.

Mr Payze: To my knowledge the work is in progress at the moment.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can the Minister explain why the staff involved in road safety within the Highways Department has been reduced from 80 to 71, according to page 44 of the yellow book?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I refer the honourable member's question to the Commissioner for Highways.

Mr Knight: Some of the duties of the Road Traffic Board have been delegated to the Central Inspection Agency. Some people have also gone as a result of that delegation of responsibility. It does not really represent a reduction as such in that activity; it is a relocation of activity.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the programme this year for the construction and sealing of the Stuart Highway? What distance will be covered this year? What ABRD funds will be spent on public transport as opposed to roads in 1984-85?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I have some detail on the Stuart Highway. Provided that the current rate of progress is maintained, the Stuart Highway from Port Augusta to the Northern Territory border will be completely sealed on the new alignment by December 1986. The construction programme is based on the assumption that Commonwealth Road Grant Act funds will be maintained in real terms beyond 1984-85 at the 1984-85 level and that ABRD funds for national highways will be at the previously indicated level for South Australia, plus an additional \$3 million in 1985-86 to meet the stated objectives of both the Commonwealth and State Governments to complete the construction and sealing of the Stuart Highway by December 1986.

The total length of the Stuart Highway is 925 kilometres. The new alignment is 150 kilometres shorter than the old route, and that saved a considerable amount of money. The length sealed to date is 520 kilometres. By October 1985 there will be a total of 710 kilometres of sealed highway from Port Augusta north. I have a brochure on the Stuart Highway to which the honourable member is welcome. The brochure gives a good indication of the stages of construction of the Stuart Highway. The first section from the Northern Territory border south to De Rose Hill is a distance of 77 kilometres. Construction of that alignment includes three bridges. This contract will be called for in October. The cash flow in 1984-85 is \$1.7 million, in 1985-86 it is \$9.6 million, and in 1986-87 it is \$3.2 million. From De Rose Hill south to Marla is a distance of 79 kilometres. The contract for construction of that alignment will be called for in February 1985. The cash flow in 1984-85 is \$2.4 million, in 1985-86 it is \$3.5 million, and in 1986-87 it is \$3.3 million. That is a joint ABRD and Road Grant Act project.

The section from Marla down to Mount Willoughby is 83 kilometres. Construction of that section is in progress and it has been contracted to McMahon Construction Pty Ltd. Completion of that section is expected in 1985-86. The cost of that section is \$9.4 million. The section from Mount Willoughby down to Pootnoura Creek is a joint ABRD and Rural Grant Act project. Expenditure this year is for site investigation and water and materials exploration. Major contracts in 1985-86 will be let and completion is expected in 1986-87. The estimated cost of this section is \$9 million. The section from Pootnoura Creek down to Coober Pedy South is 113 kilometres. That section has already been sealed. The section from Coober Pedy South down to Mirikata is 94 kilometres in length. The contract for bridges and earthworks was let to McMahons. The contract for base course is to be let in November this year. The project should finish in October next year. The estimated cost of earthworks and bridges is \$5.6 million. A separate contract has just been called for the base course. The estimated cost of this section is \$6 million.

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

Marine and Harbors, \$21 359 000

Chairman

Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:

Mr G.M. Gunn
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr K.H. Plunkett
Mr W.A. Rodda
The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J.M. Jenkin, Director, Department of Marine and Harbors.
Mr K.R. Freeman, Director, Administration and Finance.

The CHAIRMAN: I have to report that the member for Eyre will replace the member for Morphett and the member for Torrens will replace the member for Davenport. I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I refer to the Auditor-General's Report, page 134, where it states that receipts from operations in the financial year just concluded were \$31.3 million, which was a large increase of \$7.2 million, no doubt brought about by the better grain harvest that we had. There was an increase in export cargo handled of 2.8 million tonnes. Can the Minister indicate the expected receipts in tonnage for the ensuing 12 months?

Mr Jenkin: We expect approximately the same tonnage, but quite a deal of speculation is involved in that it depends on the grain harvest and on the shipping programme of the Wheat Board. Revenue will increase by the amount of our increase in charges, which has also been listed. The one variable in that that perhaps we have not seen before is increased revenue that we expect from the Port Bonython facility. This year we will run into a full year of receipts, whereas last year we had only seven months of receipts.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I would like to know what the estimates are from Port Bonython.

Mr Jenkin: Once again, that is speculative.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: To save the Committee's time I shall will be happy to get a more accurate estimate at a later date.

The CHAIRMAN: It can be provided to the Clerk of the Committee, and the deadline for the provision of those figures will be 19 October.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: An increase in boating fees was gazetted to take effect from 1 September this year. Certainly, this matter has already been canvassed in the House, but I wish to pursue one aspect of it. During the question and answer in the House we discussed section 37 (1) of the Boating Act, which provides:

All fees recovered under the provisions of this Act shall be paid into a separate fund which will be applied in defraying the cost of the administration of this Act.

The Opposition has had a lot of correspondence on this matter, protesting at the increase in fees, including one letter from a houseboat owner at Coonalpyn, who points out that marine and harbors fees have risen by 1 000 per cent in the area in which he is interested. Last year the charge to have one of his houseboats surveyed was \$18 plus travel. This year the charge has gone up to \$9 per metre plus travel. As he has a 20 metre long craft his last survey cost \$180 plus travel.

Works and Services—Highways Department, \$2 900 000—
Examination declared completed.

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

When the Minister was answering the question he mentioned that many of the charges were very small and that they had gone up only, say, from \$3 to \$5 or amounts of that nature. He cannot say that about this charge. As I understand it, the Director has estimated that revenue from the boating fees will exceed the cost of administering the Act by \$198 000 in 1984-85 and \$224 000 in 1985-86. If that is not so I would like the Director to say so. In the light of those increases, what will happen to the surpluses, and will the Minister give an assurance that the gains through this form of backdoor taxation, which is the only way that I can describe it, will not be illegally used to boost Government funding or activities in other areas?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I reiterate, as was mentioned, that all of the fees paid into a separate fund are to meet the cost of administering the Boating Act. At 30 June 1984 the fund was in debt to an amount of \$4 000. Without an increase in fees the projected deficit at 30 June 1985 would be \$202 000, and at 30 June 1986, \$426 000.

With the increases which were proposed and which are in operation, there will be a surplus to that fund of \$14 000 at 30 June 1986. Fees were increased as follows from 1 September this year: licences from \$5 to \$12, which is a once only charge; and the registration fee from \$12 to \$17, which is an annual fee. With that increase in fees, the projected balance in the account will be \$14 000. Costs include a provision for the appointment of one additional marine safety officer—a boating inspector—for the Upper Murray. The Department currently has 10 such officers throughout the State. During the summer boating season we never seem to have enough inspectors to control the recreational boating. Approximately 7 000 new licences are issued annually, with 38 000 boats being subject to the annual registration.

The honourable member asks whether I can guarantee that any surplus funds will not be used for any other purpose. I can guarantee that those funds will remain in that account to counter for the following financial year. I guarantee that those funds will be used for no other purpose than administering the Boating Act. Mr Freeman may be able to add to that.

Mr Freeman: We are talking about two different sets of regulations.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I am aware of that.

Mr Freeman: The houseboat situation is separate from boating fees. The fees have not been increased since 1964.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Under section 37(1) of the Act the fees recovered shall be applied only in defraying the costs of administration of the Act. When the increase in fees was put to Executive Council were the necessary estimates of expenditure on administration and the number of registration fees expected to be paid put to the Governor in Executive Council, as specifically required under section 37 (1) of the Act?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: To my knowledge that information would have been put to the Governor in Executive Council. The matter went before Executive Council and was approved. The Governor is made fully aware of the contents of the proposal. I can only assure the honourable member that that took place.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Supplementary to that, will the Minister cite the section of the Executive Council minute? If he gives me an assurance on his word of honour, I will accept that, but he sounded as though he was doubtful.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I could read the full details.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Will the Minister read just the part about section 37 (1)?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I have all the detail that was submitted under that section, and I am happy to make a

copy available to the honourable member rather than reading it now.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister may make the information available to the Committee.

Mr GUNN: The Minister will recall that over 12 months ago he announced at Ceduna that the port of Thevenard would be upgraded considerably to deal with the expected increase in the shipment of gypsum from that port. What stage has the proposal reached? I understand that last year a considerable sum was budgeted, but obviously it was not spent. The Minister's announcement created considerable interest, and I would be grateful if he could advise the Committee where the proposal rests at present.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: There have been negotiations with CSR and Gypsum Resources of Australia. I am not aware of the current status of negotiations: the Director may be able to enlighten the Committee.

Mr Jenkin: We have had several discussions with the gypsum industry, which has started to set out its needs. The expenditure would be quite large and the Government would be reticent to undertake the project unless a proper need could be demonstrated. I am having discussions next Wednesday with the shipping side of the joint venture regarding gypsum mining to try to delineate the advantages that would be gained from the proposed expenditure. I must say that at this stage the advantages put forward are rather slim compared to the expenditure that would be necessary to increase the ability of Thevenard to handle larger ships at faster rates. However, the matter has not been resolved and discussions are continuing.

Mr GUNN: I take it from what the Director has said that a considerable sum is involved. Will the Minister say what that sum is? As well as deepening or altering the channel, will the capacity of the belt be increased?

Mr Jenkin: The loading plant at Thevenard is one of our oldest plants. It has been expanded in its ability to handle volume several times to the stage where it is really at its design limit. If we were to dredge the channel to provide for larger vessels, the height and the rate of lading of the existing plant would be inadequate for those vessels. A cheap upgrading of the plant that has been expanded so many times would not be economical. The expenditure would be quite large, because we have passed the parameter whereby we could reasonably and easily improve the efficiency of the plant in a way that is compatible with the investment in dredging.

Mr GUNN: From time to time it has been suggested that not enough people are employed from Thevenard, and people have been brought in from outside: locals have not been given an opportunity. This matter attracted attention some months ago. Will the Minister or his officers explain the employment policy at a port such as Thevenard, particularly regarding the employment of local residents?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I am not sure whether the honourable member is talking about a specific classification of employment.

Mr GUNN: I was referring to staff for mooring boats and that sort of general work. I am not quite sure of the classification. I believe that people were brought in from other ports, and it was put to me that local people had the skills to do the job.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: During the mooring gang dispute we were employing people from other ports at the port of Thevenard to continue the flow of shipping, particularly while negotiations were in progress. That was very costly for the Department, but we felt that it was important that ships be berthed and released after loading to ensure a continuous flow of shipping. Resulting from negotiations, an additional person was employed on the mooring gang at Thevenard. It was difficult to employ people on a full-time

basis simply because of the lack of mooring work at various times.

I am sure that the member would be aware of the shipping calls at Thevenard, which has busy periods followed by slack periods when it is difficult to employ people. Therefore, we have been employing people on a casual basis and trying to provide employment at those times for unemployed people. I do not have details of the numbers of people involved, but perhaps Mr Jenkins can add something on the employment aspect.

Mr Jenkin: The policy is that we employ that number of people in each of the outports who can reasonably be fully employed either on mooring duties or on other duties within the range of duties that that class of employee has. To build up the mooring gangs in times when there are insufficient people available we have established a register with the Commonwealth Employment Office in the ports concerned, and we draw casual employees from that register. We attempt to draw those employees from local people and to keep up a level of expertise by re-employing the same people as much as possible time after time.

It would be extraordinarily expensive if we had to employ sufficient full-time personnel to meet the demands of shipping whenever it arrived. Equally, it would be expensive, as the Minister has already said, to move mooring gang personnel from one port to another. The system of casual employees to make up that surplus is used to provide the degree of service needed for the ports, but at a reasonable cost, while also employing local residents as far as possible.

Mr RODDA: Can the Minister inform the Committee what progress has been made in relation to direct container ship calls to the port of Adelaide from Japan? This matter has received much publicity in recent times and has been talked about for a long time. I am sure that I do not have to remind the Minister, who is well aware of this, about the boon that such calls would be to South Australia. Can the Minister tell the Committee where negotiations are in respect of this matter and when we can expect a decision in relation to it?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I thank the member for Victoria for his questions because I know that he and the member for Torrens are very interested in this matter. Hopefully, we still have their support in relation to it. So far as the Japanese service is concerned, we have not been successful in encouraging the Australian North bound Shipping Conference to extend its services to Adelaide. I understand that the Conference has renewed its consideration of this matter in the light of press speculation that the State is looking to non-conference ship owners to provide a service. We anticipated that that would happen. However, it would be unwise to rely upon a change of heart in this matter, given that we have been unable to achieve this over more than six years of what I believe have been detailed and rational proposals from our side, during the terms of this Government and the previous Government and prior to that.

I am thankful that we have the full backing of the South Australian shipping user group in the tactics that we are adopting at the moment. In fact, the Chairman of the shipping user group, Mr Arnold Schrape, wrote a strong letter to ANSCON that he has given me permission, to quote in the Parliament, if it is necessary to do so. I have not done that yet, but will do so if necessary. Direct shipping services with our major shipping partners are vital if the State is to maintain and extend its economic position in the future. We are looking at the options before us, given our long standing inability to achieve this result with the established Conference lines. It will be understood that examinations of these options involve negotiations of a commercial and confidential nature. Such negotiations are underway at the moment, but for the time being I would

prefer not to elaborate on those negotiations, and I am sure that the member and his colleagues would not want to jeopardise those approaches.

It is possible that the Northbound Shipping Conference will come running. We feel that it was given every opportunity in this matter and it may be that its approach will be too late. However, its approaches are still welcome if it sees fit to make them. Negotiations are of a fairly delicate nature. However, we have had expressions of support from several non-conference lines. I do not want to name those lines at this stage. That is the situation so far as ANSCON is concerned. Shipping services have improved and cargo tonnage through South Australian ports improved by 2.8 million tonnes during the past financial year. This reflects a good grain harvest, the commencement of tonnages through Port Bonython and an increase in general cargo.

Regular liner services are maintained with Europe, Asia, North America, Africa and the Indian sub-continent. The European container services with container ships have increased their frequency from one sailing to two sailings a month, bringing the overall European service up to a frequency of three sailings a month. This justified the reintroduction of direct services to Port Adelaide. The major inadequacies in the State's liner services now are with Japan, South Korea and New Zealand. Vigorous steps are being taken to remedy those shortcomings.

Mr RODDA: I was interested to hear the Minister mention 2.8 million tonnes of freight, which is quite considerable, notwithstanding the good harvest. Can the Minister tell the Committee how many boxes go out of South Australia to Japanese destinations via Melbourne?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I do not have that specific information, but will be happy to supply it to the member later. Japan, as the member is aware, is our biggest trading partner. Because of centralisation, 25 per cent of the total cargo shipped from the port of Melbourne to Japan comes from South Australia. I do not have the number of containers or 'boxes' as the member called them that are shipped. However, I think the Director has some comment to make about that matter.

Mr Jenkin: Internal statistics on trade in Australia are not particularly good. However, we have worked through this exercise very carefully and at the moment we estimate that about 16 000 TEUs (20 foot equivalent units) are going from South Australia through the port of Melbourne to Japan and South Korea. In addition, there are a number of commodities which at present are not travelling in containers but which could be if there was a container service in place.

Mr RODDA: This is a sensitive area of negotiation. This matter was given much prominence in shipping papers and the local press—that there was such a freight differential that it was advantageous to have this volume of cargo go from Melbourne. Can the Minister give us any more information on that without prejudicing anything he may have in the pipeline to conclude this contract?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I take it that the honourable member is talking about the concession that was offered?

Mr Rodda interjecting:

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: That amounted to \$93 per container, which is quite considerable. I understand that that concession is still operating and that has made it extremely difficult for the line to refuse that kind of assistance and come to us. We gave consideration to measures to counter that. They consistently refused and they denied, at the last conference held with the ANSCON representative, that there was any agreement in principle. When the member for Torrens was Minister it was the Department's understanding that it was quite clear that he achieved agreement in principle with ANSCON and the Japanese representatives that they would give us an affirmative response within a short period.

Of course, it went on and on. It was not forthcoming and we were forced by the offer of those concessions to look at alternative measures. That is what we are about.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Returning to survey charges, I intend to read the second half of the letter. As I mentioned previously, houseboat survey fees have gone up from \$18 plus travel to \$9 per metre plus travel, and this firm, which has a 20 metre long craft, now pays \$180 plus travel for survey. The letter goes on in the following vein:

Marine and Harbors always try to survey several boats together. Wouldn't \$50 be a fair charge? We did think last year's charge was ridiculously cheap but they have gone from one extreme to the other. Also, when we first had our plans approved it cost us \$18. To have our next houseboat approved will cost \$18 per metre plus 75 per cent of that—\$360 on top for checking over our plans.

I once again put to the Minister: does he not regard this hike in charges as unduly excessive? If he does, will he give an undertaking to review it? Obviously, these houseboat operators are very important to our tourist industry and should not have to face hikes in charges of around 1 000 per cent.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I ask Mr Freeman to respond to the questions asked by the honourable member.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: With respect, Mr Freeman cannot give an undertaking to review the charges.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will ask Mr Freeman to answer the detail and then I will give consideration to reviewing those charges.

Mr Freeman: Concerning the charges (and I am going on memory because I do not have the papers in front of me) this was the first increase for survey of commercial vessels and houseboats since 1964. There was a significant difference between the fees that were levied on those vessels and the fees for fishing vessels. The new charges that were brought in for houseboats and commercial vessels were set at the same level as applied for fishing vessels, so they are now all at the same charge. The Department has approximately 10 ship surveyors (again, I do not have the figures in front of me) and there is a deficit of something in the order of \$100 000 per annum in the actual cost of operating that service. Even with the new charges applying, they by no means meet the total cost of operating the staff and undertaking a survey of vessels.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The charges represent a very small proportion of the operational costs. I feel that they are not unreasonable as they still do not return the cost of the highly skilled marine surveyors. Safety is essential for the future of the tourist industry. It is my understanding that the additional cost for survey fees applies mainly to the commercial section of the houseboat industry and not to the individual or private owner. I have very strong doubts as to whether any review of charges would come up with a different answer.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I find that quite extraordinary because in the Boating Act the collection of fees is meant to defray the costs—not to try and recoup the full costs. With the figures that I have given the Committee, obviously they will more than recoup the full cost in the next 12 months or so, but maybe not thereafter. It is not necessarily a dictum of Government that fees should be levied in order to cover the full cost of any operation, particularly when it is an operation concerning safety. The Minister is right: survey is safety. However, no-one expects that one will ever recoup the full cost. Safety is usually an item paid for by the taxpayer—the State—and not necessarily levied on individual participants. Taking an example from the Minister's other portfolio, I point out that there is no way that, despite the increase in driver's licence fees and the like, motorists pay for the complete cost of safety on the roads.

I refer to the question of the police and safety organisations, and the same argument applies here. Why does the Government take this view when it is obviously a charge that will affect industry greatly? It is an increase in survey fees of 1 000 per cent. Will the Minister review these fees?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It may be possible to adjust them on a more regular basis, because the fees have not been adjusted for a long period. I can say that I will review them, but I could come back with the same decision.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Some houseboat operators have many houseboats and to have their survey fees increased by 1 000 per cent and to pay that increase every year is an enormous imposition, especially when they are contributing towards the tourist industry which, of all industries, we should be supporting in this State because it provides jobs quicker than any other industry. As I am not going to get far on that I now refer to the USL code and doubtless the member for Eyre will support my sentiments. Is the USL code as applied in South Australia applied in every other State to the same extent? I refer to the certificates on inland waters and at sea applying to fishermen. Are participants in the industry in South Australia being disadvantaged through rigorous application of the code when in other States such application does not necessarily apply? For example, in the road area, the Minister is well aware that ATAC meets from time to time and at one meeting decided on a national open road speed limit of 110 km/h. Doing the right thing, South Australia instituted 110 km/h but before we knew it Victoria had switched to 100 km/h. In other words, there was a differential between the States. True, the USL code was promulgated and put in use by the Tonkin Government, but I altered the regulations to give Ministerial discretion in difficult matters. Further, I believe that maritime safety is paramount and as Minister I upheld that, as did the member for Victoria when he was Minister, but I am still strongly against South Australians being disadvantaged through the rigorous application of laws which are supposed to be Australia-wide and which are not equally applied in other States, especially on the Murray River.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Some sections of the USL code are used in other States. One could say that we are in front in some respects and behind in others.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Can the Minister identify those areas?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I am not familiar with the provisions that are used and not used in other States, but I can get that information for the honourable member. It is not unreasonable that we ask industry and commercial operators to carry some of this cost. I ask the Director to elaborate on the point.

Mr Jenkin: South Australia was one of the leaders in implementing the USL code. Western Australia was well in advance. All States have agreed recently to a time table under which the full USL code is supposed to be implemented uniformly. I do not believe that South Australian industry has been disadvantaged in areas where there have been problems, because the Minister and his Department have been willing to discuss these problems and in a number of cases exemptions have been granted in respect of the detailed requirements where it is believed that it could be implemented without jeopardising safety. In this area, in the last few weeks we have had discussions with the tuna industry, which is going through a period of change to larger vessels and which took operators out of one category and into another. We have agreed with the industry to a period of transition to enable the change to be made. I do not believe the industry has been disadvantaged. For the most part, regulations are essential to the on-going safety of the industry and are essential to its future. South Australia has nothing to apologise for by being somewhere in the middle

to upper end of its implementation rather than one of the laggards.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Specifically, how does the code apply on the Murray River in Victoria as opposed to the Murray River in South Australia?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I cannot say what the specific difference is between Victoria and South Australia. I will ask the Director to comment.

Mr Jenkin: I am not sure that I can answer the question totally because the code covers a wide range of vessels and conditions. There might be some confusion between boating licences and the code—boating licences for the general public. So far Victoria is perhaps the only State that does not require some sort of boating licence for the general public. In the Glenelg River we do have a problem with South Australia requiring general members of the public to be licensed and Victorians taking their boats into South Australian waters without a licence and then going back into Victorian waters and not requiring a permit.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I was referring to the necessity for cockswain's certificates for Murray River fishermen or travel or pleasure boat owners.

Mr Jenkin: As I understand it for fishermen and river boat operators there is a fair degree of uniformity in the application of these regulations.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I would appreciate more detailed information if it is available at some future time.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: We will provide that information.

Mr GUNN: I support the comments of the member for Torrens. When the regulations were initially put into effect my constituents, to put it mildly, were most agitated and concerned. If the departmental officers look at the record they will see that there was some fairly direct representation made by myself and the member for Mallee. I think at one time we were responsible for having considerable modifications made to what we thought was a gross set of bureaucratic and unnecessary regulations. It was explained to me that it took five years to prepare a set of regulations of that thickness. I hope that in his further examination of these things the Minister will endeavour to streamline and in many cases do away with what I regard as unnecessary bureaucratic controls. I can give many examples where some of my constituents had certificates from other countries but had no idea of how on earth they should fill out these forms. They were beside themselves.

The member for Mallee has asked me to ask a series of questions on his behalf. What are the reasons for installing the straddle lift at Lake Butler road? How important is the safety factor? What was the cost of the lift? What will now happen to the men employed by T. O'Connors, who built the unit? Will their talents and skills be lost? Will they ever use their newly acquired skills again? Does the Minister consider that the people who use the Beachport boatyard facilities for repairs and maintenance of boats are adequately protected? What other safety problems exist in ports in the South-East about which the Government is concerned?

The CHAIRMAN: I will take that as one question from the member for Eyre and suggest to the Minister that he may be able to provide the Committee with a considered reply before 19 October.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Thank you for that gesture, Mr Chairman. Last Friday I visited Robe to open the new all-weather shipping facility in the lake mentioned by the honourable member. The cost of the straddle carrier was about \$160 000. As the honourable member mentioned, it was built by the successful tenderer, O'Connors. They had representatives at the official opening. They were very thrilled and interested in the first straddle carrier they had developed. I would think that they are in the running for any future

development or straddle carrier of this nature that may be required in other ports.

The total all weather slipway and the facility cost \$500 000. The whole project was worth almost \$700 000. There is still about \$40 000 worth of work to be done on the hard level, which should be completed prior to Christmas. I assure the honourable member that the fishing industry in the area is very excited about this modern facility. I think some of the very large vessels which can be lifted on to the hard base total a maximum of 60 tonnes. In relation to further developments in the South East, I think there is some additional work at Beachport. Negotiations are being held with the fishing industry, and there is also some work at Port MacDonnell.

Mr GUNN: What will be done to solve the erosion problem on the Robe foreshore adjacent to the copping place and next to the historic Caledonian Inn? What help is the Department giving the Kingston community in the opening of an access channel to the sea across the beach from Maria Creek in the South-East at Kingston?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I have no knowledge of what is taking place there. There is some doubt as to whether the Department is involved. I am happy to take the question on notice and we will investigate and obtain the information for the honourable member.

Mr GUNN: Has the Department considered improving the handling facilities for tuna either at Ceduna or Streaky Bay? I am sure that the Department would be aware that during certain periods of the year very large quantities of tuna are landed, and some have been landed at Thevenard. I understand there are problems when other ships have been loaded. A lot of tuna has been landed at Streaky Bay. A few years ago there was a proposal to improve facilities at Streaky Bay. What plans, if any, does the Department have to implement a quicker turnaround for tuna?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The Director will respond.

Mr Jenkin: There is not an altogether satisfactory answer to the honourable member's question. We have had some discussions on the subject. The problem with the tuna industry is that it is not in the same place each year. The volume of the catch has tended to shift eastwards. With the reduction in the volume of catch that has been imposed on the industry, it has tended to shift back towards Port Lincoln. Indeed, vessels with very much larger freezing capabilities to produce ashimi for transfer to Japanese ships at sea is now becoming rather more important. For these reasons the question of spending fairly large sums of money on facilities that may only be used in a transitory way is not an easy subject to cover. Indeed, the tuna industry itself has not really expressed very strong concern over the level of facilities that currently exist. Everyone would like immediate 100 per cent access to unload their tuna. I think the industry itself accepts that there are vagaries in the industry as to where the boats are going and where they will want to unload. I think the industry is reasonably happy with the facilities that presently exist.

Mr RODDA: What is the state of the Department of Marine and Harbors dredging programme? I vividly recall the tragedy that we had with dredging and the *AD Victoria* (I believe it has another name now). There was a considerable dredging programme at Port Pirie and Wallaroo, and I think it was also considered at Thevenard. They were the major dredging proposals. The programme at Port Pirie was to be quite extensive. I ask the Minister to bring the Committee up to date on the dredging programmes in the places I have mentioned. There is also the reclamation at the port of Adelaide with the suction cutter.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: To prepare for and cope with the long term port needs of the State, the Department is undertaking an intensive planning period with three aspects: an

overall development plan to map out the future needs of the commercial ports, particularly with regard to capital works; to prepare a more fully developed on-going maintenance plan for the commercial ports; to examine the recreational jetties and their requirements; and to examine the resources required for these three elements.

This process will obviously take some time and involve consultation with a number of interested parties, including the users of the ports, the work force and so on. I have initiated this overall planning review because it is essential to maintain a firm direction in port and shipping planning, but at the same time this must be achieved within the resource limitations that we face.

The specific question that was asked by the member for Victoria in relation to dredging is being taken into account in this development plan. I can indicate that it appears that the amount of dredging at the moment is not what it was in the past. Some is still necessary, but not to the extent that it will provide considerable work for the work force in the Department. The Department is attempting to establish what the real need is. I am aware that some dredging is necessary in the Port River. A lot could depend on future development in the Outer Harbor area, and possibly Thevenard, about which we were talking earlier. Apart from that, not a great deal of dredging is required. We have just concluded a pretty big contract at Port Pirie. The swinging basin was further developed and widened at Port Pirie and the dredging of the channel provided a vast amount of work. The outcome of this hopefully will be known, perhaps early in the new year.

Mr RODDA: Port Pirie has a considerable wheat harvest and a major storage. I am pleased to know that the swinging basin and the channel have been completed. Has the dredging enabled any ships of greater tonnage to get into Port Pirie? I know that Port Pirie has a limit, but what is the tonnage to the vessel that can get into Port Pirie now that that job is completed.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It certainly has made a considerable difference. One of the problems was that if two or three ships were in the Port Pirie harbor at the same time and one vessel wanted to leave before the other had completed loading or discharging whatever cargo it might have been carrying, one had to be moved out so that the other vessel could turn to travel out the channel and leave the harbor. That caused tremendous delays. It has overcome that problem and it has also provided for shipping vessels of greater tonnage, particularly for lead and zinc vessels that call into Pirie. I am not certain of the exact depth of the outer channel.

Mr Jenkin: I thought that the question was rather about the size of ship. At the moment the improved channel can cater for vessels of around 20 000 tonnes using the tide, but not fully loaded. The depth of the channel is around 8.1 metres (I am open for correction in the decimal point there).

Mr RODDA: Over the years there have been discussions about the disposal of the Australian wheat crop, and the outlets with the rail service through New South Wales, with the upgrading of that line. Redcliff was talked about as being a likely site. Can the Minister say what explorations or surveys are being conducted to either upgrade one of the major ports or look at a new one, perhaps on Spencer Gulf?

Mr Jenkin: We have been undertaking a very detailed study into the needs of the grain industry, along with the overall needs of the commercial ports. We have had consultations with various grain interests during that process. It is clear that this State will need to cater for larger ships in the so-called handy size bulker category of around 45 000 tonnes. There were and still are several options, from developing a port such as Wallaroo to creating a totally new port somewhere north of Wallaroo. The cost of a completely

new port facility or dredging out a port that is used totally for grain is such as would put a very heavy burden on the grain industry.

It appears more likely at this stage that the improved grain handling facility could be provided in Port Adelaide much more cheaply to the industry, partly because the costs would be cheaper, but also because other cargoes can help cover the cost of the development itself. The final outcome of these studies will not be known until the development plan procedure is completed early in the new year.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Minister will recall vividly that on Saturday he officiated at the launching of *Sea Rescue III*, which was the third squadron vessel of the South Australian Sea Rescue Squadron, an organisation for which I have a great deal of time and for which no doubt the Minister has, too. Organisations such as the Sea Rescue Squadron, the Surf Life Saving Association, the Volunteer Coast Guard, etc, provide a service to this community, which would have to be provided by the Government if they were not there to do it as volunteers. They should be supported by the Government, and in some respects they are.

The Sea Rescue Squadron, for instance, is supported by a grant of fuel from the Government, and certainly the other organisations are also supported. The Royal Life Saving Society is another such organisation. I was concerned in talking to the Commodore, Mr Rod Rebbeck, on Saturday to hear that they are having some difficulties financially. It occurred to me that the Sea Rescue Squadron as a recreational organisation could qualify for a Department of Recreation and Sport administrative subsidy grant.

There are 25 of those grants and I will canvass this matter under the recreation and sport lines tomorrow. Would the Minister be prepared to support me in approaching the Minister of Recreation and Sport to see whether the Sea Rescue Squadron would qualify for a grant if it applied for one? The grants are on a dollar for dollar basis, up to \$8 000 a year. Some organisations receive \$4 000 and some receive \$8 000—it is not for me to say what the Sea Rescue Squadron would get, because it would have to make a submission. Considering the Minister's involvement with the Sea Rescue Squadron, would he be prepared to support such an application?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I agree with the remarks made by the honourable member. The Sea Rescue Squadron provides a very important and valuable service to the boating industry; it has rescued many people from the sea and no doubt it has saved a lot of lives. The Sea Rescue Squadron is an emergency service and comes under the authority of the Minister of Emergency Services. I was filling in for the Minister last Saturday when officiating at that function, which the member for Torrens attended.

If the Squadron requires financial assistance for any project contemplated, I would support the honourable member in an approach to either the Minister of Emergency Services or the Minister of Recreation and Sport for a grant on a dollar for dollar basis. I would be pleased to do that, because I have a lot of time for these people. I have enjoyed several of their functions and I commend them on their excellent work. They should have every encouragement we can offer.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I thank the Minister for that reply. I was informed today that there are an unusual number of snags in the Murray River. I understand that the Department is responsible for desnagging the river. What is the current programme for desnagging, and is it up to projections?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The responsibility for desnagging the Murray River has been handed to the Engineering and Water Supply Department.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Consultancy was granted two or three years ago for marketing the unique facilities in this State, that is, the amount of land adjacent to port facilities. That situation does not apply in any other State. What progress has been made in selling land or facilities to overseas or Australian industry to better develop the Port of Adelaide and the State?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Available industrial land within a capital city port is very rare in Australia, as the honourable member has acknowledged. The land at Port Adelaide represents an economic reason to attract new industrial activity to Port Adelaide and at the same time the attraction of port related industries will certainly benefit the Port. The modest steps taken to develop and provide the Port industrial estates will be continued within the financial constraints facing us. A number of projects are being discussed with potential developers. The Director can elaborate in that regard.

Mr Jenkin: We have not had the brilliant success in attracting companies that we would have liked. However, we recognised from the beginning that the development of industrial estates is a long term rather than a short term project, particularly during periods of relative recession. The process has not been helped within the departmental organisation by the fact that our commercial director was reassigned to head the submarine project. I have no argument with that; he was uniquely qualified both by his past and by the fact that the Department had played a key role in commencing that project. However, it has taken us time to select another person to keep the momentum going. We are now close to appointing a new commercial director of substantial international standing, who should be in a position to carry much further, within Australia and internationally, our efforts with respect to the industrial estates.

[Sitting suspended from 8.50 to 9.5 p.m.]

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: There has been quite an amount of money spent at West Lakes on maintenance under the West Lakes Development Act. I understand that \$146 000 has been spent in the past 12 months to repair fretting on the foreshore along the lake. Can the Minister say whether all the fretting has been repaired, is more to be done, and how much will be spent on this repair work in the coming 12 months?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: There is more work to be done on the West Lakes bank protection and the whole of the revetment programme down there. There are approximately 70 000 blocks in that programme. To 30 June this year 5 600 of those blocks had been replaced and during the 1984-85 financial year 4 000 further blocks are to be replaced at a total cost of \$120 000. We have caught up with the replacement of the more dangerous blocks, and the allocation for 1984-85 will enable us to keep up with necessary replacements. The Department is experimenting with different forms of treatment such as applying an epoxy coating or spraying on a grout solution in an attempt to reduce the rate of decay. Such treatments are currently being assessed. I am not sure how many more blocks need replacing. Mr Freeman may be able to indicate the remainder of the work to be done under this programme.

Mr Freeman: I cannot add much to what the Minister has said. Our people are keeping a constant check on this matter. As indicated by the Minister, the more dangerous blocks that have broken up have been replaced. We are keeping up with the deterioration at the present time. Hopefully, use of this epoxy coating or some other means may enable us to arrest the deterioration of the bank to save replacing more of the blocks.

The CHAIRMAN: Am I to assume that the member for Torrens has no more questions under 'Marine and Harbors',

because the question he has just asked comes under 'Minister of Marine, Miscellaneous', which is the line that West Lakes comes under. I assumed that the honourable member had completed his questions in relation to the other line.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: No, they are not complete.

The CHAIRMAN: Therefore, no more questions about West Lakes will be accepted until we get to the Miscellaneous line.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: My final question relates to the boating inspectorate and the cost of running it. What is the average cost per vessel of maintaining the boating inspectorate? Is it intended that additional vessels will be provided and additional staff taken on with the boating inspectorate?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I do not have that detail.

Mr Jenkin: I will provide the average cost at a later date. As previously advised, we are putting on one more inspector.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: What about vessels?

Mr Jenkin: I point out that the boating inspection service is very economic in this State where the operators are single operators and haul their boats around a very long coastline. They launch, retrieve and patrol by themselves. This situation is not the case everywhere, and the State gets extremely good value from a dedicated boating service.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I do not want it to be thought that I was reflecting on Mr Merv Parker and his inspectorate, because I have the highest regard for them. I was trying to see what additional assistance could be provided to that group of people. I think that they do a fine job.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: We take that on notice and will get that detail for the honourable member.

Mr GUNN: I understand that a few years ago the Department carried out a considerable amount of work building bridges. Is it envisaged that the Department will again enter that particular field of the construction industry?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Over past years the Department has been involved in several bridge contracts. The two most recent ones relate to bridges associated with the O'Bahn busway. The Department has been contracted to construct the two bridges over the Torrens at Stephen Terrace, Walkerville. This decision was taken to help the Department over a period of under-utilisation of its construction workforce. Tenders were not issued once a decision was taken to allocate the work to the Department because it would be unfair to submit contractors to the cost of preparing this simply as a method of establishing a competitive price to be worked to by a Government department.

The bridge projects that I mentioned have not proceeded on schedule because of unforeseen piling problems due to subsoil conditions in the area and deficiencies with the piling subcontractors. The subcontractor failed to perform satisfactorily on the original pile specification and at his request a different type of precast pile was suggested and approved both by the managing contractors (A.W. Baulderstone) and the design consultants (Fargher Maunsell). Subsequently, a number of precast piles were driven, but turned out to penetrate the soil to a greater distance than was envisaged and the design consultants then amended their specifications back to the original method.

A.W. Baulderstone then instructed the Department of Marine and Harbors to terminate the piling subcontract, at which point the subcontractor had driven 35 out of the required 65 piles. Retendering for the piling has taken place through A.W. Baulderstone and it is understood that a new piling subcontractor will commence the work shortly. The late completion of the bridges has meant rescheduling of the labour allocation by the Department of Marine and Harbors and to date the Department has not reached the stage where its own employees can be used on the site. It

is understood that the late completion of the two bridges will not embarrass the STA in its overall completion of the contract. The contracts for the last two bridges were let only recently and the Department did not tender for that work.

Mr GUNN: Can the Minister say what monetary considerations are involved and, in particular, how much will the Department receive for the construction of these bridges?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: As I do not have the exact information, I will take the question on notice and provide the information to the honourable member.

Mr GUNN: Some time ago considerable public controversy surrounded the Port Germein recreation jetty. Is the Department going to be engaged in any upgrading of the jetty? I understand that it will be an expensive exercise and I am interested to ascertain whether the Department has any precise details. A number of local residents have expressed strong views on this matter because of the jetty's long history.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The estimated cost of the Port Germein jetty is \$750 000 to restore it to the original length, which is bent 320 degrees. A submission is being made seeking funds under the Community Employment Programme for restoration to bent 285 degrees at an estimated cost of \$450 000. The Port Germein local community has put in much effort to provide funds for rebuilding land to the waters edge in that area of the jetty. The area is open and subject to storm damage, hence the substantial cost. If rebuilt, the Department is keen to ensure that it is built to withstand any future storm damage because, if that is not done, it is rather a waste of money if it is going to be blown over in the next storm.

Recreational jetties are to be initially upgraded to an acceptable standard at the Government's expense, following which they will be leased to local councils with future maintenance to be shared between Government and councils on an 80:20 basis. The Government is to meet the full cost of the storm damage where restoration is deemed justified, and expenditure for 1984-85 covers a total of 43 jetties around the coast—many more than 100 years old. With such a small Budget line to try to maintain jetties, the amount provided does not go far. We have been trying to seek more funds for that purpose. In 1984-85 the work to be undertaken includes the jetty at Milang, at a cost of \$65 000; at Grange, at a cost of \$44 000, and at Mt Dutton Bay the cost of the work will be \$40 000.

We have had some job creation employment assistance with that scheme. The work required at Port Neill totals \$14 500 as the Department's portion of the cost of the upgrading there. The cost to the Department at Port Hughes is \$8 000, and at Port Julia it is \$7 200. There is also a miscellaneous provision of \$11 300 provided in the Budget. The total amount is \$190 000. However, that does not go very far when one takes into account the Port Germein jetty which will require \$750 000 to rebuild.

Mr RODDA: I refer to the tourist passenger ships which have shown interest in calling at the port of Adelaide but have then disappeared. I think that only two ships have called in recent times. The Hilton Hotel is making its mark and the proposed ASER construction and casino at the Adelaide Railway Station site will bring in a new dimension for tourists. We also have the world-acclaimed Barossa Valley and the Festival Centre. There are many people who still do not like riding in aeroplanes. I was astounded to meet people in the U.K. who expressed interest in sailing to Australia. However, I do not know whether we will see ships from England calling at the port of Adelaide. However the port of Adelaide could become part of the southern Australian and Pacific tourist facilities. Is the Department doing anything to promote this? Is there anything down the track that could see the tourist industry receive a boost

from marine and harbors, bearing in mind the wonderful passenger facility at Outer Harbor?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It was of some interest to me to read in the media several days ago that the Outer Harbor passenger terminal is one of the best overseas passenger terminals on the Australian coastline. It is an excellent passenger terminal. I could refer the honourable member's question to the Minister of Tourism who is probably responsible for passenger services to Australia. There is a total of six passenger services coming to South Australia, and that is probably a greater number than in recent past years. The *QEII* will be calling at Outer Harbor in February next year. That will certainly be a great attraction. The *Oriana* is due some time in the near future. I think the *Canberra* is due next month. One of the Princess ships will also be calling. The Department of Marine and Harbors has no input into the visits of these ships, but we most definitely encourage them. In fact, we would like to see more of them calling because it is an advantage to the Department and certainly to the aspects of tourism mentioned by the honourable member, including the casino. We would like to see more ships call, and we will do all in our power to encourage that.

Mr RODDA: I refer to the commercial estates mentioned by my colleague a moment ago. This area of ground has grown out of reclamation and is extensive. A lot of work has been done. Is the Department still keeping up this dredging programme to which I referred on the reclaiming of land in this area of commercial estates?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The reclamation of land in the industrial estates at Port Adelaide and Outer Harbor has slowed. South Australia possibly has more industrial estate lands available than has any other port in the nation. One can go so far and continue reclaiming as much land as one possibly can. This work has slowed. We do not see that we can continue the high cost of reclamation until such time as there is a need for that to occur according to the development of industries, and particularly port related industries, which the Department and the Government are attempting to attract. As you would be aware, we have vast areas available for that purpose; so it was necessary to slow that work.

Mr RODDA: On the question of warehousing, we have talked tonight about containerisation and the extension of it. Considerable amounts of freight go from this State to Japan via Melbourne. I recall when I was Minister talking to an entrepreneur who was interested in all the cheap land available. We have just opened this wonderful facility at Port Bonython, which will have its impact.

I recall one of these entrepreneurs who was very pleased with all of these facilities and asked where the warehouse was. When told it was in Melbourne he said, 'I may as well go to Melbourne.' When containerisation came 10 to 15 years ago the warehouses seemed to disappear. I have learnt tonight that the Northern European Line is coming here; that is having an impact on some of the people I spoke to when I was overseas, who had very nice things to say about the port of Adelaide. Is there any sign at this stage of warehousing returning to South Australia rather than the small stuff being in Melbourne and people perhaps waiting three to five weeks for it.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The negotiations in this area are continuing all the time.

Mr Jenkin: Warehousing follows shipping. If one loses shipping, automatically one loses warehousing. We have recovered some of the shipping; just as automatically, we have recovered some of the warehousing. There is quite an expanse of warehouse activity around the Port and in other areas such as Regency Park. The Department has been promoting very strongly an expansion of warehousing

because by doing that a number of private interests support our efforts to attract more shipping.

I note the increase in the amount of wool warehousing in the Port area over recent years. Wool is one commodity into which we are putting particular effort to draw the commodity and warehousing activity. In addition, one part of the industrial estates behind the container terminal is being prepared to promote as a container industry park.

A good part of that is likely to be of interest to warehousing activities for importers or exporters using containers to a large measure. Perhaps we have not seen as much return as we would like, but there has been some return. We are working on that very hard as we are working on the development of the shipping services and industrial estates.

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

Works and Services—Department of Marine and Harbors, \$12 100 000

Chairman:

Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:

Mr G.M. Gunn
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr K.H. Plunkett
Mr W.A. Rodda
The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J.M. Jenkin, Director, Department of Marine and Harbors.

Mr K.R. Freeman, Director, Administration and Finance.

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

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: For the second year in succession the Department has underspent its capital budget, in the past 12 months by \$2.5 million. The Minister will recall that in the previous year the Department underspent its capital budget by \$5 million. One of the excuses given by the Minister last year was that the second container crane was not brought on stream. If budgeting is worth doing, it is worth doing properly. While in one 12-month period it is possible to experience problems with bringing on stream a container crane, no doubt because Cabinet was slow in making a decision to confirm the second container crane, I cannot understand why the Department underspent again, this time by \$2.5 million.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: It is really only necessary to spend money when the need arises. Underspending on the capital account of \$2.360 million in 1983-84 is attributed to the following: \$1.695 million for harbor facilities and services, including \$300 000 for a container crane, which did not proceed; \$300 000 for the cutter suction dredge, which did not proceed; \$650 000 reduced capital dredging, offset by increased maintenance dredging; \$230 000 for the pilot inspection vessel, which was delayed (all costs now to be incurred in the 1984-85 financial year); \$215 000 for miscellaneous variations; \$450 000 related to fishing havens; \$240 000 for the Robe boatyard expenditure, to be incurred in the 1984-85 financial year; \$210 000 miscellaneous minor

projects, which were not proceeded with; and \$215 000 for recreational boating facilities. A sum of \$170 000 was underspent on the O'Sullivan Beach boat ramp and \$45 000 for miscellaneous minor projects, which were also not proceeded with. That totals \$2 360 million underspent in the 1983-84 financial year.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I appreciate the Minister's detailing that information. I am grateful for it because I was going to ask for it later. However, I still make the point before passing to the next question that I find it difficult to understand how the Department can consistently overbudget in this way. Obviously, when one is entering into construction of such a facility there has to be some leeway and some understanding, but \$2.5 million is a lot of leeway. The proposed estimate of capital expenditure is \$3.72 million for the second container crane and another \$3.583 million for 'other'. An amount of \$3.5 million is a lot of money to put down to 'other' expenditure and I think that the Committee ought to be told what other expenditure is meant by that.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I ask Mr Freeman to answer that question.

Mr Freeman: The \$3.583 million shown as 'other' relates to the capital dredging work to be undertaken during the year. As pointed out earlier, we are a bit uncertain about the actual projects involved because they are a bit dependent upon the development plan. It is not possible, I understand, to show the information as a specific project under the Estimates because that would involve amounts that require approval of the Public Works Standing Committee.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I just make the point that \$3.5 million is a lot of money to allocate to 'other' expenditure and I think it would be helpful if in future an explanatory note is added to that effect. The Minister, at the launching of the Sea Rescue Squadron boat on Saturday, was very supportive of recreational boating in his speech and pledged the Government's support for recreational boating. However, one finds that there is not a lot to be spent on recreational boating this year. In fact, the amount involved is \$266 000.

I know that the amount spent on recreational boating over many years was always around the \$250 000 mark until we dealt with the O'Sullivan Beach boat ramp, which my colleague the member for Victoria initiated. I believe that the spending of \$250 000 or so each year on recreational boating is really only paying lip service to an important industry so far as tourism is concerned in this State. What projections does the Minister have about future additional Government expenditure on facilities for recreational boating?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I ask Mr Jenkin to answer that question as I do not have detail of that expenditure.

Mr Jenkin: There is a process of consultation with the boating industry whereby a spending plan is developed. This tends to be a little lumpy because, if one has a large project such as the O'Sullivan's Beach boat ramp, which cost \$3 million roughly, this tends to take the funds for quite a time. A list of projects has been put forward by the panel, but I do not have a copy of it here.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Is it possible to obtain it?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: We will provide it.

Mr Jenkin: I assure the member that the general principles that have applied to recreational boating projects in the past are still in place.

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

Minister of Marine, Miscellaneous, \$1 420 000

Chairman:
Mr G.T. Whitten

Members:
Mr G.M. Gunn
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr K.H. Plunkett
Mr W.A. Rodda
The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J.M. Jenkin, Director, Department of Marine and Harbors.

Mr K.R. Freeman, Director, Administration and Finance.

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

Mr HAMILTON: Given the Minister's response to the member for Torrens in relation to the condition of the revetment work, is the Minister saying that the revetment work is such that it does not constitute any danger to people walking on the concrete blocks? The Minister will be aware that this has been of concern to me ever since I became a member. On the last occasion I inspected it, places opposite the Leg Trap Hotel were very dangerous. I have not been down there for a couple of months but would like an assurance that it has been fixed up, particularly as schoolchildren play in the area, which is opposite a reserve. There was some question some time ago of the recouping of costs from one of the companies that manufactured the concrete blocks. I understand that a Crown Law opinion was sought. Will the Minister advise whether that matter has reached finality and whether any attempts were made to recover any money from that company?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: The direct answer to the member's question is 'No'. I am not indicating that the work is finished and that it is 100 per cent safe. It will continually be kept under review. As I mentioned earlier, a lot of experimenting is taking place. We want to gauge the success of that programme in order that we can extend the work, if successful, to other areas. In relation to some of the member's other questions, I ask the Director-General to reply to those.

Mr Jenkin: The legal question as to responsibility was looked at by a joint group consisting of officers from Department of Marine and Harbors, Treasury and Crown Law. The situation was clouded because the manufacturer of the blocks ceased to exist: the company had been taken over by another group. We had some negotiations with the West Lakes Company but in the end our advice from Crown Law was that legal action would not be successful. Therefore, the Government is accepting the cost of keeping the banks safe.

Mr HAMILTON: The question of safety concerns me, particularly with schoolchildren using the area. Will the Department of Marine and Harbors place warning signs around that area? Children wander along those fragile concrete blocks, and it only requires children to step on the edge, slip and injure themselves seriously. I raise the question of compensation.

Also, I refer to the practice of some residents living around the lake of erecting fences down to the water. I raised this question at public meetings some years ago and asked whether this was an illegal practice. Does it come under the Department's jurisdiction?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will take advice on that matter. The placing of warning signs in the area of the lake could be an expensive exercise, depending on the number required. There is the possibility of warning schoolchildren in the schools, and I will ask the Department to contact all the schools in the area and warn them of the hazards. That may be a better method. I will take up the matter with the Department and investigate the possibility of issuing such warnings in schools.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to the question of fences erected to the water's edge across the revetment by residents, because I question whether it is a legal practice for people to block off the area from the front of their houses to the water's edge. I hope the Minister will take the question on notice and obtain the information.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I will take that question on notice.

Mr HAMILTON: Although I appreciate the Minister's response in regard to advising and warning schools in the area, that still does not overcome the problems of people coming from all parts of Adelaide, South Australia and elsewhere who should be warned of the dangers of walking along the revetment. I am aware of the danger of back injury, and damages could apply to people who are injured. Can the Minister advise as to the monitoring of the condition of water at West Lakes?

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I ask Mr Freeman to respond.

Mr Freeman: Monitoring of water quality is undertaken by the Engineering & Water Supply Department on a regular basis and the Department is charged for that.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I am extremely concerned about what the Minister said in response to the member for Albert Park, who asked some good questions. The Minister said he was unable to guarantee safety, and that is a serious matter. The Minister cannot have it both ways. If the Government will not put up warning signs, which must be difficult, then a crash programme must be set in train to repair the revetment. The matter cannot be adequately dealt with by warning local schools. The Minister said he was not able to guarantee safety.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: I do not recall saying that.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: That is my understanding, and the problem has to be addressed.

The Hon. R.K. Abbott: Although I do not remember saying that, if the honourable member understood my remarks in that way I will check them tomorrow. I do not suppose one can guarantee anything. How can one guarantee safety by putting up signs? Accidents can happen anywhere at any time and not just at West Lakes. I said that I would take it on board and take it up with the Department to see what we can do about it, including approaches to the school and the placement of signs, if that is warranted.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed. I thank the Committee for its co-operation, and the Minister and his two officers. I ask the Minister to thank the officers who were with him earlier today.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.53 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 3 October at 11 a.m.