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Tuesday 4 June 2019 - Estimates Committee B (Rockliff)

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Tuesday 4 June 2019

MEMBERS

Mr O'Byrne
Mrs Rylah (Chair)
Mr Tucker (Deputy Chair)
Dr Woodruff

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Dr Broad
Ms Dow
Ms O'Byrne
Ms O'Connor

IN ATTENDANCE

Hon. Jeremy Rockliff MP, Deputy Premier; Minister for Education and Training; Minister for Infrastructure; Minister for Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries

Department of Education

Tim Bullard, Secretary

Robert Williams, Deputy Secretary, Corporate and Business Services

Jodee Wilson, Deputy Secretary, Support and Development

Jenny Burgess, Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Performance

Trudy Pearce, Deputy Secretary, Learning

Kane Salter, Director, Finance and Business Services

Liz Jack, Director (Libraries Tasmania)

Todd Williams, Director, Facility Services

Shane Frost, Director, Education Performance and Review

Lynne McDougall, Director, Inclusion and Diversity Services

Suzanne Pennicott-Jones, Director, Office of the Secretary

Office of Education Registrar

Katharine O'Donnell, Registrar

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Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards & Certification (TASC)

Katrina Beams, Executive Officer

TasTAFE

Jenny Dodd, Chief Executive Officer

Scott Adams, Chief Financial Officer

Department of State Growth

Infrastructure

Kim Evans, Secretary

Gary Swain, Deputy Secretary, Transport Services

Alan Garcia, Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure Tasmania

Shane Gregory, General Manager, State Roads

James Verrier, Director, Infrastructure Policy

Martin Crane, General Manager, Road User Services

Babette Moate, Acting Director Passenger Transport

Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST)

Lia Morris, Chief Executive Officer, MAST

Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries

Kim Evans, Secretary

Retired Rear Admiral Steve Gilmore, Defence Advocate

Bob Rutherford, Deputy Secretary, Industry and Business Development

Mark Bowles, General Manager, Business and Trade Tasmania

Lara Hendricks, A/G Director, Advanced Manufacturing & Northern Engagement

Skills

Kim Evans, Secretary

Bob Rutherford, Deputy Secretary, Industry and Business Development

Angela Conway, General Manager, Skills Tasmania

Stuart Hollingsworth, Director Policy & Programs - Workforce Development Systems

Business Services

Amanda Russell, Deputy Secretary, Business Services

Glen Dean, Director, Finance

Ministerial Staff

Vanessa Field, Chief of Staff

Vince Taskunas, Principal Adviser – Infrastructure

Anna Jones, Senior Adviser – Education

Adam Foster, Adviser – Infrastructure and Advanced Manufacturing and Defence Industries

Rosita Gallasch, Adviser - Infrastructure

Geoff Logan, Adviser – Skills, Training and Adult Education

The committee met at 9 a.m.

CHAIR (Ms Rylah) - Good morning, everyone. Members would be familiar with the practice of seeking additional information, which must be agreed to be taken by the minister. It must be stated by you and the question must be handed in writing to the minister and the minister will provide his approval.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Chair.

As we would all appreciate, education is the single most powerful driver for positive change in Tasmania, empowering our children, young people and adults to succeed and contribute fully to their communities and the future of our state. As minister for Education and Training I have seen firsthand how education transforms lives and creates opportunities. It is precisely because of this that we have placed a focus on increasing access and providing educational equity to all since we came to Government so that no matter what circumstances a learner may come from or where they live in Tasmania, they have the opportunity to access and enjoy a quality education. The 2019-20 Budget provides a record \$324 million over six years for Education and Training, with \$145 million in recurrent funding that includes funding for an additional 358 new staff, 250 new teachers with a focus on quality teaching practice, and \$179 million to education infrastructure.

In December 2018, our Government signed the National School Reform Agreement, which means the Tasmanian Government will provide an additional \$340 million to Tasmanian government schools over the next 10 years. This significant investment increases support for government schools to further address Tasmania's unique and complex educational circumstances with the aim to achieve equity for all learners. We will ensure this funding is utilised to support government schools to drive continuous improvement in learner outcomes for the benefit of all individuals, families and communities in Tasmania. This means directing funding to student need to ensure that the students of today receive maximum benefit from available funding. Supporting all learners means tailoring high-quality learning to the needs of individuals across a system that prioritises equity of opportunity and achievement.

We face significant challenges in Tasmania with high rates of disadvantage and significant concentrations of disadvantage present in our communities but we know that every single student is capable of successful learning. High-quality, equitable education empowers individuals, families and communities to build a better and brighter future for themselves. A strong example of how greater access to education empowers individuals to achieve their goals is our 11 and 12 extension school program. Extension schools are providing greater opportunities for young people to engage in learning to complete year 12, especially those who have not previously been engaged at a college. Each student's learning pathway is personalised based on their learning needs and future aspirations. Curriculum in extension schools now enables a student to access diverse learning options across sites within a region. Students can now access vocational or academic pathways, or a combination of both, through collaborative partnership between colleges, extension schools or Virtual Learning

Tasmania to realise their approved learning program. We are proud the direct retention rate from year 10 to year 12 is the highest on record at 72.2 per cent based on the census of 2017 to 2019.

Our 2019-20 Budget investment will continue to support access, participation and engagement of learners in Tasmania through the targeted use of resources. We are implementing a nation-leading needs-based funding model for students with disability, which will deliver an \$8 million to students with disability in 2020, increasing to \$11 million by 2022. This is on top of the \$93.3 million already being invested in 2019 for students with disability, the biggest investment in disability education of any Tasmanian Government. Implementing a needs-based funding model will make a huge difference to our students, schools and families by providing resources for what an individual student needs rather than being obliged to conform to a disability diagnosis.

We know that a strong sense of wellbeing is fundamental to helping students to engage with and to succeed in learning at school and throughout their lives. Our 2019-20 investment provides an additional \$2.7 million to provide a school nurse in every government senior secondary college by 2021. This will increase our governments total investment for school nurses to \$3.8 million and 2019-20, a total of \$17.4 million over the forward Estimates.

Recognising our school leaders are key to improving learning outcomes and the health and wellbeing of staff underpins everything we wish to achieve for education in Tasmania and we are committing \$4.9 million over four years to implement the 2019-21 Principal Wellbeing Action Plan. This will go far in supporting principals and responding to the concerns raised in the annual Riley Report.

Over the years I have heard from teachers, parents and young people as to how traumatic experiences can have a devastating impact on students' ability to function in the classroom environment and learn. This is why we have prioritised funding of \$7.25 million over four years to increase support for children and young people impacted by trauma. This funding will build capacity within schools including through trauma informed practice training and professional learning for school staff and student engagement programs. We know that school and community partnerships further enhance student wellbeing and learning and that families are the first and most influential educators of our children. In June last year, I requested the Department of Education review how it engages families and policy development and decision-making at school and department levels to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Our 2019-20 investment includes approximately \$800 000 over four years to implement recommendations from the review.

In recognition of the importance and value of both vocational learning in schools we are committing additional funding of \$1.48 million over the four years to increase the utilisation of the Australian school-based apprenticeships for years 10 to 12 students in Tasmanian government schools.

Our Government has maintained our focus on ensuring all children in Tasmania have a great start to learning in the early years regardless of where they live or their family background, resulting in a range of initiatives and programs to support this valuable period in a child's life. We are committing 15-and-a-half million over four years from 2019-20 to commence construction of six new child and family learning centres in Sorell, Kingsborough, Glenorchy, East Tamar, West Ulverstone and Waratah-Wynyard communities. I am pleased to announce the school sites to be progressed Sorell School, Table Cape Primary School and East Tamar Primary School. A number of factors were taken into account when determining the school sites including site capacity, community readiness and high numbers of birth to four-year-old children. We are also committing

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\$8 million to the 2019-20 budget to support the continued implementation of the Working Together for 3 Year Olds initiative to provide quality while in learning experience for disadvantaged and vulnerable children in partnership with the early childhood education and care sector. Through this initiative, we will provide up to 10-and-a-half million per annum to support free preschool for those children who are the most disadvantaged or vulnerable.

I am extremely proud of our government's strong and my Department of Education's continued investment in education for the benefit of all learners and the future prosperity of Tasmania. Education results are improving. However, we must remain focused on continued support to provide quality education in Tasmania for every learner, every day. Thank you, Chair.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you update us on what is happening with the Brighton school? I understand there are significant issues around a site and location for the new Brighton school in relation to the farm. What sites are you considering?

Mr ROCKLIFF - This is a significant investment for the Brighton community. It is important that the department is conducting consultation regarding the site and location of the school. I know, from community consultation, that construction of a Brighton High School is a much-anticipated project the Government is looking forward to delivering in partnership with the Brighton municipality. Following extensive site analysis, community consultation and advice from key internal and external stakeholders it has been agreed that the school and farm cannot be co-located on the current farm site. The land area required for a high school means that there would be inadequate vacant land for the farm as well. Whilst the department was open to the option of relocating the farm, this was on the basis that any new site would significantly improve educational benefits of the farm to the Jordan River Learning Federation, providing greater scope to develop the Government's vision for the farm.

For this reason, I have decided that we will develop the Jordan River Learning Federation School Farm site as originally planned. That is a significant investment, and I have requested the department to work with the Brighton Council to identify suitable sites for the construction of the new Brighton High School.

Ms O'BYRNE - Just to confirm, you are ruling out building it on the school farm site?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Correct.

Ms O'BYRNE - What sites are being considered with council at the moment? I understand they're not necessarily on side with this position.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's important that not only the council have a say, and of course the council are a very important stakeholder in this, but also so are the community.

It is also important that, given the significance of this investment, that we bring the community along with us, and given the investment that we are making, which is an important investment, we want to minimise any negativity or disagreement within the community by ensuring that everyone has a say.

Ms O'BYRNE - The council, as I understand it, would like to have the farm moved out of the township, so you're quite comfortable that that's not going to be on the agenda more? In that case,

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have you got the money? There's the build for this school in 2021 with \$1 million. What money have you got for land acquisition, or are you still relying on council to do a land handover?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have ruled out the farm as the school site, and we were open to looking at the farm in terms of Brighton high school and the farm to see if we could combine them both, but it wasn't possible. There wasn't the room to co-locate, so the school farm, in terms of the farm, will remain a school farm, and we will move ahead with our investment there. But we will work with council, of course, to do a site analysis of what potential options are available within the Brighton municipality.

Ms O'BYRNE - My question was not, minister, will you work with council, because clearly you are going to have to, but is there money set aside in the funding for land acquisition that will need to obviously be spent prior to the commencement of the build in 2021?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We first have to do a site analysis.

Ms O'BYRNE - What are the sites?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That's why you do an analysis.

Ms O'BYRNE - But you have sites in conversation with council already?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We would like to work with council to ensure that we have all available options in terms of a site analysis. We work collaboratively when it comes to other councils, such as the West Tamar Council, for example.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, my question is, do you have money for land acquisition?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important that we find the site first.

Ms O'BYRNE - But do you have money for land acquisition within the Brighton school project?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The \$30 million is committed for the Brighton School Farm.

Ms O'BYRNE - And that includes potential land acquisition? Sorry, \$30 million is for the school, \$4.3 million is for the farm.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It all depends on what site is selected, the design of the building, of course -

Ms O'BYRNE - This is yet another unfunded issue within the Budget. So, you don't have money for land acquisition. You don't have it. You don't have an agreement with council. You don't have a site selected. You don't have money for the purchase of the land, and you are commencing the build in 2021.

Mr ROCKLIFF - That's right, two years. \$1 million.

Ms O'BYRNE - I can read the Budget papers. I've seen the way it transitions out. In 2021 there's \$1 million, in 2021-22 there is \$2 million, in 2022-23 there is \$12 million. The rest of the

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\$15 million is somewhere in the out years. How much of that \$30 million that is supposed to build this school will go on land acquisition?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not going to, without a site analysis and without -

Ms O'BYRNE - Or an agreed relationship with council on what's going to happen.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have a good relationship with the Brighton Council and indeed the mayor, Tony Foster. We have worked constructively together over the last five years, as minister for Education, and we will continue to do that.

Ms O'BYRNE - The two sites I am hearing discussion around are near the sports ground which council does not support, and an area that's in the middle of a built-up industrial zone.

CHAIR - Is that a question?

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you confirm that they are the two sites you are discussing?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not going to rule anything in or out. I am not going to play this rule-in rule-out game because I want the community to have a say.

Ms O'BYRNE - Because you haven't got a plan.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, I am interested in seeing how the progress of the roll-out that you have committed to for all high schools to go to year 12 is going, and the concern that people have in some parts of Tasmania about the impact on the college system. There are quite a lot of differences, as you are aware, between high schools and colleges - gaps, physical and geographical distances and resourcing issues, depending on the number of students. Two high schools in particular, Taroona High School and Ulverstone High School, both have different issues in terms of their relationship with the closest college, Hobart College and Don College.

I am concerned to see where the progress went. Last year Ms O'Connor asked questions about this. You said you were following up with principals, had already met with them last April, you were going to meet with them again at the end of the year.

Where are we on that issue? Can you tell me how many students there are at Ulverstone High School? There were only two last year? How many are there this year?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question. I beg to differ on the differences. I believe that the college communities and the high school communities are really working together well with respect to this policy and roll-out.

All through the policies that we have within education, it's about equity, and access to education, irrespective of where you live or your background. It is important that we recognise that this policy is working when it comes to our retention and TCE attainment. We are providing more opportunities for individuals, and for whatever barrier, there are more people engaged in year 11 and 12 subjects.

What is important also is that we recognise the good work that is being done around the state. Rosny College, for example, and you would have heard about the teganna Collective. That is

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progressing well. A few weeks ago there was the Hellyer Collective launched with the high schools in and around Hellyer College. That is a similar model to Teganna, but one that is borne of the region, with slight differences. I met with the Hellyer Collective a few weeks ago, and the willingness to engage in really collaborative discussions for the benefit of ensuring that our students can access 11 and 12 provision is really very positive.

I don't see the antagonism between colleges and high schools. I met with the principals in April, as you say, last year. I met with them again in November. I meet the principals individually from time to time, and look forward to meeting them as a collective as well, to talk about issues within colleges 11 and 12 provision and any subject really that they want to talk about.

I am very excited about the model that has developed because it is not a one-size-fits-all model.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you explain what you mean by that? It sounds like it is a one-size-fits-all model, in whatever resourcing high schools need to keep students there to year 11 and 12. There is just a finite pool of resources. Ultimately this is going to starve colleges of necessary funds to provide the high-quality resource that they provide.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Colleges provide a high-quality education in 11 and 12 provision and that will continue. This is not about a 'them and us' mentality and is not a one-size-fits-all. That is very clear when you look at the collective arrangements in Hellyer.

Dr WOODRUFF - What about Taroona? Are you going to take that high school to year 12, which is already bursting at the seams?

Mr ROCKLIFF - There are 43 high schools that are involved in the 11 and 12 provision at this present time in terms of the extension. Expectation is that all high schools will be involved in 11 and 12 provision by 2022. Ulverstone Secondary College, for example - and they have recently changed their name - they have, I am advised, 78.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) students going to Ulverstone.

Dr WOODRUFF - In year 11 and 12.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes. It is important to recognise, Dr Woodruff, that a lot of these students would not have accessed year 11 and 12 provision without this opportunity. That does not mean that Ulverstone Secondary College isn't willing to engage in constructive discussion and dialogue for the benefit of the students with other colleges, of course. In fact, a couple of years ago, I am aware of a student who was attending Ulverstone High School, as it was then, and having year 11 and 12 subjects at Newstead College in Launceston, for example. So it is not one-size-fits-all.

Dr WOODRUFF - What has happened to Don College? Have their enrolments gone down by 76 students, or a large number of enrolments?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Enrolments in colleges also depend on the year 10 cohort at any particular time as well.

Ms O'BYRNE - You mentioned Newstead, so we will touch on that and declare an interest as my child goes there. It is a school that can cope with more than 1000 students. It has very few students. Can you guarantee the future of Newstead College? Yes or no, will be fine.

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Mr ROCKLIFF - I am very confident.

Ms O'BYRNE - In its current form?

Mr ROCKLIFF - What do you mean in its current form?

Ms O'BYRNE - Do you guarantee that it will remain a college in its current form?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you table the infrastructure priorities for 2019? We get it every year, someone will have it.

CHAIR - We are talking education infrastructure, are we?

Ms O'BYRNE - We get the list every year, Chair. Can you put it on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We can take it on notice if it means that we can -

Ms O'BYRNE - You always have it. Are you sure you're not hiding it?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, we do not hide things in this place.

Ms O'BYRNE - Back to Newstead, you do not anticipate that the model at Newstead will change? If you extend those other feeder high schools to year 12, Newstead's numbers will probably decline.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Absolutely. It is a very good college. I visited it recently when there was a years 11 and 12 art exhibition of the students displaying their work to be judged as part of their subject, if I can put it that way. But I am not going to discourage colleges and high schools for having a conversation about what their future might look like.

Ms O'BYRNE - Are they having a conversation about what their future might look like, minister?

Mr ROCKLIFF - You asked me the question about Hellyer College -

Ms O'BYRNE - I'm not asking about Hellyer College -

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne, allow the minister to answer the question, please, as the minister sees fit.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I encourage all colleges and high schools to engage in constructive discussion -

Ms O'BYRNE - Is Newstead College currently in discussion around that change?

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne, please do not interrupt.

Mr ROCKLIFF - All colleges are looking at what they are providing -

Ms O'BYRNE - So, yes.

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne.

Ms O'BYRNE - Are they engaged in -

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne, I warn you. Please be polite and wait for the answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr Bullard, please.

Mr BULLARD - All colleges are in discussions with their feeder high schools around their provisions, and the way that they can differentiate what they are providing. What we are trying to do is to expand the education offering that we are providing in senior secondary, to ensure that we have opportunities for all students to be engaged in meaningful learning, and that means that different sites are undertaking different delivery of different subjects.

The other thing, too, is that we are looking at how colleges themselves can support more differentiation in terms of the students, so this year it is great that in each of the eight colleges we are supporting tier three programs through funding, so that young people who attend college and are at risk of re-engaging have options within college.

They're the discussions that are going on right across the state. The minister has already referred to the Garner Collective, Hellyer Collective, and there is work going on in the greater Hobart area around how those schools will work together. And last week a discussion was undertaken between the high schools and the colleges in the Launceston area around provision.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, the new Hobart high school you allocated \$250 000 for a study for, some time ago -

Mr ROCKLIFF - It was \$300 000.

Ms O'BYRNE - Well in that case, if we spent \$300 000, can we have a copy of the report? What was its conclusions?

Mr ROCKLIFF - As a Government we are committed to a long-term, sustainable resolution of the complex capacity issues affecting schools in the greater Hobart area. The Government understands that there are immediate enrolment pressures facing a number of schools such as Taroona High School. There are also much broader issues for education provision affecting the whole of Hobart that require a long-term sustainable solution. Preliminary investigations into the feasibility of an inner-city high school suggest that there are many complex factors that affect the decisions families make about where to enrol their child in school. The Department of Education is consulting with schools in the greater Hobart area and the broader community to develop a solution mix for sustainable education provision that meets the changing community needs and addresses enrolment complexities.

We have fulfilled our 2017-18 Budget commitment to develop an education infrastructure planning framework. This framework, delivered by the Department of Education in July 2018, is a planning tool that uses school information such as enrolment data, capacity figures and population demographics to forecast enrolment demand, now through to 2036. The department has applied the

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framework to test the feasibility in demographic terms of an inner-city school in Hobart. The results of the feasibility study show there is a reasonable demographic demand to support an inner-city high school, but that a new school would not necessarily resolve enrolment pressures on those schools that are now at or are close to capacity.

A new high school may be one of a number of options that warrants further investigation as part of a broader collective effort to address education concerns affecting the wider Hobart community. Key stakeholders the department is consulting with include principals, teachers, school, staff, parents, carers, students, local businesses, residents, councils and industry groups, and we are committed to ensuring all voices are heard and play a role in shaping public education. I hope that has answered your question.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can I just confirm, then, that you spent \$300 000 on a report that says it is all really hard, and you have no plan at this stage to -

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, that is not true.

Mr BULLARD - No, we didn't spend the \$300 000, and we just need to get clarity of how much of that we did spend. It is also important to understand that it wasn't spent on the commissioning of a report. It was spent on the purchase of a system-demand model, so now we can reuse that for other sites and areas across the state.

Ms O'BYRNE - But no Hobart high school, it looks like.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are doing further work on that now.

Ms O'BYRNE - But there is no money in the never never anyway.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Well there is no funding in the Budget for the building of a new Hobart high school, but I invite Ms Burgess, who has engaged in this area.

Ms BURGESS - What we have realised through that analysis is that it is a really complex environment, the broader greater Hobart city area, for a number of reasons. We know that we have growing enrolments at Taroona High School, we know that we have single-sex provisions in high schools at New Town and Ogilvie, we know that parents make a number of choices where to send their young person to high school based on a number of factors. So purely looking at demographics and the population levels will not help us adequately determine what the future provision in the greater Hobart area is.

Whatever we decide has to be future proof. We know that the University of Tasmania is moving into the Hobart CBD, and we don't fully understand the impact of that yet. What we have undertaken to do is we have met with all high school and college principals from as far as Jordan River Learning Federation to Claremont College across to Rose Bay, Clarence High Schools, to pull them together for them to help us solve the issue and complexities around senior secondary and secondary provision in the broader Hobart area. This week we are meeting with the primary schools and we will pool groups together after that to determine what impact we can have and what is required in the broader Hobart area to suit the needs of students in the longer-term, not a short-term solution.

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Ms O'BYRNE - Thank you, Ms Burgess. If I can confirm, minister, the money you spent of \$300 000 told you exactly what we already knew, that we can move on.

CHAIR - Is that a question or a statement?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are still working through a complex set of issues. Ms Burgess has outlined that -

Ms O'BYRNE - Taroona is over capacity, we have single sex schools, that there are a host of reasons for people making choices; all the things that we talked about and already knew.

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne, please don't interrupt. It is a time for questions and this is your opportunity. I am not giving you another call. Please allow the minister to finish.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important that we look at the future needs of our education infrastructure. I wish your government had looked at the future education provision of education infrastructure because I wouldn't have started with such an appalling mess in the school buildings and schools I saw in my first year. I was gobsmacked at how any government would allow students to sit in classrooms in some of the school buildings I saw. They were third-world conditions and we are doing our best to address that now.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, you have laid out decisions in Education and Training that set a course for infrastructure, and colleges and high school will have an impact that will last for a generation. Can you tell us why you keep talking about TCE when you are talking about high schools going to year 11 and 12? I am not hearing your emphasis on TCE and ATAR as learning options for students that attend year 11 and 12. How is it going to be possible, given the small numbers going to some colleges, those year 11 and 12 extensions, to provide either a TCE or an ATAR score for students if there isn't the sufficient number of courses offered to provide the quality education to achieve either of those standards?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is all about the individual, individualised learning and providing opportunities for each individual student based on their aspiration and their interest. We all know the longer we can engage our kids in education, the more productive members of society they will become. They will live longer, be healthier and have more opportunities as a result. It is about designing and investing in an education system that maximises the opportunity for every single Tasmanian, irrespective of their circumstance, background or where they live.

Dr WOODRUFF - There is a finite pool of resources, unless you can tell me that there is going to be a whole lot more money coming into the system. I don't see it in the Budget. There is a finite pool of resources to bring those children you have talked into year 11 and 12 and make sure we don't lose the rich learning environment we have in our college systems, which produces such outstanding results for children from regional areas or backgrounds such that none of them believed anyone would study year 11 or 12. It is not an elitist college system, which I feel your Government sometimes refers to it as, far from it

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have never referred to it as an elitist system.

Dr WOODRUFF - How do we bring the two together when there is not an expansion of the resources in the pie? If you are driving down college enrolments you will end up reducing the number of courses that can be made available.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I reject that we are driving down college enrolments. We are increasing opportunities for students across Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - What happened to Don College? What was their enrolment this year compared to last year?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I can provide those figures for you, but back to your first question. Students completing year 12 are provided with more opportunities and we celebrate success in education in various ways. It could be through ATAR, a TCE or vocational education and training. I have spoken to principals who celebrate, understanding the circumstances of some of their kids, that they are walking through the school door - as you would appreciate.

We need to take a step back and look at the bigger picture. We know we are the only state that has not had the traditional 11 and 12 provision. The ACT has a similar model to us but they have a very different set of demographic circumstances. Over the years, we have had a kindergarten to grade 10 culture. We are changing that to kindergarten to grade 12. If you had no college system around Tasmania, all high schools only went to year 10 and you wanted to create 11 a year 11 to 12 provision for students following year 10, if you only built that infrastructure and that provision on eight sites around Tasmania it would exclude a lot of people.

Dr WOODRUFF - Perhaps, except the cost of building buildings and these expensive classrooms comes out of some budget and out of the education budget. That is money that is not spent. With respect to the one size fits, all will you be looking at the issue of not continuing, for example, a school like Tarooma to year 11 and 12? It would draw students from Elizabeth College and Hobart College, two amazing institutions that produce incredibly high-quality learning outcomes for the children who go there. Is that the sort of adaptability you are thinking of? I cannot even imagine where you would fit the students on the site.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I encourage you to travel the state, visit colleges and high schools and look at the different provisions available. You will get a greater understanding that it is not one size fits all.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is particularly about that as an example. It gives an indication of whether you are flexible like you say you are, because that is probably the standout of a most extremely different standard. We have Woodbridge High School already bursting at the seams, which goes to year 10 now. It desperately needs infrastructure work done on it.

CHAIR - Do we have a question?

Dr WOODRUFF - It is overdue for work. You have Huonville High School, which is doing incredibly well with that college program. It is working in some places but will be a problem in others and you are still forging ahead with the one size fits all model.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Dr Woodruff, it is not a one size fits all model.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you explain for Tarooma, for example, how it would not be a one size fits all model?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important to realise that we committed to extend 21 rural and regional high schools in our first term of Government and we exceeded that. We have extended 43 high schools to the year 11 and 12 provision. That was not through forcing communities or high schools to add year 11 and 12. The communities put their hands up and said they wanted to be part of this. Ulverstone Secondary College, as it is now, was not on the original list. They came to me and the department said they want to offer 11 and 12 provision at their high school, which was great. The school association was on board and it has been successful. We have almost 80 full-time equivalent students.

Dr WOODRUFF - We are not arguing about that stuff. We are talking about the one size fits all approach and the example of Taroona. You keep avoiding that issue because it is the hard one. It challenges you to say whether you are a one-size-fits-all minister or adaptable.

CHAIR - Do you have a question please, Dr Woodruff?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I believe we have been very adaptable. That is why we have had collectives forming over the last five years. I am very adaptable and my motivation is the student and what is best for the individual student.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, could I ask you to table the actual year 11 and 12 enrolment numbers for each school in Tasmania, by school? Do you need to take that on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes.

Ms O'BYRNE - This is question to you, Chair, so I don't lose my question. We were waiting for the infrastructure audit and the cost of Hobart High School study. I am happy to put all of those on notice if that is easier for the minister.

CHAIR - Minister, would you prefer them on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will take all those on notice but if we find the information today we will provide it.

Ms O'BYRNE - That would be great. Minister, I am interested as to when you were first made aware there would be an efficiency dividend, the discussions around what in education constitutes frontline and backline, and what areas you will be quarantining from any impact?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The efficiency dividend is 0.75 per cent government expenditure per year and is less than the efficiency dividends of other jurisdictions of around 2 per cent. Treasury will work with agencies to identify savings. There will be a strong focus on minimising the impact on service delivery and looking to expenditure such as consultants, travel and advertising, together with a targeted vacancy control and natural employee attrition without affecting frontline essential services, as well as reviewing returns from all government businesses. The department is working on that now will advise me in due course.

Ms O'BYRNE - Have you determined what in education would constitute a backline area that could be captured by this process? Do you have an agreement from Treasury that there will be a quarantining of education? The Premier was able to quarantine an area yesterday. What commitment do you have for quarantining education or can you identify what that backline pool will be?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Frontline services will not be affected.

Ms O'BYRNE - I am not trying to be difficult. I know you don't want to impact on frontline services. I am conscious this is, like Health, one of those portfolios where it is difficult to determine what a backline role would be. Could you identify what you think a backline job in education is?

CHAIR - I counted four questions in that question. Can you wait for the minister to answer?

Ms O'BYRNE - Apologies, Chair. I was trying to clarify so the minister was aware of what I was asking. I am not suggesting he is attacking frontline services, only trying to find out where it might fit.

CHAIR - Thank you, Ms O'Byrne, for clarification, please allow the minister to answer the questions.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will be waiting on advice from the department with respect to savings measures. We will not be reducing our frontline services. Education does have a large frontline service in our teachers and teacher assistants, but we will be working through those savings measures in a measured, methodical and strategic way.

Ms O'BYRNE - Are you anticipating a percentage share of the cuts in education or, as a larger agency, will education be expected to do some of the heavy lifting on these efficiency dividends?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We all have a role to play in managing our budgets sustainably, as education does and has been very good at. We will play our role to ensure the government achieves savings and we balance those budgets. If we manage our finances well, we can continue to invest in vital areas of service delivery, of education in my context.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you table the expenditure for travel? The travel would need to be broken up between school-based, educational travel and non-educational travel, advertising and consultancy, those areas you will be expected to find savings? Do you need that on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It might take some time, I will take that on notice.

Ms O'BYRNE - Thank you. I understand TasTAFE is funded through a deed with Skills Tasmania, which outlines their base funding over the forward years. That doesn't have a specific reference for how an efficiency dividend would be applied. Are they, in effect, exempt from the efficiency dividend?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have had no conversations with the Treasurer as to TasTAFE having to find an efficiency dividend. Over the forward Estimates, I went through these figures yesterday, TasTAFE are above inflation and that is good. They have a particular deed and they have growth funding.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can you confirm it is impossible to apply an efficiency dividend to TasTAFE because of their contract?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have had no conversations with the Treasurer about applying an efficiency dividend to TasTAFE.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, can you please advise what action you have taken to ensure the department's large asset portfolio is managed appropriately?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Department of Education manages a large statewide asset portfolio comprising in excess of 500 sites with combined current estimated value of over \$1.3 billion. Our government has increased annual maintenance spending on the Department of Education sites from \$14.9 million in 2013-14 to \$24.8 million in 2017-18. We take the management of this large asset portfolio very seriously. Since coming to Government, we have been committed to working with the department to ensure that all Tasmanian government students have access to contemporary, inspiring learning spaces. This is demonstrated through our Government's significant investment in capital works. This investment in facilities has been the largest expenditure in over two decades.

As members would appreciate, an important part of sensible asset management includes careful planning and maintenance for the future. To further support the department's work in this area, our Government has supported the purchase of a modern asset management system to assist with strategically managing its asset into the future. Through 2018, the department undertook a tender process to identify the most appropriate and modern asset management system to purchase. After a lengthy and extensive evaluation process, Assetic[TBC] has been identified as the preferred supplier. A contract allowing for the system to be implemented has been signed and implementation of the system has recently commenced. Through 2019 and 2020 the system will be implemented and loaded with the key asset data including condition information to be sourced from an independent contractor. This means that the department will easily be able to prioritise and plan.

This powerful asset management system will be a key tool in identifying maintenance and capital priorities and allow for a strategic forward planning and modelling can be undertaken easily. The system will also seamlessly integrate with the departments finance system and reporting platform and will provide an easy way for schools to access key asset data in the future and I look forward to providing members with an update next year. The asset management system will manage data for such a large infrastructure portfolio and it will highlight projects of the highest need, assisting decision-making and allowing for robust future capital and maintenance planning. This system is an investment into the future of education infrastructure, and will assist Government's planning to ensure that all students will have access to contemporary learning spaces.

I thank the department and especially the facilities team, headed up by Todd Williams, who have done tremendous work for a long time, but also in the last few years which I have been minister and had a greater knowledge of the work that they do.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, in 2013-14 under the Greens education minister, Nick McKim -

Mr ROCKLIFF - I remember it.

Dr WOODRUFF - the percentage of children meeting the kindergarten development check was 74.5 per cent. Under your Government, this has declined every single year to 74.1 per cent in 2014, 72.6 per cent in 2015, 71.4 per cent in 2016, and the latest figures in the Budget is 69.7 per cent for 2017-18. Your target up until the 2017-18 Budget was 77 per cent, and now your target has slipped down to 75 per cent. The Budget target is still 75 per cent. How do you intend to meet that target, despite the fact it has been slipping every single year and is down to 69.7 per cent? What are you going to do about it?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - The early years provision more generally is a key focus for our Government, particularly when it comes to Launching into Learning, Learning in Families Together program - our LIFT program. We have around 64 new support staff in our schools, including our school nurses. We have an extensive evidence-based approach -

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, this is a very heroic, or possibly it's just an arbitrary target. How is it based on anything if there is no substantial money directed into that? Isn't it just to pad out the Budget to make it look better? I can't see anything in the Budget papers that is going to specifically change the situation.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am advised that the decrease you speak of is due to fewer students achieving the motor skills and the SPEAKS in a manner understood by adults expected outcome.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is what the kindergarten development check is, yes.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This may be due to increase teacher emphasis on identifying students at risk, possibly as a consequence of the implementation of the national disability data collection, rather than a real decrease in the motor skills of the students.

Dr WOODRUFF - Or possibly it is neither of those things, and it is a real decrease in the motor skills of the students. Those two things you just put up there may or may not be true. There is no evidence that there is a reporting bias, and there is no evidence that the national standards have changed. I simply do not accept that as reasonable reasons.

CHAIR - Minister, there wasn't a question in that. If you don't wish to answer I pass the call to Ms Dow.

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me, Chair.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You might be thinking about AEDC. ABC is the test that we do in Tasmania.

Dr WOODRUFF - You still haven't answered the question on why you put such an unrealistically high target.

Ms DOW - I would like to bring the minister back to infrastructure, please. I have a number of questions around proposed infrastructure upgrades to schools. Are Hellyer College and Ulverstone Primary School programmed to be upgraded this financial year? It is the science lab's redevelopment that I am particularly interested in.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The science lab redevelopment at Hellyer College. I might bring Todd Williams to the table to provide -

Ms DOW - I want to understand as well, as part of that question, why Montello Primary School missed out for their capital improvements?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr Todd Williams is the Director of Facility Services. We are committed to Ulverstone Primary School structural investment, and indeed the science labs as well at Hellyer College. As you can appreciate both were in need of upgrade.

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Mr WILLIAMS - Thank you. Hellyer College works are planning. We are going through the design phase at the moment and that will be progressing. Hobart College -

Ms DOW - Will that be completed this financial year?

Mr WILLIAMS - This coming financial year, yes, I believe so. And the Hobart College works, again, we're just finishing the design process and hope to tender those works shortly.

Ms DOW - Montello Primary School is in significant need of an upgrade, particularly around disability access, and I don't see any money in the Budget for that. I am wondering why.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are always willing to work with school communities, and where there is a need, we recognise that need. I visit a lot of schools and I see a lot of need in terms of infrastructure investment. I see a lot of great infrastructure as well. We opened Tasman District School for redevelopment a few weeks ago. That was a particular school that I was absolutely shocked and appalled by, when I had my first visit, at the state of the school, and very pleased at the work of the school community that has rallied behind the school. That is now being completed.

There will be a phase two that will probably come across our desk at some time for that particular school, but I would never deny a need in a school and ignore the need.

We'll work through with the facilities team and overlay the Budget and the priority areas and ensure that school communities have the best possible infrastructure that supports their student learning.

Ms DOW - You obviously have a lot of pressure on the Budget. Are you concerned that the extension of the year 11 and 12 programs throughout the state is compromising your ability to provide capital improvement at primary schools and colleges around the state?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, I'm not concerned at all. We have \$194 million to be invested into school infrastructure, including TAFE infrastructure. I believe that the year 11 and 12 infrastructure provision is important for the students that are engaged in years 11 and 12 at schools around the state. There's been investment in New Norfolk High School. There's been investment in many areas, Ulverstone High School, for example. It's an investment that's worthwhile, it's an investment that clearly demonstrates to the students that year 11 and 12 matters.

Ms DOW - I'm not questioning that, but obviously it puts additional pressure on your budget position to be able to do that. There are a number of schools around the state that have been priority one, particularly primary schools that have been on waiting lists for significant periods of time that were done last year with the budget, with the election commitments too.

Mr ROCKLIFF - When it comes to primary schools - and I stand to be corrected - we have a \$15 million investment to upgrade our early-learning facilities.

Ms O'BYRNE - That's not the primary schools, though.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's kindergarten.

Ms O'BYRNE - That's not all the primary schools though.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Kinder.

Ms O'BYRNE - Primary goes to grade 6.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, kinder to grade 6, but kindergartens are all primary schools. I understand your point and I am pleased when members of parliament - irrespective of who they represent in terms of a political party or electorate - when they visit schools and they can identify a need, that is fine with me. We have to work our way through every single school. Our facilities team, of course, are always engaged in working with schools around the state, but I wouldn't pit grade 11 and 12 infrastructure against every other school.

There has to be a point in time when the Labor Party starts getting on board with year 11 and 12 provision. It's working; people like it.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, I asked you a question.

CHAIR - Order.

Ms O'BYRNE - Ms Dow asked you a question. She's not rude like me, she's very polite, you should answer hers.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's helping our students. At some point in time you have to get on board and support this initiative, because students like it, school communities like it.

Ms DOW - With all due respect, my final question is in relation to the UTAS Morval Road campus. Obviously, the university will be relocating from that site sometime in the near future for the redevelopment at West Park. I'm just curious to understand what the department plans for that site, considering you own the building.

Mr ROCKLIFF - So, I'm advised that particular issue is being worked over with Treasury.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, can you tell me how much of an efficiency dividend - otherwise known in plain terms as a cut - will be exacted on the Education Department? I understand that it would be within the range \$35.6 million to \$41.8 million. Can you tell me where that money is going to be coming from in terms of resourcing, reduction in teacher numbers, reduction in speech pathologists, et cetera.

CHAIR - Minister, this is somewhat tedious repetition. So, it is up to you whether you choose to answer it, but we have had this question so many times.

Mr ROCKLIFF - So, we had some discussion about this earlier, Dr Woodruff, and as I said, the department is working through the savings measures as a result of the efficiency dividend. Frontline services will be protected, and particularly of course, very important, you've named support in schools; speech pathologists, school psychologists, social workers, our school nurses. They are vital frontline services in our schools.

Dr WOODRUFF - It's not just about the ticking of boxes, of course, it's about doing support for children to really get grassroots change. It has to be abundant. The number of speech pathologists who are in low-SES schools is incredibly small; a minimum of one. Really there would need to be two or three. So, are those the sorts of places where there will not be any extra speech

pathologists dedicated in those areas that need it the most. Is that the sort of efficiencies that being looked at?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, that is not the case. The Department of Education is employing record numbers of professional support staff to assist students with participation in engagement, early learning, wellbeing, literacy and numeracy, and also to support schools in managing and responding to critical incidents. A further 2.4 FTE speech and language pathologist positions were allocated to support the 12 child and family centres in the 2018-19 Budget. This increases the number of professional support staff funded by the Department of Education to 211.05 FTE, which includes 32.7 school health nurses. Student wellbeing remains a priority and has been reflected through delivery of associated evidence-based services.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, you've made a commitment that all Government kindergartens will be assessed under the National Quality Standards from 2020. Can you please update the House on how this will be implemented?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Tucker, for the question. As I've said before, we're very committed to ensuring that all our young learners have the best possible start to life and that is through education. Tasmanian kindergartens provide a vitally important service that supports our children's development. It is crucial that we know our kindergartens are operating at the highest possible standard and that we're able to meet this. Funding of \$2.7 million over four years has been provided in this budget to assess kindergartens against the NQS. This includes systems and tools to track and measure progress and quality improvement. The approach to the NQS assessment of the Tasmanian Government kindergartens has been aligned to work that is already underway in the Department of Education, including the department's approach to improvement through the Strategic Plan goal for early learning. Further, the approach aligns well with the department's commitment to Tasmania's Strategy for Children -Pregnancy to Eight Years 2018-2021.

Significant work has already been completed or is underway to prepare for the NQS assessment of our kindergartens. This includes professional learning opportunities for teachers and teacher assistants and upgrades of our kindergarten facilities. As I mentioned a few moments ago, a total of 107 kindergartens in Tasmania are benefitting from the \$15 million capital works program. Ten of the 107 schools will receive replacement kindergartens, these include Bagdad Primary School, Bowen Road Primary School, Cooee Primary School, Forth Primary School, Franklin Primary School, Glen Huon Primary School, Glenora District School, Lilydale District School, Moonah Primary School and Rosetta Primary School. These upgrades will ensure our kinder children have access to state-of-the-art learning facilities that reflect and harness play-based learning, which is at the core of the kinder learning framework of Belonging, Being and Becoming.

Our approach to implementing the NQS draws on the strengths of Tasmanian Government school system to minimise duplication while ensuring our commitment to a high-quality NQS benchmark is maintained. While kindergartens will continue to be regulated against the Education Act 2016, the prior arrangements to mirror the NQS in kindergartens have been strengthened to ensure government kindergartens align with the relevant national regulatory provisions that underpin the NQS.

The Education and Care Unit, which regulates and assesses Tasmania's education and care services against the NQS, will validate the NQS assessments of our government kindergartens from 2020. During 2019, the Department of Education is developing a set of publicly available resources and tools for schools, parents and the community to provide information, assist in quality

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improvement and guide the assessment of kindergartens against the NQS. This work will include opportunities for relevant stakeholders to participate in the co-construction of resources and tools to inform and guide practise and maximises the benefits for our learners.

Ms O'BYRNE - Yesterday, you changed the position of the department on activities such as laser tag, and some of the other unsuitable activities including canyoning and caving. Some school outdoor education programs have included those for some time. Are you reviewing all the things on the list or only the one that attracted media attention? Does the rest of the list stand, which is still the one question?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will invite Mr Bullard to answer the question.

Mr BULLARD - As part of our ongoing improvement and providing better support to schools, we are going through a process of reviewing all of the department's policies to make sure they are contemporary and fit for purpose. As part of that, we regularly look at things such as the off-campus guidelines and review them to see whether we think they are still contemporary.

Ms O'BYRNE - Through you, minister, I am familiar with how you did that. To reiterate the question, you have reviewed the laser tag activity because of public pressure. Does that mean you are looking at everything on list again or is that the only way you can have it changed? I don't think the caving and canyon community have quite the loud economic voice, perhaps.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You talk about economic voice. My responsibility is first and foremost to the children in our public education system.

Ms O'BYRNE - Which my children to go. Are you reviewing all of them?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr Bullard has answered the question.

Ms O'BYRNE - To be fair to you, I am not sure that is the answer to the question. You produced a list of activities no longer to be supported because you believed there to be some risk. I absolutely accept that. You have decided that laser tag no longer has a risk. Are you looking at all of other issues you thought had a risk to see if they still do? Outdoor education currently includes those trips.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not saying there is no risk. It is important that school communities, particularly the principals, have local ownership of those decisions.

Ms O'BYRNE - Sorry, I am still trying to have the question answered. Are you reviewing the whole list?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No.

Ms O'BYRNE - Thank you. TasTAFE used to run a fantastic engineering course in the north-west. Can you confirm that UTAS are now in discussions with Swinburne to run engineering courses on the north-west coast due to the lack of course provision from TasTAFE?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is a question for UTAS.

Ms O'BYRNE - Are you aware?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I'm not aware of the conversations between Swinburne and the University of Tasmania.

Ms O'BYRNE - The University of Tasmania haven't told you that? That's interesting because they told TasTAFE.

As to the Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing work, you talked about the Riley Report yesterday. There's some pretty alarming reading in that report. Do you keep a systems data track around serious incidents on school grounds and monitor those trends? If so, I have a number of questions, which might be easier to put on notice, about the numbers of recorded assaults, court orders, bullying, sexual harassment, et cetera, for principals, teachers and support staff.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We can provide the information for you if we have it today but I'm happy to take it on notice. I am aware of the Riley Report. It is important for principals. The Riley Report of February 2019 this year was released, highlighting concerning levels of bullying and violence against school leaders across Australia. Bullying and violence has no place in our schools, workplace and homes. In February, I launched the 2019-2021 Principal Wellbeing Action Plan to support the wellbeing of education leaders to undertake their critical work in Tasmanian government schools. The 2019-2021 Principal Wellbeing Action Plan is an important step in supporting the wellbeing of our principals, which is why this Government has committed \$4.9 million over four years to implement this plan, with \$1.2 million of this commitment to be spent in the 2019-20 year.

The actual plan includes provision for 10 new positions to help strengthen the network of support for our principals. I recognise that school leadership is rewarding, complex and challenging and the Riley Report says that principals are experiencing unacceptable levels of offensive behaviour in their school communities across Australia. The plan has 19 actions, which the department will take to address areas of principal feedback. Engagement of Tasmania's principals in the action plans development ensures we are directly addressing feedback from Tasmanian principals on the issues affecting their wellbeing. Actions cover six areas; workload and staffing, principal preparation and developments, support systems, managing challenging behaviours, establishing a co-ordinated and sustained approach to principal wellbeing and a holistic wellbeing approach connecting child, student, staff and principal wellbeing together.

I have some figures for you, Ms O'Byrne. If I don't have all these numbers now I will put it on notice. There are incident categories -

Ms O'BYRNE - Are these for principals or all three categories of staff?

Mr ROCKLIFF - These are for all staff.

Ms O'BYRNE - Are you able to break them down into categories of staff when you table this, minister? That is, between principals, teachers, support and EFA staff.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I don't believe we are able to break that down but I have -

Ms O'BYRNE - I can put that on notice and you can give me what you do have. It's not a question we've asked before, Chair, so I wouldn't expect the minister to have it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Okay. We can put the rest on notice. For the incident category of assault by student against staff, these figures are from 1 April 2017 of any given year, so 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, there were 35; this year to 31 March 2019, there were 12 -

Ms O'BYRNE - To today or to the end of March?

Mr ROCKLIFF - End of March, 12. Assault by a parent against staff: there were none for the previous period, and there is one for this period. Aggressive student behaviour, non-assault: 325 last period and 376 this period. Other categories like lifting, manual handling, there is an incident.

Ms O'BYRNE - The list I will provide is recorded assault, court orders, sexual harassment, stress leave and workers comp, and that will cover the workers compensation question we would normally ask you. I appreciate it is a bit hard to extrapolate.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, I was contacted earlier this year by a parent at Tasman District School and she was expressing great concerns that she and other parents in the school community have about Tassel's corporate marketing program, which is occurring in the Tasman District School. Tassal partner with school activities and they fund a few different sporting events, and they take year 9 students out to their farms. More concerningly to her, they teach activities like sustainability.

You would be well aware of the controversy surrounding Tassal's activities around Tasman Peninsula, and the idea that they would be teaching or having any involvement with a course on sustainability when they have just lost their sustainable seafood label nationally is laughable.

I guess this raises the question, and she felt concerned to speak to you, because people in the community have jobs from Tassal. As a parent she wants that stuff left out of the classroom. She does not want her children to be brainwashed with corporate marketing. Do you have guidelines about which corporations, which businesses, can come and do teaching in schools, and do they include ethical standards like truth, for example?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Brainwashing is not allowed, but industry engagement is.

Dr WOODRUFF - To what end?

Mr ROCKLIFF - If you want to go down to Huonville High School, in your electorate, and see the engagement there with the aquaculture companies, you would be very impressed.

Dr WOODRUFF - In the trade training centre, that is absolutely appropriate.

Mr ROCKLIFF - For some time, there were students who were engaged in that level of educational activity, and they were provided with jobs at the end of it, which is terrific. I am encouraging industry - whether it is aquaculture, building and construction, agriculture - to engage with our schools.

Dr WOODRUFF - What about the learning outcomes? The quality of learning? How can it possibly be okay for Tassal to teach about sustainability?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - We do have a clear education program for My Education, which is a kindergarten to grade 12 initiative. Ms O'Byrne always finds this very -

Ms O'BYRNE - The worst waste of money your department has ever done.

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Byrne.

Ms O'BYRNE - You have gone back to the process you had beforehand.

CHAIR - Order, Ms O'Byrne. This is Dr Woodruff's question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Ms O'Byrne, amusing yourself once again. On the more serious note -

Dr WOODRUFF - It is serious. Is Tassal teaching sustainability in primary school at Tasman District High?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I would encourage industry engagement with our children irrespective of the industry.

Dr WOODRUFF - Without any standards to govern it? What are the standards for teaching? To actually have a business come in and teach material as part of the curriculum - don't you have standards to govern that? Is it just anyone comes in? If they've got money they can come in?

Mr BULLARD - There are sponsorship guidelines which our schools are required to follow, where industry to partner or come into a school. The other thing, too, is that in the circumstances such as that which you have outlined, we would expect the school to be engaging their school associations in the decisions that are made around industry partnerships.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, to you on this particular issue, and particular school, I can say that the Education department needs to change its practices, because a member of that school association told me that they did not feel empowered to have that conversation open and frankly, because of the controversy in the community where some people get jobs, and some people are very uncomfortable with the practices that are occurring in their community.

CHAIR - That is a statement. Can we have the question?

Dr WOODRUFF - The question is, will you be revising your guidelines, and what do you mean by corporations being able to just come in? Providing money to a school should not give licence to act and teach -

Mr BULLARD - That's right, and as I have outlined, we have sponsorship guidelines. To the point that you have raised around the operation I assume of the school association, the member has raised the issue with you? Is that correct?

Dr WOODRUFF - I am not reflecting on the school association, and they don't represent the school association -

Mr BULLARD - I suppose I am just trying to understand, was this person's assertion that they felt uncomfortable to do with the school?

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Dr WOODRUFF - This person's assertion was that numbers of teachers and many parents felt uncomfortable with Tassal coming in and teaching sustainability, or being involved in any form with that sort of learning experience, but did not feel empowered to speak frankly to the department about it. There is clearly an issue. I have heard this also in the Huon Valley at Huonville High School, the same comments, concerns by parents, but not feeling empowered to have a frank conversation about corporate over-reach in the classroom.

Mr BULLARD - They are certainly issues I would be happy to take advice on.

Dr WOODRUFF - Could you perhaps table the guidelines? I haven't seen them and I am not aware of what they are.

Mr BULLARD - We can take that on notice, we don't have them with us.

Mr ROCKLIFF - More broadly, I encourage industry to engage with our students and their education.

Dr WOODRUFF - There shouldn't be strings attached.

Mr ROCKLIFF - No.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, I was going to have series of questions on disability. I don't know if you need to bring anyone to the table?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Lynne McDougall would be the ideal person to bring to the table. Lynne McDougall, welcome, Director of Inclusion and Diversity Services.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, I am really interested in the first stage around part-time enrolments. We have had some concern raised from parents about the official number of students who are on part-time enrolment. Can you tell me how many students are currently approved as part time? I am dealing particularly with overall, so students who are approved as part-time enrolments overall, and of those, the amount who have a disability. I am interested in how many the department has refused to authorise as a part-time enrolment, and whether or not we get follow-up to make sure that if you haven't approved one, that the students are actually attending school on a full-time basis.

It really is about how is it working, and are we auditing it to make sure, because certainly the official data we have been given doesn't correlate with what a lot of families are telling us. I am wondering if we have a bit of in-school or at-school challenge.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I might refer part of that question to Ms Burgess.

Ms BURGESS - We have two processes that run here. We have the part-time attendance process through the Education Act, but that does not capture the students with a disability and those who are on a learning plan. The data we can provide you around the part-time process that requires sign-off will not include the information around students with a disability, who might be accessing their part-time learning plan.

Ms O'BYRNE - Do you have that data as well, of those students the school would have done a learning plan on the school side around? Would you be able to give me the data of the number of both groups that are captured in different ways?

Ms BURGESS - I am unsure about that.

Ms McDOUGALL - We have the data in relation to students who have learning plans on the basis of disability but I am unaware if that data correlates then with the part-time exemption data. We would need EPR to look into that.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, would it be possible to put that on notice? The issue being raised is that a lot of children are being given a part-time enrolment pathway because the school is struggling to provide the support the individual student might need. Will we be going into the needs-based funding model that we hope will provide a great deal of support in the future? I would like a picture of how many students might have a part-time arrangement in their learning plan, which is separate to the data kept by the department. Different groups are being captured in different ways.

Mr ROCKLIFF - If you could articulate that in a written form we will try to extract that information, if possible. We will take it on notice.

Ms O'BYRNE - Does the department audit those processes to make sure those agreements and part-time agreements with schools are okay and genuinely meeting the needs of students? I appreciate the challenges at a school level, with schools trying to do the right thing alongside parents' expectations and the disconnect that might be there. You would have seen, minister, quite often the individual learning plan is simply 'insert name here'.

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne, we could do with some silence. That would be good.

Ms McDOUGALL - We do audit the learning plans. That has come as a recommendation of the ministerial task force, which is now the Inclusion Advisory Panel - Disability Focus. We audit 33 per cent of schools every year. Every three years, every school has a cycle of audit around the quality of those learning plans and how they align to the student outcomes. I would take exception to your comment that it would be 'insert name here' because each of those learning plans are now developed in alignment with a matrix that looks at all the learning areas, the capabilities within the Australian curriculum and reports on the outcomes on the short-term and long-term smart goals for each student within SARIS.

Ms O'BYRNE - Through you, minister, and please take it if it is not appropriate. When you have done the 33 per cent audit each year, how many of those needed to be reworked?

Ms McDOUGALL - In the schools for which we do have concerns - and sometimes it is only concern in one area, for example, around parent consultation or reports within SARIS - it is generally not across the board, we spend time at the school and each school gets their own data back. We then spend time with the school and offer professional learning, other resources, support teacher support, sometimes a school psychologist if it is around SMART goals that are appropriate for the students. We use our support staff to help the school continually grow that improvement process.

Ms O'BYRNE - In order to transition to the new model, will you need to do a greater amount of or more closely auditing each year? I realise 33 per cent is a large percentage of students. I am not saying you are not doing a lot of work. I wonder whether additional resources might need to be applied.

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Ms McDOUGALL - On the basis of the new model we are moderating the information around each student's level of adjustment in relation to their teaching and learning plan. In virtually every instance that also includes the personalise learning plan for that student. On that basis we have employed five moderators and there are three people from my team, including myself, who are currently visiting every school in the state before 2 August to look at all the students within the NCCD and we look at all of the data -

Ms O'BYRNE - That was my question. It is every child that could be captured by NCCD as opposed to those we currently have an adjustment process for. I do have other questions.

CHAIR - I will suspend for five minutes and Dr Woodruff will have the call when we return.

The committee suspended from 10.30 a.m. to 10.40 a.m.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, how many schools across the state has Teen Challenge been to in the last financial year? How much has been paid for those programs? Do you have that information?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I might have to take that on notice. I am happy to provide it to you.

Dr WOODRUFF - I believe you have personally endorsed Teen Challenge and the provision of succour for it to come into schools. Are you aware of the evidence that their Just Say No program doesn't work and that has been attacked by nationally respected drug organisations on to the lack of evidence for its wild claims of effectiveness?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Engagement of organisations such as Teen Challenge is a school-based decision.

Dr WOODRUFF - Does that mean we don't any standards as to what organisations can go into schools?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Of course we have standards.

Dr WOODRUFF - Do you set the standards, and does Teen Challenge pass the standard?

Ms O'BYRNE - The minister wrote to me to say they passed the standard last year.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am advised that curriculum services have looked at their materials and their provision.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are qualified teachers and qualified drug counsellors doing the work they are doing?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Department of Education provides a range of support to schools in relation to drug education and managing drug-related incidents. These are aligned with the national and Tasmanian drug education strategy. Coherent with the curriculum delivery, concerns were raised last year specifically in relation to the group Teen Challenge. It is not everyone's program. The department investigated the program and advised it is a structured program consistent with the

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National Drug Strategy. It recognises schools as critical places to educate young people in harm minimisation and the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Dr WOODRUFF - I continue my question, which you didn't answer: do the people who run Teen Challenge courses in our publicly funded schools have teaching qualifications or counselling qualifications?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The information delivered, as I am advised, to students falls within the Australian Curriculum health and wellbeing learning area and addresses the three sub-strands of: personal, social and community health, being healthy, safe and active; communicating and interacting for health and wellbeing; and contributing to healthy and active communities. The program presentation directly addresses the three focus areas of alcohol and other drugs, mental health and wellbeing and safety.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are parents advised that this is a faith-based program and is it very clear that they have the opportunity to provide their child with another teaching option during the time Teen Challenge is there?

Ms O'BYRNE - I think the answer to that is no.

Mr ROCKLIFF - With respect to the processes -

Ms O'BYRNE - If I can assist you as a parent, we weren't told -

Dr WOODRUFF - No, I would like to hear it from the minister.

Ms O'BYRNE - Well, letting the minister know, we weren't told when they came into -

CHAIR - Order. One person, thank you.

Mr BULLARD - We will send you the number but I am advised it is very small, only the north of the state. The people who deliver the program are not teachers but there is a teacher present in the room during delivery and parents have an opportunity for their children to opt out.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are parents advised that the course will be run and that there is another option for their child to go to if they want to before that happens in the school day?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I might invite Trudy Pearce, Deputy Secretary of Learning, to the table.

Ms PEARCE - In the work we did last year to look at the curriculum and their delivery, the changes were made so that parent permission was provided for engagement in the program.

Dr WOODRUFF - Is it very clear to parents that it is a faith-based organisation when they are providing that permission?

Ms PEARCE - We don't mention anything about it being faith-based. The presentation of the curriculum does not involve anything in relation to it being faith-based.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is an absolute scandal. Parents would be outraged if they found out the sort of organisation Team Challenge is and the values they have.

CHAIR - Do we have a question?

Dr WOODRUFF - My question is: will you change that to make it very clear to parents when they are signing that Team Challenge list that it is -

Mr ROCKLIFF - There's not to be any proselytising in schools.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is a faith-based organisation. It is widely pilloried in the drug-education community nationally. Isn't it a fact that you are actually being pushed by your Cabinet colleagues to have a pedagogy about a particular approach to drug use? It is not based on evidence, as the Minister for Health made very clear yesterday.

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is ridiculous.

Dr WOODRUFF - Will you actually change that permission slip so parents are really clear what they are signing up to? They should know. It is a fundamental principle of public schools in Tasmania, everywhere in Australia, that we should not have this slippery slide where we are letting faith-based organisations come into our classrooms and brainwash children.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There are very strict guidelines around religious instruction.

Dr WOODRUFF - The parents need to be informed.

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne, you have the call.

Ms O'BYRNE - Thank you. I will, as an aside, mention they don't just proselytise, they claim their converts on their website, don't they, minister?

Minister, can I go back to disability education, but before I do that, I might just pick up on something that has occurred to me. As part of the first Family Violence Action Plan was the development of the Respectful Relationships Program, which I completely support, and I commend you on an excellent program.

Minister, it is becoming clear that it is not being run in every school in full. Can you confirm how many schools actually run the Respectful Relationships Program in its entirety?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Seeking that information for you.

Every school is committed to Respectful Relationships education every day, I am advised. The Respectful Relationships course is about enabling school communities to build respectful, safe and inclusive learning environments; supporting long-term attitudinal change to family- and gender-based violence; equipping young people with lifelong skills to develop and maintain healthy and respectful relationships; and promoting the link between respectful relationships, wellbeing and learning outcomes.

Respectful relationships education is an important part of leading generational cultural change to gender-based violence. The Respectful Relationships education package was developed as part of a whole-of-government commitment to changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to family violence.

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In monitoring implementation across all government schools, they have used a range of measures including staff attendance, professional learning, access to the website and use of other respectful relationships education programs.

The department's 2018 corporate survey data shows that all Tasmanian government schools are conducted at least one respectful relationship education program. That is what I am advised.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can I go back to disability education? Again, I appreciate this is a mixture of issues, but how many compulsory conciliation conferences have you had in the last 12 months? What is the percentage of those with a disability, and of all of the students, both those with a disability and not, ended up then being in home school enrolment?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will invite Katharine O'Donnell, who is the Office of Education Registrar, to the table.

Ms O'BYRNE - I am interested in how many conciliation conferences there have been? The division between those who are students without a disability, and those with a disability, and at the end of those conciliation processes, how many ended up in home school enrolment?

Ms O'DONNELL - I can tell you that, 1 July 2018 until 31 March 2019, we had 84 conferences held, 74 of those were in government schools, and 10 from non-government schools. I can't give you here the breakdown of children with a disability, but I may be able to take that on notice. In relation to those who went into home school, again, I will take that on notice. The figure is small, I would say probably four to five would be my best recollection, but I will take it on notice.

Ms O'BYRNE - That is fine, that is all I have in that area, minister.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, how many students do you expect to qualify in each category of the model, and for those students who are currently in [inaudible] particularly of an [inaudible] payment, how many do you anticipate are going to be phoning you when their adjustment gives them a slightly lesser dollar figure than they are currently receiving?

Mr ROCKLIFF - My understanding is that around 4500 students will be eligible for the new disability funding model.

Ms O'BYRNE - Do you have them in the categories that you have identified or not?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Not yet. There might be some early work done on that. That will be an increase of around 2000 students; that is my understanding. In terms of the 4500, that is projected.

Ms McDOUGALL - Through the supplementary to extensive levels, there would be on the 2018 [inaudible] data, which we are projecting from, because we are currently collecting the 2019 data. There would be 4500 students, and of those, it is a percentage at the moment in relation to the supplementary substantial and extensive. For example, 1 per cent of that is extensive, 2.7 per cent substantial and around 4.5 per cent supplementary. The rest are through quality-differentiated teaching practice, which is through the general adjustments that teachers make in classrooms for students.

Ms O'BYRNE - Are you having conversations with those families you anticipate are going to end up with a lesser amount? You made it clear, here last year and in other and all discussions, that that some families will get less as a result of this process. What are you doing to work with those families in the lead up to that being the case, so it doesn't all just turn to custard?

Mr ROCKLIFF - When you say they get less, it is important to remember that it is not just about the dollars, it is about the level of adjustment, and indeed what resources can be provided. It might be human resources, it might technology that is resourced; again, it is fully dependent on the individual needs of the student and what they best require, whether it is a professional resource, or a package of support. It will all depend on the individual student. In that sense I am wanting all students to benefit from the program.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, I am not being critical, we have named up the fact that some families were getting, at this stage \$25 000, and are not going to have \$25 000, and that is going to be a shock. What will you be doing to work through that?

Ms McDOUGALL - On that basis we are currently holding 26 forums across the state, face-to-face and online. There are two online forums that have over 94 registrations, and we've had several hundred families come to those face-to-face forums, where we are explaining the model and looking at the conversation that parents will have with school staff around adjustment to the educational program, to ensure access and engagement to learning. The conversation is actually changing the culture of inclusive practice in our schools to be around the adjustment the student needs, not a conversation necessarily about the dollars.

As the minister explained, there will be new students into this model that previously haven't attracted any disability funding - students with dyslexia, for example, or Asperger's syndrome, that are also a part of the conversation with those families who will see new resources into their school.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, through you, I am not criticising the work you are doing.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not taking it as a criticism.

Ms O'BYRNE - I am just conscious that we know now with most new models that it is all fine until you hit that sticky point of someone losing out. I am wondering - and I appreciate the work you are doing - are you dealing directly with those families, one-on-one, so they have an understanding as they transition through? That is where, if the model is going to come unstuck, it will happen, and we don't want that to be the case.

CHAIR - I think it just requires a short answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes.

Ms O'BYRNE - You'll do one-on-one with them.

Mr TUCKER - Will the minister please provide an update on the Government's commitment to openness and transparency in education data?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Since we have been in government, it has been a top priority to make education key data publicly available, as part of our overall commitment to transparency and openness. The Government continues to fulfil our commitment to publish openly and transparently,

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information about government services, costs and other data of interest to the Tasmanian community, and, of course, the media.

We first released the Department of Education's key dataset in 2014-15, in line with the Tasmanian Government's Open Data Policy, and have continued to expand the range of information included in the dataset.

Data collection is important, because it illuminates the facts and allows for informed continuous planning and improvement.

Access to open data also facilitates engagement and collaboration between the Government and the wider community.

This year, like all other years, I am pleased to publicly release the Department of Education's 2018-19 key dataset. This document will be made publicly available on the department's website, along with previous years' reports.

I note that the data available includes details regarding funding, which has increased; enrolments in the first term census; NAPLAN results, which are showing improvement; direct continuation from year 10, which is up.

Other points of interests will include:

- Specialist staff has increased by 19.05 FTE, from 146.5 in 2014 to 165.55 in 2019.
- Teaching positions have increased by 95.18 FTE from March 2018 to March 2019. Funding for students with disability has increased to \$93.35 million, an increase of \$24 million since 2014.
- Average class size is down to 23.4 in primary years, and 23.2 in secondary years.

Data is critical to improving educational outcomes for Tasmania by ensuring that funding is distributed according to student need, and that programs and policies are developed and implemented appropriately to suit the requirements of all our students.

Of course, we are committed to continuing to manage our data in the most effective way possible and most importantly to reflect, review, plan and implement initiatives across Tasmania.

This is an important dataset. It is important we are open and transparent with the Tasmanian community, about our data, so that can be an informed discussion in terms of policy development.

We recognise that not all the data could well be favourable. There might be improvements in areas that will highlight we need to do better.

That is the importance of being open and transparent, releasing key data, so all the community know how we are travelling in terms of our educational outcomes, where there needs to be room for improvement, and where we are doing well, and that enables a thorough and open discussion in our community, as well, around the importance of education.

CHAIR - Ms Dow.

Ms DOW - In your overview, you alluded to the child and family centres that are part of your commitment made last year actually.

Can you please outline a timeline for construction of each of those child and family centres, and confirm there is operational funding for those due to commence planning and preparation this year?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have 12 child and family centres around Tasmania. We are committed to the early years and improving educational outcomes for our youngest children. That's why it's part of our early education hub initiative. We are building six new child and family learning centres across Tasmania.

These new centres will provide greater access for families to early years services and support in their local community. They will be co-located on school sites and will support successful transitions between home, earlier learning and school for children and their families.

Sorell, Waratah-Wynyard and East Tamar will be the first three centres to be built, with four being operational by 2024. A number of factors were taken into account when determining the school sites, including the site capacity, community readiness and high numbers of birth for children. I am pleased to announce the school sites of Sorell School, Table Cape Primary School and East Tamar Primary School.

The new centres will be built in the Sorell, Kingborough, Glenorchy, East Tamar, West Ulverstone and Waratah-Wynyard communities. Families will be able to access quality education, health, support and outreach, similar to the services found in our child and family centres which you'd be familiar with, Ms Dow.

Building on the learnings from our 12 CFCs, these new centres will include an onsite early childhood education and care facility. The type of each CFC service provider will depend on the need in each community and will value-add to existing services.

The centres will promote greater collaboration across government agencies and community-based services. Each community will be involved in the design and the development of new centres, with extensive community engagement and production through local enabling hubs and capital funding of \$21 million over six years for the child and family learning centres over the forward Estimates. The allocation is \$15.5 million, and \$500 000 has been allocated in the 201920 financial year to commence the construction process.

Recurrent funding of \$3.4 million over the forward Estimates has been allocated for the 12 new early years staff, and this includes four teachers, six child and family learning centre leaders, and two support staff. An allocation of \$100 000 in 2019-20 for staffing has been provided to commence planning. As I say, four will be operational by 2024.

Ms DOW - Say, for example, the one from Waratah-Wynyard, when will that one be done?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We'll have three operational by 2022.

Ms O'BYRNE - Which ones?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - Sorell, Table Cape and East Tamar will be operational by 2022. In terms of the building of them, in terms of whose first?

Ms DOW - Yes, physically when will they be on site.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Ms Dow, I think, is asking, are they going to be built at the same time?

Ms DOW - Yes.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Well, as soon as possible, depending on the community discussion.

Ms DOW - Okay, that is part of the planning process and then the construction will follow by 2022.

Ms O'BYRNE - You have the local enabling groups and similar models before.

Mr BULLARD - Through the minister, exactly the same process we established with the child and family centres.

Ms O'BYRNE - Given that we're in Opposition, you're unlikely to have all the troubles that we had with George Town.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, you have the call.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Minister, you, myself and every other member of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly received an email from a wonderful student who is called Hugh Magnus from Woodbridge High School about civics and citizenship and what is being not taught, he says, at least in his school, Woodbridge High School. He is in year 10, but years 9 and 10 are not being compulsorily taught civics and citizenship and he's really concerned about this, given the disengagement happening socially broadly around politics and voting. He thinks it's really important, so do the Greens and so do most parents, I suppose.

I was certainly shocked to understand that my child in year 10 has also not received any civics or citizenship training and doesn't understand the difference between the Senate and the House, despite many reasons that you would think otherwise.

Have you or your department responded to Hugh and, more broadly, what action are you going to take to make sure the Australian Curriculum is enforced and this very important subject is taught?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will be responding to Hugh. I thank Hugh for his letter and his passion. When I was Hugh's age, I probably had a similar view of the importance of civics and citizenship.

I note that the Parliament of Tasmania provides a wonderful service to our schools. I thank the Parliament of Tasmania, and Kimbra particularly. Kimbra is doing a fantastic job and provides is a wonderful learning opportunity. We welcome schools to the parliament with open arms.

I recognise Hugh's concern that the study of civics and citizenship has not been compulsory in years 9 and 10. This was a decision made by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Report Authority, I am informed. In years 9 and 10, the curriculum is designed to provide increased opportunities for students to make choices about learning pathways. Schools are encouraged to

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consider all aspects of the curriculum to inform the elective or optional programs they offer. With the development of new resources and professional learning for teachers, schools will be better placed to broaden the options they offer their students. While not compulsory in years 9 and 10, Australian Curriculum civics and citizenship is a required element of learning from years 3 to 8.

Dr WOODRUFF - I think we can take it as evidence that it has not happened in years 3 to 8. Whilst there may be conversations about politics, parliament and voting, there is no doubt that the mind of a child in third grade is not able to take the level of detail required to generate the leaders who will be engaged with our politics in future.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I do not necessarily agree with that. It's important that information around civics and citizenship be age-appropriate -

Dr WOODRUFF - Of course, but it is not enough.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We see primary schools visit the parliament and the kids engaged in what we do.

Dr WOODRUFF - Are you going to make it compulsory? Simply recognising Hugh's concerns is not enough. He wants action. He wants change.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thank Hugh very much. It is part of the Australian Curriculum so I am not of a mind to make it compulsory.

Dr WOODRUFF - You could. You could prioritise it over Teen Challenge, for example, that level of engagement and teaching time. You have the power to do that and it would be appropriate, given the current political situation.

CHAIR - Order. Ms O'Byrne has the call.

Ms O'BYRNE - I have two short TASC questions.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have Katrina Beams who is the Executive Officer, Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards & Certification. Welcome, Katrina.

Ms O'BYRNE - My concerns about TASC are well noted. I understand discussion took place yesterday. I only have two questions that weren't resolved yesterday. Can you let me know when the testing on the new TRACS system will be complete?

Ms BEAMS - As part of best practice with the rollout of the system, we are continuing to test the differing functionality of the system prior to its use. That testing program will continue over the next two months until we ensure we are completely confident prior to release.

Ms O'BYRNE - I do want it tested after last year. What is the backup plan is if the system doesn't reach a point of operability? What do you do?

Ms BEAMS - The system is currently operating and will be operating very soundly. It has multiple security aspects to it and it's regularly backed up every night so anything that did happen to the system could be retrieved from the previous day. We have all those guarantees in place

around the way the system has been built, the security level, and it's had full and rigorous penetration testing as well.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, you know I've had concerns ever since you changed the model of TASC and that we have had student distress every year. Can I request your personal guarantee that you will be aware of what happens this year so that you and I don't have the same conversation at the end of this year when the exam system causes distress for students and teachers? We end up having a fight at the end of every year, which you say Labor always does, but it has only been an issue since you changed it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question, Ms O'Byrne. I take great interest in TASC and the work they are doing. The model that replaced the TQA model is far superior and I commend the work of Katrina and her team. TRACS is based on an enterprise architecture design to maximise information and data management and business process for the system. It is nation-leading. It has undergone and passed a detailed external cybersecurity assessment of its code, base and infrastructure. It was launched in April and has only been used by schools for one month. Since that time, approximately 2000 users have already undertaken 1000 tasks and pieces of correspondence in TRACS. TASC takes the security of student information seriously. Protecting student information is -

Ms O'BYRNE - I'm happy to move to TAFE. Can you give the total amount spent by the Department of Education on relief teacher salaries in the last financial year and the previous financial year? Do you want that on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I'll take that on notice.

Dr WOODRUFF - In relation to the information, I might have missed it, that you tabled in response to Mr Tucker's question about information -

Mr ROCKLIFF - The dataset?

Dr WOODRUFF - Yes, the dataset, which includes information about government school satisfaction.

CHAIR - It's being photocopied right now, Dr Woodruff.

Dr WOODRUFF - Government school satisfaction has declined from 85.7 per cent in 2015-16 to 83.5 per cent in 2016-17, and is down to 82.8 per cent in 2017-18. This is another markedly negative trend on your watch. Have you been collecting information as to why satisfaction is declining? What does it tell you about how you need to change and can you provide it, please?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Perhaps I can invite Mr Bullard or Ms Burgess to talk about satisfaction.

Mr BULLARD - There are three measures of satisfaction. You've spoken about student satisfaction, which has declined. Parent satisfaction has remained stable and staff satisfaction is stable as well. Whilst we can get some information from the student satisfaction survey, we recognise we need an improved system. That's why we have commissioned a child and student wellbeing survey, which we are going to roll out in September this year for every child from year 4 to year 12. The survey tool we have commissioned operates in other jurisdictions and internationally. It will allow us to benchmark, with a high degree of nuance, exactly what the issues

are that are facing our children and young people to bring about that decline because obviously a key pillar of the department's strategic plan is child and student wellbeing. We have a child and student wellbeing strategy, but we need to make sure that we are targeting the resource to where it is needed most.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. The department is not sure of the underlying reason for the decline, but it is investigating that. Do you know what the dissatisfaction is around?

Mr BULLARD - One thing we do know is that the changes in results that you see could relate to sampling differences. It is encouraging. I think that we have got a higher proportion of years 7 to 10 students responding in 2018 compared to 2017, but we also know that the satisfaction among our years 7 to 10 students is traditionally lower in other levels, so we have potentially got a skewing of the data. I think there are a range of issues that affect students, and it is not necessarily one issue that would go across the whole of education in Tasmania. When we were trialling the child and student survey, we trialled a number of tools last year to see which was the one that would be best to use. There were pockets of dissatisfaction or issues within particular schools, which we've now got principals following up on. I don't think that you can say across the whole of the Tasmanian government system everyone does not enjoy school or does not have a friend. I think you would find if you go into that data, certainly what we saw, for example, at one school, year 9 boys were very unhappy. That then is going to allow us to have targeted intervention. The tool we've had has done a job, but it's too blunt, and that is why we have commissioned the new tool.

CHAIR - Ms O'Byrne.

Ms O'BYRNE - TAFE, if you are comfortable.

CHAIR - Can I have a sense whether we want to go into outputs anywhere along the line?

Ms O'BYRNE - It might just be easier to do it as an overview for TAFE.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have the Chief Executive Officer of TasTAFE, Ms Jenny Dodd, and the Chief Financial Officer of TasTAFE, Mr Scott Adams, with me. I will have a very short opening statement and I will make it even shorter than it is here.

As the largest registered training organisation in the state, TasTAFE continues its commitment to delivering high-quality vocational education and training to over 23 000 Tasmanians each year.

The last 12 months have been a time of quantum change for TasTAFE. As an organisation it has faced significant challenges, and I am delighted to report to members that the [inaudible] has responded to these challenges in a commendable manner. TasTAFE's top priority over the past year has been stabilisation. As an organisation they accepted all recommendations made in the WLF internal audit and have successfully implemented over 95 per cent of them.

The TasTAFE Board accepted the final report in December 2018, and now see the audit as substantively complete, knowing the significant work that has been undertaken. They have not only implemented new policies, procedures and processes but have them embedded across the organisation as a whole.

In the last year, focus at TasTAFE has been placed squarely back on the students and their learning experience and outcomes. Under Ms Jenny Dodd's leadership, TasTAFE's commitment to

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continuous improvement was clearly evidenced as they responded to the renewal audit by the national regulator, the Australian Skills Quality Authority - ASQA - during March.

Such a detailed audit involves extensive preparation, and I acknowledge the outstanding amount of effort from all staff throughout this process.

At an exit briefing on 15 March, ASQA auditors noted the professionalism and level of commitment shown by all TasTAFE staff. They also noted the active student support that was clearly in place.

As is common in an audit process, it was expected that areas of improvement would be identified. TasTAFE staff have worked diligently for the auditors over recent months to provide additional information where requested, and to rectify any individual areas of noncompliance within specific training products. A final submission has now been made to ASQA and we are awaiting their findings.

Tasmania is experiencing its strongest economic growth in a decade and this is translating to a significant skills demand, particularly in the traditional trades. Overall, TasTAFE's apprenticeship numbers have increased by almost 500 this year, from 4045 in 2018, to 4536 in 2019, with the biggest increase being in construction.

Yesterday I detailed we are very proud of our students, and I named a number of them for their successes. Engineering student Bronte Richardson was named 2018 Skill-based Apprentice of the Year at the Tasmanian Training Awards; Lydia Scotney, a Diploma of Nursing student, was celebrated at the 2018 Aboriginal Student of the Year at the Tasmanian Training Awards; and TasTAFE-trained cabinet-maker and 2017 WorldSkills gold medallist, Joshua Boon, has recently been selected to represent Australia at the world's largest skills competition in Russia during August.

These are great examples that demonstrate the close working relationship TasTAFE has with industry to produce the skilled workforce needed to fuel the growing Tasmanian economy, and I commend all those at TasTAFE for the work that they do.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you provide the staff vacancy list in TAFE? The list of vacant positions?

Ms DODD - We have 16 teacher and currently 26 actual vacancies are being advertised. Of those 16, eight are in our trade areas.

Ms O'BYRNE - I want to go to the ANMAC review in a moment, to let you get ready for that one. Can I ask, the Certificate 3 in Education support, the teacher's aide course, and we touched a bit on that in our previous Estimates. Minister, you have had to revoke that fee structure because Skills Tasmania wrote to the TAFE CEO to advise that it was illegal to do what TAFE did, which was to fail to offer a concession and an avenue for refund for Certificate 3 students.

What happened to those students is that they applied, they were told that they would have to pay the full fee, which would mean if they were a concession card holder for instance, they couldn't get the \$350 fee. It has gone up from \$1300 to \$1990.

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Minister, can you advise how you allowed an illegal instruction to go out, how many students were affected, and what data did you have on students who inquired about the course but didn't accept their place due to the considerable cost?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. TasTAFE made changes to the pricing of this product you refer to in 2019.

Ms O'BYRNE - This was an illegal pricing change. This was a refusal to provide concessions, not the increase in the fee.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As a result of the changes, the product was advertised. It was commercial only, without access to concession. This was incorrect, and the product should have been advertised as an entitled product with access to concession.

This has been fixed, and all enrolled students have been contacted to assess their eligibility for concessional pricing.

Ms O'BYRNE - How many didn't accept their place due to the cost? You would have the data of the people who were offered places and didn't take them up.

Ms DODD - We would have to take that component on notice, we may not have that data.

Ms O'BYRNE - Okay, I will put that on notice. Minister, can you tell me why the enrolled nursing course completion rate is only 40 per cent?

Ms DODD - Enrolled nursing is a very difficult qualification. It is probably one of the most difficult qualifications we deliver at TasTAFE. We are in the process of reviewing the sequencing of that qualification. Sequencing refers to when some of the students do the competencies. I can speak confidently about that, this being something we did when I was in Queensland. We discovered there can be some units of competency that are difficult for the students if they are offered too early in the program. One of those units is such that it requires high levels of numeracy. In our review of the program we are currently undertaking it is important for us to identify how we are going to retain students and make sure they are able to successfully move through that program, as they should, towards completion.

I also make the comment that we are investing in a literacy and numeracy tool that will be rolled out across TasTAFE. The purpose of that will be pre-enrolment assessment to make sure we have the right people in the right course at the right level. Once we have determined that, we will be able to identify the educational support they will need to help them get through their program more effectively. However, I want to make comment that one of the things that came through in our ASQA audit, right across the board, was a very positive statement for TasTAFE around the high level of student support we provide. That was very much identified through the initial student survey that ASQA conducts and then in their audit and site visit.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, in April 2015 TasTAFE signed an MOU with Mr Ma, the head of Shandong Chambroad petrochemicals, to pursue training opportunities in China and Tasmania. In 2017 there was a press release from Nick Street, then Liberal member for Franklin, saying that the hospitality training school would be a key feature of the development for a hotel and, supposedly, a hospitality training centre that was subsequently approved by Clarence Council. By September 2017 there were rumours that TasTAFE was already having second thoughts about its

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association with that development or with Chambroad. Can you please tell us exactly what is happening with TasTAFE and the hospitality training centre at Kangaroo Bay?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The project is still under consideration and is a work in progress for the government, as you would be aware. I understand that Clarence City Council has agreed to a six-month extension to commence the construction of the Kangaroo Bay hotel and hospitality school but it is noted, if there is not substantial commencement at the end of that period, council will consider a buyback of the land. The hospitality school partner was envisaged to be TasTAFE. TasTAFE management has reviewed its willingness to participate in that joint venture. It is still keen to be involved as a service provider but not as a partner. The Coordinator-General is engaging as we speak to identify an alternative education provider.

Dr WOODRUFF - What does being a partner mean? Does it mean that TasTAFE has any staff involvement, expenses, training or provides anything?

Ms DODD - That particular project, as we investigated it further, is really about higher education. TasTAFE is not a non-university higher education provider. We offer nothing above AQF level 5 and 6. That particular project was really looking at master's level qualifications. In answering your question, our role will be such that where there is a training opportunity within our gamut and suite of operation, that is where we will offer the service provision to the people who are delivering and running the program.

Dr WOODRUFF - Has TasTAFE changed its priorities for the sorts of programs it provides in the last three years? Nothing has changed. The development hasn't been built. The arrangement is still the same. This was a key feature, a key arguing point with council and the community that this was going to provide world-class hospitality for Tasmanians on this site in conjunction with Chinese tourists around the hotel. This has all fallen through. Wasn't this arrangement only ever to take it over the line in the community's eyes? What has changed in TasTAFE?

Mr ROCKLIFF - As we have explained, TasTAFE is still committed to play a role where that is appropriate.

Dr WOODRUFF - What does that mean?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Ms Dodd has explained it.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am struggling to understand what that means in real terms. It sounds like the role is to gain some imprimatur from the community for having this massive development, which is twice the size the Kangaroo Bay development plan had approved. The reason it became this sort of juggernaut of a development was the argument for a hospitality and training centre, which is going to be privatised and offered to whom?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is a question for the Coordinator-General who is involved in these discussions.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Liberal Government's Coordinator-General is looking to develop a privatised hospitality service.

CHAIR - I give the call to Ms O'Byrne.

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Ms O'BYRNE - My question goes on from the comment around the complexity of the nursing course. I have a copy of a letter you have also received, as has the CEO of TasTAFE, stating -

There are countless days that we have to go to TAFE without teachers and I think of it as self-directed learning only. Nursing training should be class-based learning but what we are getting is the opposite. The unsupervised self-learning days turned into weeks and if you collate them in sessions it could turn into between a quarter to half of the year. Of course, these pre-template assessments become harder and harder to comply with as we have not properly discussed and haven't been taught on them.

Minister, you have confirmed that ANMAC has concerns with your accreditation in the enrolled nursing course. Can you provide the deficiency statement provided by ANMAC? I understand they cover literacy and language, practical room currency and the suitability of training facilities?

Ms DODD - To set the record clear, ANMAC has not expressed concerns. We are in the normal process of going through the accreditation process. ANMAC has provided us with feedback, as you would expect, from their site visits which occurred in March. We now have a project in place, working through the months of June with the aim of submitting for our accreditation in July. This is not an unusual process, nor is it out of the ordinary for any TAFE such as ours to be undergoing.

What is important to understand is that there are new standards for enrolled nursing. The current program had to have complete overhaul to meet those new standards. Most importantly, as well, it is timely to review your program. I refer to the honourable member's previous commentary around retention. It is important we are delivering a quality education program so significant work is going right across the whole spectrum of that AQF Level 5 diploma qualification, which is a complex qualification, to make sure our sequencing for students, our delivery and, importantly, that it is the same experience for a student whether they are in the south, the north or the north-west. That is work is bringing our people together so that they are reviewing their program for the benefit of students. That is part one of where we are heading in our ANMAC submission. We are well underway with that. We have a project plan and a couple of our staff preparing that piece of work offline. The review of the program for the students will produce a program that is better suited to students' progression through their learning and that's very important. ANMAC identified and supported our online learning management system, which we call CAMPUS and recommended better use of it for the students, in particular around assessment. We are also looking at how that will be integrated.

We are also actively recruiting to grow our staffing base in nursing. We are aware we need to meet the demands of the future in this very critical industry and we are out in market now, across the state, recruiting into that program.

Ms O'BYRNE - My question was, can you provide the deficiency statement? I understand you were framing it. Can you provide to the committee the report that ANMAC gave you with the work that had to be done?

Ms DODD - It is in confidence between ANMAC and us as we prepare our submission and ANMAC will confirm that. This is an in confidence piece of work we are undertaking. We have a project plan well underway that is identifying all the various aspects. All our nursing teachers are

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brought into that project plan. There's no secrecy around that. That is a very transparent process in the preparation they're doing. I want to commend our teachers; it is not a small piece of work to do a complete review of a qualification, as we are undertaking.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, how many staff have resigned from the enrolled nursing course in the last six months?

Ms DODD - We've had very small resignations overall and I'm not aware of -

Ms O'BYRNE - In nursing, particularly. I am advised there were four.

Ms DODD - That's not correct. I'm not aware of that level -

Ms O'BYRNE - I'd like to put that on notice.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We can take that on notice.

Mr TUCKER - Can the minister inform the committee as to how TasTAFE is being supported to address skills shortages in key industries?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Tucker. Tasmania is experiencing its strongest economic performance in a decade. The construction sector is booming with the fastest growth in first homebuyers in the country and many commercial developments underway or planned. This unprecedented economic growth creates massive skills demand in additional trades and the need for a skilled pipeline of workers in these areas is stronger than ever.

To help meet the state's skills needs, the state Government is providing TasTAFE with \$2.9 million to help address skill shortages in some of Tasmania's key industries. The funding will allow TasTAFE to train more apprentices and students in growth industries including construction, electrotechnology, plumbing, welding and nursing. It will help meet the future skill needs of Tasmania's booming construction sector.

New qualifications and programs will include a new foundation program for allied trades and a new advanced welding qualification. Additional training places will also be created across existing TasTAFE courses including pre-vocational welding, a certificate II in electrotechnology and a certificate II in automotive vocational preparation. These qualifications are a great first step for people looking toward gaining an apprenticeship in the future. They will help create a pipeline for future workers for the building and construction sectors, which is currently experiencing very strong growth. The funding will allow TasTAFE to employ an additional five teachers across building, construction and allied trades, a dedicated team of three welding teachers and a dedicated apprenticeship coordinator and industry liaison officer.

The funding will also create an additional 75 places in TasTAFE's Diploma of Nursing qualification statewide, a 45 per cent increase on current levels. Up to seven additional nursing teachers will be employed and there will be a dedicated coordinator for student work placements, a key part of TasTAFE's nursing qualification. Tasmania has the oldest population of all states with one in five people over the age of 65. This creates high demand for workers in the health and aged care industries and this funding will help TasTAFE meet this demand.

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This funding will help TasTAFE address the increasing demand for skilled labour in key industry sectors. As Tasmania's largest training provider, TasTAFE has a vital role to play in meeting the skill needs of industries. I thank all the staff for all the work they do.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, the Kangaroo Bay hotel has so far received \$2.5 million-worth of prime waterfront land in Bellerive. It received a federal government grant of \$5 million in funding toward a so-called jobs and growth plan. It has cost the community all the public open space allowed for under the Kangaroo Bay Development Plan, and has a building approximately twice the height along Cambridge Road, that has been approved for an ostensible hospitality centre, ostensibly to be run by TasTAFE. Now you tell us it is going to be a privatised service and that there is no longer any formal role for TasTAFE in running that service.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As I have said, the hospitality school partner was envisaged to be TasTAFE. TasTAFE's management has reviewed its willingness to participate in the joint venture and is still keen to be involved as a service provider but not as a partner so the Coordinator-General is engaging as we speak to identify an alternative education provider.

Dr WOODRUFF - What funding, if anything, has TasTAFE put toward the Coordinator-General's efforts? Did TasTAFE send a person to China for the Binzhou City trip? What has been spent on this exercise to find a private hospitality deliverer?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will take that on notice. Ms Dodd?

Ms DODD - The first part of your question about whether we sent someone to China, I am afraid I can't answer that. We would have to take on that on notice. The other part is in the previous year's budget. An amount of money was allocated to staff members who were conducting a feasibility into the business case in the very first part of 2018. Part of their work resulted in the review that indicated that master's level qualification was what was being sought, which is outside of the parameters for which we deliver, and therefore us being a partner was not appropriate.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, are you saying that TasTAFE spent \$200 000, which was what was allocated in the 2017-18 Budget, to work out that it could not deliver a master's education course and that had not been discussed with this company in the development of an entire hospitality training centre? Are you really saying that the conversation about the level of certificate was not discussed and you had to spend \$200 000 to find out you could not provide those services?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The \$200 000 was allocated -

Dr WOODRUFF - What was it spent on? How much was spent?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We will have to take that on notice as to exactly what was spent.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you please include how much was spent and what it was spent on?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I think Ms Dodd has explained what it was spent on.

Dr WOODRUFF - No. Are you really saying it cost any money to determine that TasTAFE could not provide a master's level course? Isn't that something written down in the list of things you were going to do -

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CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, could I please have respectful questions? Otherwise, I will give the call to Ms O'Byrne.

Dr WOODRUFF - I did not expect to receive that answer. I apologise, Chair, but I am flabbergasted.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am more than happy to take it on notice and provide it to you.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you confirm the review into the enrolled nursing course identified that marking of assignments was chronically delayed and many papers have not been marked since as far back as September? Can you confirm that staff have been required to work on Saturdays to clear around 700 hours of marking to complete those assessments?

Ms DODD - As we investigated the matters in our nursing program, it was evident that marking had been delayed. We have put a range of strategies to that. The first comment I will make is no-one was required to work, people were made an offer of overtime if they chose to work those Saturdays.

Ms O'BYRNE - It is overtime?

Ms DODD - It is overtime to work on Saturday. On top of that, we have sourced some additional staff who are able to contribute to the marking and they are also undertaking it. Getting the results to our students is fundamental and really important. We have put a new operational manager in place to help work with the staff. We are really completely supporting the staff to achieve some of the outcomes we need. As previously stated, we actively in recruitment right across the state.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, you would be aware that not having your work marked in any educational framework creates a number of problems. One of which is you don't know how you are progressing against the rest of the work that you need to complete. The second is whether or not you have the work done in a timely fashion to be able to progress to the next stage of your career, such as placement in your enrolled nursing course.

Minister, you must be aware that police and ambulance were called to an incident at TasTAFE at Clarence last week, which involved a student who became incredibly distressed because as a result of their work not being marked and their results being delayed, they are not able to go on placement. Ambulance and police had to be called because that student was so distressed that they threatened to self-harm.

What is being put in place to support these students who have had their results and placements delayed as a result of chronic understaffing and underinvestment in this course? Results not marked since September, minister, and we are now in June.

Ms DODD - I will answer it in a couple of different ways. We are focusing on the immediate group of students who require those outcomes. This is not something that any of us are happy about, and it is something that we are addressing actively. It has concerned me as well that we have got to where we got to. We now have a lens on it, we're looking at it and we are actively addressing it.

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The particular student that you refer to: I do not believe that your information is completely correct as to why that student ended up in the situation they are in, and I think it is appropriate that we don't draw the conclusion. Yes, the student was not to go on placement, but I think there were other issues related to that than the ones you are drawing.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, if you don't have your work marked from September and you cannot progress through a course, what reaction do you expect from these students, and how are you individually supporting them? Many of them have put their careers on hold, their lives on hold, to do this enrolled nursing course, and most of them will not be able to progress in a way, because it has been so poorly managed. What are you doing to support those students?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We always support our students, no matter what educational setting they are in.

Ms O'BYRNE - Clearly not, if they haven't had their work marked from September, minister. It is June.

CHAIR - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not going to talk about individual circumstances.

Ms O'BYRNE - Broadly they have not been marked, 700 hours of marking wasn't done.

Ms DODD - There will be no students whose course is delayed due to that. We are also reviewing our intakes to ensure that our students who are currently enrolled get the priorities in order of priority. This is very important from our point of view. We are putting enormous resources to supporting our nursing teachers in the south to be able to achieve the outcomes.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can you confirm that the incident last week will be fully investigated as a workplace safety issue, and support provided to the staff who were extremely distressed at the outcome?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Of course we will support our staff and our students.

Ms O'BYRNE - Will there be a workplace investigation?

Mr ROCKLIFF - If appropriate.

Ms O'BYRNE - No, my question is: will there be?

Mr ROCKLIFF - If appropriate, I don't -

Ms O'BYRNE - Have staff been told that there won't be a workplace safety investigation?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I'm not aware of that.

Ms DODD - I don't believe so. I am happy to take that on notice. My understanding was our EAP was called, there were debriefings with the staff, and there are particular matters that I understand were long-term matters related to this particular student.

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CHAIR - Ms Dodd, what is an EAP please?

Ms DODD - Employee Assistance Program.

Dr WOODRUFF - In relation to the \$200 000 allocated to TasTAFE in the 2017-18 Budget, which you have said you will provide us with information about how that is spent, and how much of it was spent, can you confirm that there is nothing in this year's Budget or the forward Estimates from TAFE towards any further expenditure on the proposed Kangaroo Bay development?

Ms DODD - That is correct. There is nothing.

Dr WOODRUFF - Can you tell me whether any expenses have been used by TasTAFE? I think I asked specifically about whether a person would be attending China, but not on this trip at the moment, which is a rescue mission for the development. Is there any money that has been spent by TasTAFE towards the Coordinator-General's efforts to get this building built?

Ms DODD - TasTAFE is not part of the trip to China, that is correct. The TasTAFE board identified that, as we previously said, our involvement is now the service-level provision.

Dr WOODRUFF - So TasTAFE has spent something of \$200 000, and we are yet to hear the final figures. Will TasTAFE try to recover this money from the developers? This is a failed exercise. Tasmanian taxpayers have spent \$200 000 of incredibly scarce resources to TasTAFE on a failed exercise to get a hospitality centre going. It has clearly fallen over on a number of levels at the Coordinator-General on this failed exercise to try and get it here, but it is a cost to TasTAFE. Will the Government be pursuing that money from the company?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are happy to take the questions on notice around the \$200 000 and then we will apply to that detail in terms of the expenditure.

Mr TUCKER - Can the minister share with the committee the purpose and value of the TasTAFE's recent statewide professional development session?

Mr ROCKLIFF - TasTAFE continues to operate with a very clear student focus. In response to a maturing social dialogue, TasTAFE's commitment to support staff and to add further value to TasTAFE's outstanding levels of student support, a professional development session was recently held, focusing on mental health.

On 24 May 2019, a statewide professional development session was held for both teaching and non-teaching staff. The session focused on how to identify signs of poor mental health in others and how to take appropriate action.

The innovative and proactive partnership between TasTAFE and OzHelp saw 15 facilitators deliver contemporary training across multiple campuses. The session was attended by over 600 TasTAFE staff - a truly remarkable piece of logistical planning and show of commitment by staff.

It proved extremely valuable in equipping teaching staff to support students, but also for all staff to improve their skills in supporting each other in the workplace.

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Feedback from the session has been overwhelmingly positive across all TasTAFE teams. The value and relevance of the professional learning was held in extremely high regard by both educators and support staff alike, with many noting that the practical strategies and skills could be immediately and readily applied with great benefit.

A short staff networking event was held at the conclusion of the mental training to provide TasTAFE staff with the opportunity to connect with their colleagues across the organisation, and this event was attended by TasTAFE board members who launched the TasTAFE's new network of mental health first aid officers, and also recognised and thanked staff for their ongoing dedication and commitment to quality teaching and learning outcomes.

TasTAFE continues to progress its commitment to providing professional development opportunities to all staff, in the interests of maintaining a strong and supportive learning environment for Tasmanians.

Ms DODD - The event was planned in 2017, as was our calendar of events that identified three professional development days for all educators. Those three professional development days were one at the start of the year in January, the May event and another one we had in July. The one at the start of the year was about assessment and really helping our educators to develop their skills on assessment. This event was around student behaviour, and how we can work with our students better. It had been in the plan from 2017.

Ms DOW - I want to ask a question about the skills hub that was promised during the federal election for Burnie, and how that will work with what's currently provided through TasTAFE, and if you have any further details about that. That's my first question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Is this the discussion we had about the matter of public importance as well a few weeks ago?

Ms DOW - No that was the north-west Job Ready Generation Package, which is about the implementation plan for that. This is new money.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will invite Ms Conway from Skills Tasmania to the table.

Ms CONWAY - I think the skills hub you are referring to was a recent election commitment of the Morrison Government, so because the government has only just settled in Canberra, we don't have any further information other than what has been announced at this stage.

We know there will be one in Burnie, and we are very keen to talk with our federal colleagues about this is all going to fit together. It is great. There's a lot of skills-related activity in the north-west, but it is going to be important that we coordinate it all and maximise the benefit for the north-west region.

Ms DOW - Particularly when you are trying to increase what TAFE offers as well across [inaudible].

My other question is around the Agritas funding as well, which was promised during the federal election, and how that will work with the agricultural centre of excellence which has been proposed by TasTAFE. I would like to have a good understanding of how many students are currently

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enrolled in agriculture and horticulture at the Burnie campus of TasTAFE. You might need to put that on notice.

Mr ROCKLIFF - More broadly though, the working relationship between Agritas and TasTAFE, particularly that centre of excellence which you refer to, is a strong one in terms of that involvement.

There has been a \$5 million commitment to building the centre of excellence and to establish that [inaudible] farm. We have a steering committee that has been appointed to make some initial recommendations to the TasTAFE executive and board with regard to the project's expenditure.

The steering committee is made up of Mike Badcock, from the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, Terry Bryant from the Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group, Paul Arnold from Agritas, Jonathon Price from Dairy Tasmania, Phillip Loane from Dunroan, Denise [inaudible] from TasTAFE and Anthony Wright from TasTAFE, who is the chair as well.

With Anthony Wright and Paul Arnold working closely together, it augers well for that partnership in terms of ensuring we maximise the opportunities of both infrastructures.

In terms of the number of students enrolled in agriculture -

Ms DOW - Yes, at the Burnie campus.

Ms DODD - We have total students enrolled, but not by campus, so we can take that on notice.

Ms DOW - The final question is around the \$2.9 million which is in the Budget. Is that on top of what is already provided by the Government to TasTAFE as core operational funding?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes. It is additional funding. We provide, as a Government, around \$100 million a year to skills. Around \$76 million of that goes to TasTAFE, a bit more. We made a commitment, and I think your party did as well. In terms of that 70 per cent level, it is probably closer to 80 per cent, and that's been demonstrated over recent years. The \$2.9 million is additional.

There is growth funding, as well, for TasTAFE above the level of inflation, which is pleasing, to ensure we sustain TasTAFE's operations. TasTAFE have done a very good job in the last few years - particularly when the organisation, as a result of the Tas Tomorrow experiment or situation when TasTAFE was formed, inherited a \$2.5 million debt. That has been paid off and that is to the good work of the TasTAFE team. I commend them for that.

Ms DOW - I have a couple of other questions and I am conscious of time. Drysdale Campus at Claremont: what is the progress of that project?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is a \$2 million project and that is progressing well. The project remains on track.

Ms DOW - When will that be operational?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That \$2 million was allocated to Drysdale in Claremont and the timing for the project is still on track.

Ms DOW - For when? When do you anticipate it will be operational?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Working groups have met. Planning is underway, and recruitment of a dedicated resource to drive the project will be finalised by mid-June 2019.

We are working diligently on the project and will not rush projects and the forms in this area, but my expectation is that it is 2020. It remains on track for 2020.

Ms DOW - My final question is, you have spoken about equity of access being the primary focus of the extension of year 11 and 12 across the regions. I am interested in whether you adopt that same principle for TasTAFE, equity of access to vocational education and training, which is just as important for many regional students. How you are addressing that through the funding, and perhaps even the additional funding you provided this year?

How much of that will be spent across the regions, making sure our regional young Tasmanians get access to vocational education and training?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We want to make all offerings from TasTAFE as accessible as possible.

Ms DODD - Can I draw your attention to a particular project we have underway, which is some resources that will be available for the north-west, in aquaculture in particular, to enable that access. That project will work hand in hand with the aquaculture centre of excellence, which is very much in the north-west. It is all about the north-west and being able to drive a centre of excellence in that part of the state.

Those two projects come together to be able to improve access. On top of that, we have a range of programs delivered out of Burnie and Devonport that provide students with the options to study across, pretty strongly, the full suite of TasTAFE.

CHAIR - Mr Tucker has the call.

Mr TUCKER - Can the minister tell the committee how TasTAFE's partnership with industry are delivering the training Tasmania needs?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question, Mr Tucker. Partnerships with industry are central to TasTAFE's role as a demand-driven training provider.

It allows TasTAFE to be responsive to the needs of specific industries and support Tasmania's economy. There are many great examples where TasTAFE is partnering with industry.

TasTAFE and St Lukes Health have collaborated to develop a new qualification: a Certificate 4 in General Insurance, launched in March 2019. It was my pleasure to be there at the launch.

It will assist those wanting to upskill, or seeking a career in health insurance. It has been delivered in-house, using St Lukes Health trained staff, and validated through TasTAFE. It is expected to be rolled out nationwide, meeting a gap in the market, as there is currently no national qualification specific to the health insurance industry.

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TasTAFE is currently partnering with the Civil Contractors Federation to deliver GPS training in civil construction. This meets a gap for training in this area. TasTAFE is also a member of a workforce development group for the civil construction industry.

A partnership with the Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing and Energy Council saw eight TasTAFE metals teachers recently trained by Weld Australia, experts in specialised welding techniques at TMMEC's advanced welder centre in Burnie. The training focused on welding according to the latest industry standards, as well as installation and operation of augmented-reality welding simulators.

TMMEC and TasTAFE will continue to work in a close collaboration, with opportunities to train TasTAFE students in our plan. Implementation and exposure to this innovative training will revolutionise welder training in Tasmania.

TasTAFE is also working closely with Master Plumbers Tasmania and a number of other stakeholders in planning for trades centres of excellence.

To encourage and support more women to pursue a career in ICT, TasTAFE and the Australian Computer Society, ACS Tasmania, have collaborated to develop an exciting new program. The Women in ICT Pathways Program was a 24-month funded program to support 36 students to undertake a Certificate III in Information, Digital Media and Technology course.

The Pathway program has been specifically designed to suit a range of women, from school leavers, to mothers or carers looking to return to the workforce, or women looking for a career change. It will give women the opportunity to learn a range of practical ICT skills through working with TasTAFE's industry-trained teachers, as well as providing opportunities for mentoring, workplace visits, industry guest speakers, and work placements.

I applaud the excellent partnership work TasTAFE is driving forward and thank the staff for their ongoing commitment to community and industry engagement.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, I wrote to you last year and you replied in relation to certificate III in guiding and that it was no longer being offered at the Launceston campus. Can you provide an update of the certificate III at the different campuses? You indicated there had been a change in delivery and focus, including events and hospitality. That is a different pathway and ecotourism, as your Government has continued to push, can be a really good pathway for people, particularly in the north-west if we make the Tarkine a national park in all the beautiful wilderness we have there.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There is a guiding campus in southern Tasmania, which is part of Drysdale's operations.

Ms DODD - They do their activities statewide. The team is located in the south but the students participate statewide. My understanding is that Drysdale has consolidated their operation out of the southern campus but the operation and guiding experience takes place right across the state.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, what is the in-classroom time required? It is all very well to talk about it being in the south, and I am sure they do walks elsewhere, but there must be a lot of in-class time, which is a big impost on people living in the north and north-west of the state.

Ms DODD - We will have to take that on notice and we will come back to you.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Ms O'Byrne asked how many nursing teachers had resigned. I am advised three nursing teachers have resigned and one has retired the last 14 months.

Ms O'BYRNE - Minister, can I take you to the Great Chefs Series, which Joseph Chromy and the JAC Group generously took on and ran successfully last year? They did that with \$50 000 from State Growth through to NTD. They were anticipating they would be running that again this year. It is an investment that you were making into northern tourism and training. They had progressed to engaging four chefs on that process. Can you confirm you are no longer running the Great Chefs Series and you have moved to Restaurant Tasmania, which I understand is a statewide model? Who are you partnering with in that?

Ms DODD - In October 2018, the industry subcommittee for Drysdale reviewed the operation regarding what was known as the Great Chefs Program and the proposal, NTD were in partnership to suggest this would go forward in 2019. As a partnership, their role would be to source the chefs and other activities. Drysdale's exposure to that would be through the particular event experience. It was agreed in that committee that the naming of that event would be reviewed because there had been some previous negative connotations and associations with that name, hence the new name that is coming forward. One of the most important parts about this was making it available for all apprentices regardless of where they worked. The Joseph Chromy group was invited to be part of that as well in terms of all apprentices being able to have that experience rather than putting it through one organisation. That is where it currently is at.

Ms O'BYRNE - Can I ask when it will be running? It was originally cast as an investment in tourism during our winter season in the north. It is no longer an investment in the north. Is it still in our winter season?

CHAIR - No more questions, the time for examination has expired. I'm happy to take the answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have agreed to take that question on notice.

CHAIR - Thank you very much. I thank the officers for their contributions today and we will now move to Advanced Manufacturing.

The committee suspended from 12.10 p.m. to 12.12 p.m.

DIVISION 11

(Department of State Growth)

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Chair. Over the last year, particularly since late 2018 when we released our Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy 2023, our presence in Defence circles has grown significantly. I will refer to retired Rear Admiral Steven Gilmore who will also use my time in providing an opening statement.

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Mr GILMORE - Thank you very much, minister. It is a great privilege and pleasure to update this committee on defence industry activity because there has been quite a lot, as the minister highlighted. It's a really good story to be told, as I've immersed myself in it across the state over the last year or so. The core of that story, not surprisingly, is Tasmania is doing really a remarkable job in an area that is not well acknowledged.

Across the state, I have found pockets of excellence, companies that are producing something or generating a service, which they have very successfully adapted to the defence domain for the Australian Defence Force and internationally, against very unique requirements and they are variously doing extremely well. My initial impressions were that there was less than a consistently good understanding of defence and where the opportunities lay, what defence policy was or processes to be followed. As a consequence, the contribution wasn't consistently as much as it could be. We have been working very hard to position those companies to find other companies that could do the same and help them position, be ready, to further pursue defence industry contracts.

We have also, as my title highlights, been advocating hard to ensure those in defence, defence departmental officials and defence primes, are equally aware of what I have found as I have gone across the state. We have done that through a number of means; attending various forums where Tasmania hasn't been present previously and telling that story, and getting the defence primes - by that term I mean the major companies in Australia that generate capability for defence - down here. We can tell a story all we like in their patch, but there is nothing better than getting them here. I can highlight today that we have had around 30 representatives of defence primes visit the state in the past 12 months, sometimes in a repeat way that has led to a number of contracts and very useful contacts for our companies in future. A number of them are now in those primes global supply chains with their unique products.

The investment we have made in time, effort and money into taking some of those companies to expositions in Australia and overseas has also generated considerable interest and a number of contracts. The most recent one we attended was the big Sea-Air-Space exposition, which is the largest maritime exposition in North America. We took five Tasmanian entities, four companies and the Maritime College, and the interest was extraordinary. Tasmania was a third of the Australian delegation to that exposition and we subsequently demonstrated a range of products to the US Navy, Military Sealift Command and merchant marine academies and the companies are in the process of negotiating contracts with some of those. That is demonstrative of the approach we are taking.

Ms DOW - Thank you very much for your contribution and for the update. We would be interested to understand in more detail the activities of your role and wondered whether you could provide that if we asked for that on notice, or have a briefing?

Mr GILMORE - Absolutely.

Ms DOW - You alluded to one trade mission you have undertaken but could you provide details of the other delegations you have undertaken and the cost of some of those?

CHAIR - Ms Dow, I suggest that make sure you direct it through the minister.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question. It is an exciting time in terms of opportunities to win defence work. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend Sea-Air-Space event in

Washington USA last year. Our defence advocate was also there this year, and at the Land Forces exposition in September last year to help advocate on behalf of the Tasmanian defence sector. One of the things I have come to appreciate is how important it is for Tasmania to have a presence at these expos. The defence market is built on trust. Yes, our companies need to have the right certifications and produce a world-class product but they also need the opportunity to look potential customers in the eye and convince them of their product and that the product will fulfil their needs.

That is why we have \$2.75 million in the Defence Industry Strategy in this year's Budget. It is important as it will allow the Government to continue to support Tasmanian industry to have a presence at these important trade events. The defence advocate has been particularly invaluable in helping to identify strategic opportunities for Tasmanian businesses, including at events such as Sea-Air-Space, Euronaval and Land Forces. The defence advocate, as you said, recently returned from this year's Sea-Air-Space expo where he led a delegation of Tasmanian businesses, AMC Search and UTAS. I am happy to take your question about costs on notice and provide the cost of the trips for you so you can be aware of all of that.

Ms DOW - My next question is regarding the defence strategy. It is lengthy and it is a revised version of the initial document put out under the auspice of Mr Groom, the recent minister. Do you have an action plan to accompany it, a detailed budget and time frames for a number of the initiatives listed? What sort of expectation is there?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have allocated around \$2.75 million to the strategy and the employment of our defence advocate. You refer to the refreshed Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy to 2023. It guides the Government's activities and investment in the defence industry. Australia's current investment in defence capability is valued in excess of \$195 billion over the next decade and worldwide allied defence spend is estimated in the trillions of dollars. Retired Rear Admiral Steve Gilmour was appointed as Tasmania's first defence advocate, which forms part of the expenditure, and provides a key resource to industry by accelerating our access to defence markets and advocating and promoting the overall Defence Tasmania brand. We have contributed \$580 000 in the 2018-19 Budget toward the development of the Tasmanian defence industry by supporting access to national and international defence expositions, assisting in business and workforce capability and accessing Australian Defence Force and industry contacts and contracts.

Ms DOW - Minister, I don't want to interrupt you but my question was to an implementation plan, an understanding of the work to be conducted over those years and the monies allocated.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Are you talking about 2020-23?

Ms DOW - Yes.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Over the next four years, it will be \$2.75 million.

Mr GILMORE - The strategy does highlight a number of actions under the seven areas. We are now working through those actions. Each is being progressed pretty much in parallel but with different degrees of priority. That is where we are allocating the money. We understand what our budget is and we are working on those priorities. They are focused positioning those actions that help position our companies to be as highly competitive as they could be, to find the opportunities and relay that to them and to attend activities where there is overt advocacy and connecting them personally. That is how we are progressing actions laid out in the strategy.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, from what we have heard, the key part of this portfolio is the relationship you are building with the United States and that trade event was only one example. I would like you to explore whether you see any problems on the horizon for Tasmania given the escalating tensions between the United States and China, China being a major trade export partner of Tasmania. If we are trying to develop a defence capability and a defence industry with the United States, it wouldn't take much to see that there is a potential for tension. Can you talk about that, please?

Mr ROCKLIFF - With respect to our international profile and reputation of Tasmania, that continues to grow. Our advanced manufacturing and defence industries are benefitting and furthering the international reputation of our state. Food production is an example and value adding is a very important part of our advanced manufacturing sector. We have supported many Tasmanian food producers to attend national and international food expos and trade shows. Food is a very important part of our defence industry.

Beyond food, the philosophy of Tasmanian manufacturing enhances Tasmania's reputation for premium products and the Government has been working closely with local manufacturers to promote and support their niche capability as well as providing funding for manufacturers to achieve ISO accreditation and defence contract certification. Many of our manufacturers, including the defence industries, are producing products that help to protect and save lives. For example, the Liferaft Systems Australia has a \$10 million contract to supply the marine evacuation systems for the Australian Navy's new frigate.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, with respect, I don't want a list of these things. I am asking about the tensions. Are you aware of the tensions that anyone who reads the front page of the newspaper would be? What is your response and how are you negotiating that? What advice are you receiving and how are you protecting Tasmania's existing industries?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Our defence advocate has spent some time in Washington and I will invite Mr Gilmore to comment.

Mr GILMORE - Is the core of the question whether the activities we are focused on in regard to defence industries and promoting them in the United States will amplify or have an effect on the tension between the United States and China?

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, I am not assuming that is the case, but I am asking, given it is a very sensitive area, whether you have received some advice from ASIO, from the Australian Security Policy Institute or defence security experts nationally about how we should negotiate what could become a conflict for us as a state.

Mr GILMORE - Thank you, I understand now. Our international dealings with all foreign countries, as it relates to defence and the promotion of defence industries and capabilities, is through the Australian Department of Defence. We are working within that sphere of influence and the policy that surrounds that, which allows that interaction to occur. I mentioned Team Defence Australia, which is the Australian Department of Defence export office and which we work into. Those expositions the minister mentioned earlier were all under the auspices of Team Defence Australia and we were a component part of that. That is how that is accommodated in making sure what Australia is doing and that Tasmania, in our circumstance, is in full compliance with all of those factors that must be considered.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister. Does that mean that we don't engage in those issues at a state level and that we are expecting it is happening at a federal level? Maybe this is a question to the minister. As a state, we develop these relationships with our commodity partners and important partners in China, Japan and all other countries. We are developing a relationship with the United States toward potential defence manufacturing. Although, yes, it is under the federal government at the national level, we are also going to be responsible for you, minister, negotiating with different partners.

CHAIR - Can we have a question, please?

Dr WOODRUFF - The question is: are you receiving advice or expertise as to conduct in relation to Chinese and United States companies, should escalations continue to expand?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not receiving direct advice in relation to those matters. The important thing is about our defence industry capability in Tasmania. It is about protecting people.

Dr WOODRUFF - Tasmanians?

CHAIR - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, protecting our armed forces with the products we specialise in.

Dr WOODRUFF - Wouldn't our first priority be to Tasmanian industries?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is, that is why we are growing the advanced manufacturing and defence industry sector.

Dr WOODRUFF - What about all the other industries?

CHAIR - I am keen to move on, Labor has been waiting.

Mr EVANS - It is a good question. It came up yesterday with the Minister for Trade. It is a broader issue than defence and one we take seriously and monitor seriously. The primary relationship, as the rear admiral said, is through the Commonwealth Government and we are in constant contact with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. We are regularly briefed. We are briefed on issues by ASIO before we go on any trade mission, for example. We are conscious of it, we have to manage that relationship and we need to be cognisant of it in our dealings.

The strategy we have taken in our new trade strategy is to diversify our markets. If you read the trade strategy, you will see we have identified a range of new markets that we will focus on with a view to ensuring we have a diversified approach right across Tasmanian industry in advanced manufacturing and across all sectors. China remains the most important export market that we have but, increasingly, we have a strategy to diversify that.

Ms DOW - Minister, is the new funding for the Defence Industry Strategy in addition to monies allocated for ongoing funding for investment growth in advanced manufacturing and the existing advanced manufacturing strategy?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The \$2.75 million is for the Defence Industry Strategy.

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Ms HENDRICKS - The Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan has additional funds. We come into its last year next year. That is on top of appreciating that defence is a market for many of our main manufacturers.

Mr EVANS - It is our intention to start the review of the Advanced Manufacturing Action Plan this year.

Ms DOW - How much money in this year's Budget is allocated to the advanced manufacturing strategy, minister?

Mr ROCKLIFF - In terms of funding allocations, it depends on whether you include some skills as part of that.

Ms DOW - Can you break it down? It would be easier.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We could take that on notice, perhaps.

Ms DOW - The growth and voucher system is in the advanced manufacturing strategy and the market expansion program. Are they all continuing this year?

Ms HENDRICKS - The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation and Growth Voucher System continues and we have had great success under that. The advanced manufacturing expansion program, yes, but under a different name. We have been working closely with the trade unit looking at some of the trade support programs. Two of the programs were very similar. For ease of administration, we are running it under the trade strategy program but eligibility criteria remain the same.

Ms DOW - How many people benefitted from each of those programs during this financial year?

Ms HENDRICKS - We did a review last year of the advanced manufacturing expansion program and the advanced manufacturing growth program. Of the \$600 000 invested in those two programs, 110 jobs were generated and \$14.7 million over two years. I can give you the breakdown of that. As you would appreciate with programs, because they are a rolling fund, sometimes grant programs are not signed up until just before the end of the financial year so it makes more sense to take it over two.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Under the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation and Growth Voucher System, eligible manufacturers receive a financial rebate of up to 50 per cent to undertake innovation and growth initiatives. The program has supported approximately 15 projects. Under the Advanced Manufacturing Market Expansion Program, eligible manufacturers received a financial rebate of up to 50 per cent to offset the cost of marketing activities. In national and international markets, the program supported approximately 58 projects.

We have seen the establishment of an advanced manufacturing web portal to improve communication, encourage collaboration and develop new markets by raising awareness of services, facilities and activities and showcases the capacity and capability of the sector. There are currently 139 manufacturers listed. The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation and Growth Voucher System was launched in November 2016. The department has now approved 16 applications under this program and has fielded a number of inquiries from advanced manufacturers seeking to explore

opportunities to improve processes and competitiveness. I have a list of a number of those programs.

Work force development is a key issue for the sector to ensure access to skilled labour to maintain the growth of the sector.

Ms DOW - Minister, can I interrupt you and ask a question about that point, IECL accreditation training - how many businesses have been eligible? Some funding was made available to businesses to undertake that training. How does that fit with the simulated welding opportunities being provided at TMEC and through TasTAFE?

Ms HENDRICKS - Minister, I think there were about six from memory. I will take that on notice and check for you. Bearing in mind that there are other accreditations because we are broadening our companies into defence. There are export accreditations, which are comparable, that we are also supporting businesses like Direct Edge to undertake. We can take that on notice. They are complementary of the welding simulation programs. That is one area identified by industry, minister, that was a key concern of taking those skill sets out for regional areas to have exposure. Having systems that can be transported, taken into industry and taken into affected areas, where future employment opportunities for people are opened up at training.

Ms DOW - Minister, could you also provide the numbers of businesses that have benefited from that program in the other areas of certification required as you move into implementing the actions of the defence strategy?

CHAIR - Is that a question on notice?

Ms DOW - That would be on the list of questions on notice.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, returning to the question about how we are negotiating the changing international political climate, hearing Mr Evans' comments about diversification, which is important, it is unlikely that we would be able diversify fast enough to mitigate those changes. Although it is laudable and something we have to work on, it is not possibly going to be enough. What formal advice have you sought about how to negotiate the potential situation of China and the United States, major trading partners, being in conflict with one another? China has used trade sanctions on other countries to exact responses from governments. What advice have you had about potential threats to primary industries in Tasmania?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is a question for the Minister for Trade. In terms of Mr Evans' comments about the broader government responsibility -

Mr EVANS - I go back to my point that it is a matter for the federal Government because they have the lead. The relationship between the state government and the federal government is very strong and we get continuously briefed and updated. We will take our lead from the federal government because they have that relationship.

Dr WOODRUFF - I hear that and my concern is, through you minister, that we are the state that's negotiating relationships with trade partners, sending people to the US to expand industries and we have existing relationships. Are we just defaulting to the federal level and not taking active advice at the state level?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - Let's be clear though, my role as Minister for Defence Industries and Advanced Manufacturing is to support those industries and support their capability. In Tasmania we are an exporting state, and of course whether we are growing cherries or component parts for the defence industry, advanced manufacturing, heavy underground mining equipment or produce, we have to be at that premium end level. My responsibility is to support the industries in advanced manufacturing and defence industries in developing their businesses and their export market opportunities and as well to look at the skills that are required.

We have come a long way in the last four and half years probably since Caterpillar centralised their operations in Rayong in Thailand at the expense of a number of people and jobs in the Burnie area, as Ms Dow would remember well. We realised that not only was there a good opportunity to support the people who were affected but through the Caterpillar Transition Taskforce and the work that we did there, the advanced manufacturing indicatives, the Tasmanian Defence Industry Strategy, we have some really highly capable people in Tasmania across the entire advanced manufacturing and defence industry sector and we need to support them. That's the role that I play as minister in supporting them and working alongside them.

Dr WOODRUFF - I appreciate that you are trying to establish that industry but do you have any advice about the potential financial impacts for that industry that you're trying to establish should we be in conflict between those two major trading partners?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Again, this is an area that's a whole-of-government responsibility and -

Dr WOODRUFF - Not really.

CHAIR - This is about the Budget and Estimates Committees and I think we are getting into an area that is completely outside the Tasmanian Government perspective. I'll give the call to Ms Dow.

Ms DOW - Through you minister, it was mentioned before that a number of primes that have visited Tasmania this last year was 30. Do you have the numbers of businesses that have benefited from those, or the numbers of businesses that are engaged in working with those primes around market development?

CHAIR - Minister, I am sorry that the time for the examination of this has expired. Would you like to just give a quick answer?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We can provide the information for you on notice if you would like to write that down in terms of business engagement with primes.

CHAIR - Thank you very much to the people appearing before the committee.

The committee suspended from 12.43 p.m. to 2.05 p.m.

DIVISION 11

(Department of State Growth)

Output group 2

Infrastructure

CHAIR - Good afternoon, everyone. We will resume the Committee B hearings. Thank you and welcome to officers at the desk. Jeremy, will you please introduce them?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, thank you, Chair. With me to my right is Kim Evans, Secretary of Department of State Growth, Infrastructure; to my left is Gary Swain, Deputy Secretary of Transport Service; and we have also Alan Garcia, who is Infrastructure Tasmania.

CHAIR - Are you going to do an overview, minister?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Look, I have an overview, and it's a few pages, but I might just shorten it a bit so we can get some questions.

Tasmania's infrastructure and transport services underpin our state's future growth, and we are continuing to invest at record levels to deliver for the future. Investments we make today to our roads and infrastructure underpin the future success of our broader economy as well as directly creating jobs. Effective planning for infrastructure, public transport and traffic management is vitally important in order for our cities to retain their mobility advantages to support business and economic growth and for our state to continue to attract visitors and new residents.

Together with the Commonwealth, the Tasmanian Government is continuing to invest in our infrastructure at record levels to ensure our transport networks continue to meet our future needs. Last year saw a record investment into our capital works program and we've delivered an outstanding amount of work both on construction projects and the planning for future works. We've achieved this by taking a strategic approach to managing programs of works over multiple years and through a close and successful collaboration of industry. Fortunately, the weather was also on our side, which is always important for construction projects.

The Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government have invested over \$280 million, including maintenance and road and bridge construction program for 2018-19; this includes \$200 million for new construction projects, an \$80 million increase from last year's delivery. While some of this increase reflects favourable weather conditions, again there it is also a reflection of the move to a program management approach by the department working in partnership with industry.

Throughout the year we've advanced major road projects, including safety upgrades on the Midland Highway and the new Huon Highway Summerleas Road intersection upgrade. We've progressed upgrades to visitor infrastructure around the state, and invested in bridge strengthening and renewal on our key freight corridors.

Our transport network is critical to our way of life through the connection of people and places. The Hodgman Liberal Government understands that reliable travel time is also a major issue for commuters in Hobart and that's why we have a strong plan to deliver a range of initiatives to help get people where they need to be on time. Responding quickly and effectively to traffic incidents plays a key role in improving travel time. That's why we're implementing the Comprehensive Traffic Incident Response Plan for Hobart as part of a \$71.98 million for our greater Hobart traffic solution policy commitment outlined in the 2019-20 Budget. We already have a number of initiatives underway, including a real time traffic management system which provides better information to traffic managers and road users. A detection system has been installed and is already being trialled as a reporting tool for peak traffic times. Once fully implemented, it will provide

instant detection and travel time information. In future, road users will be able to access this information through a smartphone app to better plan their journey as well as in real time through variable message board signage on arterial routes. It will also be used to direct motorists away from traffic incidents.

As part of our broader traffic incident management focus, our incident response plans have been developed to enable us to deal more immediately with a range of scenarios that might occur across the transport network. Extensive scenario mapping has already been done on a block-by-block basis and this work will be used to direct traffic flow when incidents such as crashes and breakdowns occur. We already have tow trucks stationed near the Tasman Bridge at peak hours and the hours of operation to the service will soon be extended to provide a greater capacity to immediately respond to incidents on the bridge. A similar service will be rolled out over the coming financial year to respond to incidents during the morning and afternoon peaks at the Southern Outlet, Macquarie and Davey streets, and the Brooker, Domain, Tasman and East Derwent highways. These tow trucks will also be used to remove vehicles from clearways on Macquarie and Davey streets in the morning and the afternoon peak periods to make traffic flow through the city more reliable.

Continuing to build an efficient and effective transport network for Hobart is a key priority and our comprehensive traffic incident response plan utilising leading traffic management technology is part of our broader commitment to maintaining Hobart's liveability.

Chair, I have a few pages here as well.

Ms O'CONNOR - Just give us the dot point summary.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have a lot of dot points as well.

Ms O'CONNOR - I am sure it is all in your head.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am very pleased to have delivered the first-ever 10-year pipeline of works, some \$13.9 billion over the next decade. This includes \$8 billion that is public expenditure and the rest is private. That document will be reviewed every year and the criterion for being placed on the pipeline of works is a \$5 million project, bigger in terms of the pipeline of works.

Also underway is the 30-year infrastructure plan which our CEO of Infrastructure Tasmania, Alan Garcia, is in charge of, and we look forward to a draft being ready shortly. It is important that we get that right in terms of consultation and ensure that cross-agencies have input into that plan as well.

I am pleased with the \$3.6 billion infrastructure investment over the forward Estimates and very pleased with the work being done by the team and all our contractors and civil construction firms to get money out the door in the last 12 months - some \$280 million, which is a very good uplift. Yes, weather has played a role in that. We acknowledge that but also the good work and the strategic planning with the department as well.

Our roads and transport networks provide the links we need to get freight to market, supports the productivity of our economy and carries us between home and work or school. As our state and our economy continue to grow, this means more vehicles of all shapes and sizes, more people, more freight, more visitors moving around the state. Our investment in infrastructure and transport

services improves safety for road users, increases travel efficiency for commuters and ensures our public transport is a more available and an attractive option. Our investment improves access between local businesses and ports as well.

We're investing in the generational infrastructure we need to meet today's needs and to provide for Tasmania's future. The 2019-20 Budget continues our strong commitment to infrastructure investment and our capital investment program.

I have cut my opening statement short but I am sure I could cover some more of it a bit later on. I look forward to the questions. Thank you.

CHAIR - Thank you, minister. Just two things to cover before we start. I will go for an afternoon tea break at 4 p.m. and we will invite MAST in somewhere in the last hour just so that staff can get organised.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, thanks for that briefish introduction about the work that is happening across the state.

Last year you announced that you would launch the 30-year infrastructure strategy by Christmas. You failed to reach that deadline, then you said you would launch that by the end of March this year and you failed to reach that deadline. You indicated it would be released maybe around budget time. There was no mention of it in the Budget. When will it be released, and how can we have any confidence in the date you suggest because you have failed three times now?

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, he has agreed with that proposition.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I haven't agreed with that at all.

Mr O'BYRNE - Did you commit to release it by the end of Christmas the last year?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, I remember saying that my expectation is that we could deliver a draft by December last year and we delivered a 10-year pipeline of works.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is a different document. The pipeline is simply a list of things happening, not really a strategy.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is not only a list.

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, please do not comment. You ask a question and the minister answers. That is how it works.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is the first-ever pipeline of works and it is a living document. The investment is significant, so I would not determine it to be only this or that. It is almost \$14 billion-worth of investment. It is a living document that provides more certainty to the civil construction sector and in projects for those in building and construction. They can plan their workforce development around that pipeline.

The need to ensure we had strong consultation across agencies toward the 30-year infrastructure plan was more involved than we first envisaged. It has taken longer than December last year but it is very important to get it right. I don't want to rush it. I want it to make sure the

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document sets a pathway forward for the next 30 years. It is a look over the horizon to understand Tasmania's infrastructure over the next 30 years. A lot of work has gone into the strategy and will continue. My expectation of the latest time line is the next quarter, such as September. I will ask Mr Garcia to briefly outline the consultation and cross-agency discussions.

Mr GARCIA - One of the challenges we have had in developing the document is pushing the agencies to understand where 30 years places us, where beyond 10 years. The pipeline is an understanding of what is going to be delivered within the foreseeable future, a 10-year span. Most agencies have a fair idea of their infrastructure. The GBEs have fairly sophisticated processes to develop their longer-term infrastructure strategies.

Some of the inter-budget agencies a bit more challenging because of their horizons around Estimates - understanding what is beyond 10 years, where the global economy is going and what sort of impacts there will be. It has been challenging to have those conversations in a way that we have some confidence agencies are pitching themselves out and understanding what that might be. We have been having dialogues and have held workshops with the agencies and I am confident now that we are getting to the point, through that interaction with the agencies, and getting more of a feel for what could be a challenging strategy.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, you have been in government for five years. You announced a 30-year infrastructure strategy, you have failed to meet at least -

Mr ROCKLIFF - We announced it.

Mr O'BYRNE - You announced it. Finally, after five years to get to that point, you now claim we going to have a repeat of this again. After five years of in government, you now claim it is going to take longer than you expected because it is complex. When did it become a surprise that this kind of work would become complex?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have delivered more in one year than your good self delivered in four years when it comes to a pipeline strategy of infrastructure projects.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is not true. You have a grab-bag list of some things announced and you're claiming that's a strategy.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's a pipeline of works of some \$13.9 billion and we committed to the 30-year infrastructure plan. It will be delivered - it is important it is not rushed and we get it right.

Mr O'BYRNE - I agree with the last part, it shouldn't be rushed and it shouldn't need to be. Why did you commit to putting it out by the end of the year, knowing it was such a complex document? How can we believe you now?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr O'Byrne, because we commenced work on the 30-year infrastructure plan and through the consultation it appeared that it was a large body of work, which we are committed to delivering. We will deliver on a 30-year infrastructure plan. There's absolutely no doubt about that. Look forward to it. It will be drafted and you'll be invited to comment -

Ms O'CONNOR - Will you keep the climate deniers away from it?

CHAIR - Order.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I'm not sure that's part of the terms of reference.

Ms O'CONNOR - I hope you do, so we see some good 21st century infrastructure in there.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I want some good, forward-thinking infrastructure with this horizon look; the infrastructure needs of the state in 30 years time. I am sure climate change will be mentioned in a 30-year infrastructure plan, Ms O'Connor, I can guarantee you that.

Mr O'BYRNE - Have you seen a draft already?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I haven't seen a draft as yet. I look forward to that work.

Mr O'BYRNE - You've mentioned this pipeline. I'm not criticising, it is what it is - a document that basically lists a range of potential projects in the public domain. It is not a strategy. One of the projects in that pipeline document is the MONA development. During the federal election we saw a support package from the federal Labor Party. Clearly, MONA had, at the behest of your Treasurer, approached federal Labor for a commitment to that. Your party ran a campaign against the MONA commitment, splitting the state, north and south. What other projects in that pipeline are you going to trade for political purposes?

Mr ROCKLIFF - There is nothing we are going to trade for political purposes. That is not the intent of the pipeline document.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you support the federal Liberal campaign, their dishonest campaign around MONA, undermining the MONA development?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not going to talk about the federal politics and I'm not going to talk about -

Mr O'BYRNE - This is about your pipeline project.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not going to engage in a discussion about the federal election, Mr O'Byrne. I believe -

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you support the MONA project?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Of course I support the MONA project.

Mr O'BYRNE - What did you think of your federal party's campaign which, at best, has delayed it, at worst, could've put it at massive risk?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Well, I'm not sure it's put it at massive risk and the campaign centred around parties that had priorities in certain areas. The federal campaign decided to direct and advocate for different priorities than the Labor Party and that's democracy.

Mr O'BYRNE - Did you see the merchandise and the advertising from your party attacking the MONA development? Did you give out how to vote cards on election day, which had this sort of north-south commentary?

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr O'Byrne, I'm not anti-north and I'm not anti-south. I am pro-Tasmania.

Mr O'BYRNE - Why did you stand beside your federal Liberal counterparts in a dishonest campaign splitting Tasmania in the north and south around MONA, which is good for the entire state?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I feel MONA has been tremendous for Tasmania, Mr O'Byrne. You won't hear me criticising the MONA development or MONA as it is now.

Mr O'BYRNE - Why did you stand by and allow your federal Liberal Party members to do that?

CHAIR - Minister, I'm about to call this out of order. It has nothing to do with the Budget. I've let it run. I'm going to give the call to Ms O'Connor.

Mr O'BYRNE - It's within the pipeline project, Chair.

CHAIR - No, Ms O'Connor.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, can you confirm the state's total actual infrastructure spend in 2016-17 was \$416 million? While your advisers are checking that figure, can you confirm that the actual infrastructure spend in 2017-18 was \$436 million?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We can provide that information for you.

Ms O'CONNOR - This relates to your Government's rhetoric around the infrastructure spending and the fact that in financial previous two years, your Government has been able to get less than \$500 million out the door on infrastructure spending in any given year.

Why are you claiming that you can roll out more than a billion dollars in infrastructure spending this financial year, more than twice what you have in previous years?

Mr ROCKLIFF - My level of responsibility is roads -

Ms O'CONNOR - It's not only roads. There is other infrastructure you are responsible for.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Roads infrastructure. We have had a very good year this year in ensuring that we get money out the door, some \$280 million on the roads infrastructure that I am responsible for. That is quite a significant increase on the year before.

Ms O'CONNOR - Who is responsible for bridges?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am responsible for bridges.

Ms O'CONNOR - That's right. Maybe you could tell the committee what was the actual infrastructure spending in your portfolio in 2016-17 and in 2017-18, and then the projected infrastructure spending this year, which is markedly more, and explain to the committee how on earth you can get that money out the door, given the incapacity of government to get money out the door previously?

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am happy to get the figures for you. I won't shy away from that, but we recognise that ensuring we get money out the door is a priority. We have improved in our project delivery over the course of the last 12 months in particular. We have \$280 million out the door.

Ms O'CONNOR - In which period was the \$280 million?

Mr ROCKLIFF - To date. My expectation is that financial year there will be \$280 million.

Mr SWAIN - We operated at about \$200 million in total last year, which was a \$120 million capital delivery and about \$75 million to 80 million of maintenance. This year we are expecting to land somewhere between \$280 million and \$284 million depending on the final invoices; summing up because we are at the end of the year and we won't get the precise numbers, but at least \$280 million.

The maintenance budget is more or less the same; that represents an \$80 million increase in capital delivery off last year - \$80 million on the base of \$120 million, a very significant uplift.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I think we have averaged, and I stand to be corrected, about \$202 million over the last five years in terms of getting money out the door.

Ms O'CONNOR - On roads and bridges?

Mr ROCKLIFF - On roads and bridges. There was about \$167 million out the door in 2013-14. That is an uplift and people will correct me if that's not right. That's what I can remember. It's increasing to \$280 million this year.

Some of that, as I acknowledge, is the good weather across summer. We've had a very long construction season this year, which has helped us in that sense. You would have seen the Perth links project in northern Tasmania, which is a \$92.3 million project. That has pretty much bounced out of the ground due to good weather, planning and management from the department, and those within civil construction and the contractors VEC-Shaw joint venture. I commend the team there as well.

It highlights the fact that progress can happen a little quicker when there are no management and traffic controls required, such as where that project is as opposed to the Midland Highway, which requires a lot more traffic management.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you, minister. What we are trying to get to the bottom of here is, given previous years' total infrastructure spends which presumably was maxing out the Government's capacity to deliver in previous years, how can you and the Treasurer keep a straight face when you are promising the infrastructure spend over the next three years? Isn't it a fact the Government simply does not have the capacity to spend that much money? You have not been able to.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have improved our capacity and Mr Swain might like to talk about the areas in State Growth that have enabled that improvement to occur.

Mr SWAIN - It might be appropriate for the general manager also to add some detail. We went to budget committee and the Government following last year's budget to talk about how we could expand capacity to deliver. There are a number of processes put in place; one the minister

touched on of moving to program management. That identifies if you are running a program of 20 to 30 projects, projects can be delayed for a variety of reasons. We sought and were given support and more flexibility to move timing of projects around within programs. We have about nine or 10 programs across the state.

We sought some cashflow adjustments for sufficient planning money for the scoping of projects initially. Recognising a typical road project has a three- to four-year delivery, one to two years in planning and one to two years in delivery. Cashflow adjustments meant we had enough planning initially to ensure we can deliver the program.

We have been focusing on delivery across the forward Estimates, not year-by-year point delivery; it was really important to get planning funding right for future delivery. We have made changes where there have been opportunities to bring projects forward either through giving grants or by pushing work into our maintenance contracts. We have taken these opportunities and set up some methodologies we can use again in the future.

We are now in the process - and I will pass to Shane - of looking at how we repackage works into broader programs, both in design and construction, to use up the full capacity available in the Tasmanian industry.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Introducing Mr Shane Gregory, General Manager, State Roads.

Mr GREGORY - Continuing from Mr Swain, you hear a lot about economies of scale and efficiency in project management with larger projects. Even though the program gets bigger, when we are working into bigger parcels, we can drive more efficiency internally, we can have a number of project managers and deliver more bigger projects. The project management effort is fairly consistent across the scale of projects. A project manager can do five \$2 million projects or five \$40 million projects, the efforts are relatively similar. With those bigger projects we are also getting economies of scale in construction. The capacity of industry has also increased. We have had an uplift generally.

Supporting all that, we have been working consistently over the last three or four years about internal process improvement to make our processes more efficient.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, this budget has been lauded as the infrastructure budget. As the Infrastructure minister, can you name any new infrastructure projects funded in this budget that have not already been announced or funded in previous budgets?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is the infrastructure budget, Mr O'Byrne. I met with you in parliament the other day. We have an old Bridgewater Bridge, we are going to build a new Bridgewater Bridge.

Mr O'BYRNE - It is not new in this budget though is it?

Mr ROCKLIFF - At least it is being delivered under our Government unlike when you were in government. We are delivering the Bridgewater Bridge over the forward Estimates. There are continuing works on projects already underway and over a dozen new separate projects underway in the coming year. Projects to begin at Spring Hill and Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks as part of the Midland Highway 10-year action plan.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is there anything new that has not already been announced, though?

CHAIR - Please do not interrupt, Mr O'Byrne, the minister is answering the question. I do not know where he is going to go. He is answering as he sees fit; you have the opportunity to ask another question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The first projects under the West Tamar Traffic Solution including upgraded junctions and a safer highway for bikes between Brisbane Street and Legana. The next stages of the Richmond Road master plan include the new Cambridge link road, new roundabout upgrade on East Tamar Highway at the Mowbray Connector and safer junctions at Gleadow and Goderich streets; improvements on the Great Eastern Drive and Bruny Island main road under the Visitor Roads Package; strengthening another six bridges around the state under the Freight Access Bridge Upgrades Program.

I listed the names of those bridges last night in the Estimates for the Legislative Council. We also have a new flyover Hobart Airport Interchange upgrade; the overtaking lane on the Arthur Highway at Iron Creek, one of the first projects over the South East Traffic Solution Program; safe access to Boat Harbour School and the Bass Highway. There are the bridges: the Pipers Brook Bridge, Bridport Road, Little Forester River Flood Opening; the Humphrey Rivulet Bridge; Berriedale Rail Underpass; North West Bay River Bridge and Lesley Road Underpass.

There is a lot of action happening in infrastructure, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - There is no doubt about that, minister. The question was around could you name any new projects announced under this Budget that had not already been announced or contemplated or funded in previous budgets? The answer is clearly no.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not sure what the point of your question is? Are you saying if we don't complete projects we should scrap all those projects and keep announcing new ones?

Mr O'BYRNE - You have to be able to fund it. If you are plunging the state into over \$1 billion of net debt and you are claiming to do that - and only 12 months ago your Treasurer said we are heading into a golden age. There were surpluses as far as the eye could see, commitments around no net debt. We have now moved to close to over a billion dollars in net debt over the forward Estimates. The fig leaf protection is, 'but it is going to be an infrastructure budget', yet there is no new infrastructure.

All of these things have been known and programmed for in previous budgets. I am asking the Infrastructure minister to name something that justifies going to over a billion dollars of net debt in the name of infrastructure.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important to invest in infrastructure.

Mr O'BYRNE - There is no argument with that.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Take irrigation for example.

Mr O'BYRNE - We did that as well.

CHAIR - Order.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am the first to acknowledge the work of previous governments and bipartisan approach to irrigation. We've delivered half of tranche 2 and looking forward to tranche 3 as well, some \$170 million if I am correct. We welcomed the commitment from both sides of politics for that intergenerational and enabling infrastructure.

Mr O'BYRNE - We can move on if you can't answer.

Mr ROCKLIFF - In terms of the roads of strategic importance, the Birralea Road, Lyell Highway, the Illawarra Road, the Cooe to Wynyard road as well which Dr Broad and I are more familiar with.

Mr O'BYRNE - There are no new projects. We can establish that.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This is a very strong infrastructure Budget.

Mr SWAIN - While the individual projects the minister has named are not necessarily identified in the Budget, the state share of Roads of Strategic Importance is named up, as is the Urban Congestion Fund state contribution, which will go towards new projects.

Mr O'BYRNE - It doesn't really add, thank you Gary, I appreciate that. As part of this Budget each department has been asked to provide an efficiency dividend which will add up to \$450 million across all departments. What is your share and what are you proposing to do?

Mr ROCKLIFF - In terms of the Department of State Growth and my responsibility there?

Mr O'BYRNE - Your responsibilities within this.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Treasury will work with agencies to identify savings. There will be a strong focus on minimising the impact on service delivery and looking to expenditure such as consultants, travel, advertising, together with targeted vacancy control and natural employee attrition. We will not want to affect frontline essential services and we will be minimising any impact on service delivery. Treasury will be working with the department to identify these key savings.

Mr O'BYRNE - So when you say frontline essential services, how is that defined in your department? Industry at times is critical of the government's lack of capacity to get projects out the door in a time and a fashion which works well with industry.

Crucially important, if this is the infrastructure budget, are you ruling out cutting any roles and jobs that support road projects, and design and contract tendering?

Mr ROCKLIFF - When it comes to the Department of State Growth and that frontline service and that interface with industry, of course, in terms of being money out the door, we have employed another six project managers in the last 12 months to support that, so my expectation is that that level of service will need to continue.

Mr O'BYRNE - Are you protecting those jobs?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is a frontline interface with the industry in getting money out the door. It is important we do identify savings in line with the Treasurer's expectation, across the forward Estimates. The reason we can invest in key areas of service delivery, particularly essential services,

is because we have balanced budgets and when you balance budgets you can supply where it is most needed.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, as you are aware Hobart's traffic congestion is not improving. You only have to talk to Hobart commuters about that. There continues to be an underinvestment in public transport in this Budget, and the Tasmanian Council of Social Service has asked why at \$221 per person in 2019-20, which is only an increase of \$8 a person on the previous year, Tasmania's per capita expenditure on public transport remains the lowest in the nation. As a consequence, Project 2018 has led to services being discontinued with no alternatives put in place.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission has identified Tasmania's spending on transport as falling well below the Commission's assessment of spending required to provide national average level of services in 2017-18. How does the Government justify its continued underinvestment in public transport?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Part of the Project 2018 and the southern rollout, there were new services as well delivered as part of that.

Mr O'BYRNE - Some were cut on weekdays

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, please be quiet.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There has been some new services and we have responded to demand with respect to those services.

In terms of Project 2018, we have seen the first comprehensive review in over a decade in our Public Transport Network. Central to the review process are the objectives of the new Public Transport Network, which provides better access employment, education, and services, and improves the overall social connectivity of Tasmanians within the budgetary constraints. So far, we have seen the network changes deliver the Government's election commitments to improve bus services to Sorell, Margate, New Norfolk and Huonville, and deliver a seven-day-a-week bus service linking the West Coast towns to Burnie.

Ms O'CONNOR - After you took away the Hobart to Strahan service?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are continuing to deliver [inaudible] operators five plus five contracts to existing operators where services are needed, and performance conditions are met.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, can I pull you back to the question of Hobart's traffic congestion and the underinvestment in cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, and the apparent inability of your Government to reduce congestion in and around Hobart over the past five years - the obvious inability of your Government.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You would have to acknowledge that in the last 12 months, we have progressed a number of initiatives to impact positively on traffic congestion. The takeover of Macquarie and Davey streets, the legislation has gone through the parliament.

Ms O'CONNOR - Which has made no tangible difference to congestion.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr ROCKLIFF - We recognise the pressure on our roads, and we have a clear plan for the short, medium and long term to address it.

Ms O'CONNOR - Really?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr O'Byrne, you have seen our plan.

Mr O'BYRNE - I wouldn't call it a plan. It's a vision to have a plan and to have a strategy.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's a number of key initiatives -

Mr O'BYRNE - That have gone nowhere in 18 months, two years.

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is just not true.

Ms O'CONNOR - Hang on a second. TasCOSS wants this question answered. TasCOSS wants to understand how you and the Government justify continued low investment in public transport infrastructure - the lowest of the nation.

Mr SWAIN - The funding under successive years and successive governments has been maintained at CPI, so it will be about \$105 for buses. In the last few years, some of that funding allocation has been under the admin item, which is effectively passed through the department, and some of that money has actually not been spent. So through Project 2018, the mix of services has been changed to try to deliver a better set of services, and more services within the same funding envelope.

Ms O'CONNOR - That's right, there is no increase in funding.

Mr SWAIN - But we are also fully utilising the funding envelope [inaudible].

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, it is a fact, isn't it, that we still have the lowest per capita investment in public transport, and there is no new money going into public transport solutions for Hobart's increasingly problematic congestion problem?

Mr ROCKLIFF - There is a ferry, the Derwent ferry.

Ms O'CONNOR - Where is it?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is being progressed.

Ms O'CONNOR - When will the first ferry take the first passengers across the river?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We would like to see the ferry service operating in the first term of this Government. A comprehensive body of work has been done. You can laugh about it, but -

Ms O'CONNOR - Just for the record, you're having a crack at Mr O'Byrne for sniggering. You are talking about a ferry that hasn't been delivered, and may or may not be delivered in this term of government.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is my expectation that it will be delivered.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Ms O'CONNOR - It's a question TasCOSS asks that hasn't been answered, minister.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As Mr Swain pointed out, there has been investment in public transport.

Ms O'CONNOR - At CPI, so the roads budget keeps going up, and the public transport budget remains static, other than CPI.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You would appreciate the opportunity that the ferry service across the Derwent will present in terms of public transport as well. There has been a consideration of the report prepared by MRCagney for Metro Tasmania.

The Government recognises that further work needs to be done to inform budget planning when it comes to the ferry service - consideration of strategic transport network requirements for the eastern shore, and the role of the ferry in delivering on those needs confirmation of locations of critical landside requirements, including ferry terminals integrating with park-and-ride, vehicle drop-off, bike ride and walk-and-ride infrastructure -

Ms O'CONNOR - Can you confirm the model you are looking at is ferries not operated by Metro?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I'll finish my line of discussion and answer. Planning for supporting infrastructure, including cycle networks, parking and integration with bus services - more detailed specification is required; service attributes, including service frequency and span of the service; and relevant vessel performance and capabilities, including capacity and testing supply-side market interests and capacity to deliver the required service.

Ms O'CONNOR - Will it be run by the private sector?

CHAIR - Ms O'Connor, please don't interrupt. Allow the minister to finish, because then I am giving the call to Mr O'Byrne.

Ms O'CONNOR - Will it be run by the private sector? Is that what we can assume? You're not going to make it part of an integrated public transport system?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It will be part of a public integrated system.

Ms O'CONNOR - Not run by Metro?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important you canvass all options, as long as there is an integrated transport solution, of course. We are working on our integrated ticketing system and that's a \$7.5 million commitment as well. That's critical in terms of integrating all our services, including a ferry service

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, the Government is plunging the state into over a billion dollars of net debt. In this Budget alone, you have been asked to try to find savings across government of \$450 million. The consultant's report is RTI and released through the media -

Mr ROCKLIFF - You are talking about the [inaudible]?

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr O'BYRNE - The ferry service. The \$500 000 you have allocated will effectively only be a morning and a night service. You can't say that it will happen in the way you have announced because you don't have the money in the Budget. The Budget is going into over a billion dollars of net debt. You can't sit here with a straight face and say it is going to be this all-singing, all-dancing service. Effectively, on the budget you have allocated, and that's the only thing we can work with, you have -

CHAIR - Is there a question?

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes. You have a bus company in Metro which has a Queensland consultant in to provide recommendations to you to put more money into buses, because that is effectively the result. We all support ferries, but you've got to have credibility, because you have to be able to pay for it, and the only money you have on the table - effectively your consultant from Queensland told you that you may as well just put more money into buses and give up on the ferry idea.

CHAIR - What is the question?

Mr O'BYRNE - How can you deliver on the proposal you have gone out front-page on *The Mercury* spruiking, when you have no money?

Ms O'CONNOR - You have got a front page out of ferries about three times, I think.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I haven't seen them, I haven't been counting.

Mr O'BYRNE - Can you get on with the job, because the money you have in the Budget is manifestly inadequate to do that?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have provided \$2 million. That was our commitment, and -

Mr O'BYRNE - Over the forwards?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is correct, but, as you would appreciate, we have set up and established a working group and the work they will be charged with, and I have mentioned a number of those aspects to the work required, will inform a budget submission for next year's Budget.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, with respect, you are pushing the state into over a billion dollars in net debt. You are being asked to find close to \$500 million in efficiencies across government. You have already started to reprofile a number of your other infrastructure projects, like the Mowbray Connector, which has been pushed back. There are projects being delayed. What projects then, in your current profile, will be either cancelled or delayed for you to deliver on this promise?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I do not anticipate any will be cancelled.

Mr O'BYRNE - Will they be delayed? How can you fund it, though?

Ms O'CONNOR - You can get a private operator in, won't you?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The ferry service will be a very important part of our public transport network.

Ms O'CONNOR - But operated by a private operator.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Integrated into the public transport network.

Ms O'CONNOR - But private.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr O'Byrne, we are committed to the service, we will deliver a service, and that's my expectation in this term of government. You can appreciate the body of work that needs to be done, and that will inform the budget submission for next year.

Mr O'Byrne, the Premier made it very clear, and the report made it clear as well, that for a service to work, it needs to be seven days a week. It needs to be comprehensive. I am not going to do this cheaply just to put a ferry on the water for the sake of coming good on election commitment.

This has to be a comprehensive, seven-day-a-week service integrated into the public transport network, and it has to be done properly. We are committed to doing that, but we need to be more informed in terms of what investment is required to do that.

Mr O'BYRNE - Deputy Premier, you know, in a whole range of other policy initiatives, there are indicative costs put into the forward Estimates which are qualified pending certain studies, certain efforts, to quantify the exact cost.

You have not done that in this case. You do not have the funding in the forward Estimates. The Budget as we are looking at it at the moment, even if all things are going well, goes into over \$1 billion of net debt. How can you say with credibility that we will deliver on this and effectively you are writing a blank cheque? 'Whatever it takes, we'll do it,' is what you're saying, 'because we are going to get the ferry service up'. To be honest, the model that the only ferry operator who's been in the public domain talking about this, Bob Clifford, says it won't work.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr Clifford is welcome to be engaged in the process as well and I welcome his feedback and that would be of value.

Mr O'BYRNE - And he has told you that a single-service ferry -

Mr ROCKLIFF - You have to appreciate though, Mr O'Byrne - look, the public transport needs to be consistent and reliable and when people's expectation is that the bus is going to arrive at a particular bus stop or a ferry at a particular terminal, it has to be there. It needs to be frequent and integrated. That is what my expectation is and it's what the Premier's expectation is. In his Premier's Address in March this year he clearly stated that. That is what I expect to deliver, but you would appreciate that work needs to be done to ensure that we get the right budget amount.

Ms O'CONNOR - Historically there has been a disparity between the amount of funding that is allocated to bus services in rural and regional areas, and that which is allocated to urban bus services or Metro. In the 2018-19 Budget, rural bus services received about 18.5 per cent of the total bus funding but we can't find the delineation in this year's budget. As you would be aware, rural bus services or private operators are transporting about one-third of bus users. What is the total level of funding allocated to private bus services and community transport in rural and regional areas?

CHAIR - So it is private buses and community transport.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, community transport is a bit different. We will just stick with the private bus services that run regular services in rural and regional areas.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Right around Tasmania?

Ms O'CONNOR - Yes, what percentage of the Budget and what quantum of funding? It is all just put in under general access service funding, as far as we can see.

Mr SWAIN - It's not a straightforward question.

Ms O'CONNOR - Okay, what is the funding envelope for all the services that just went through the recent contract negotiations?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The funding envelope we have to play with was about \$105 million. I'd need to confirm this but I think Metro's payments are about \$42 million. Outside of them, all payments go to private operators. In the budget papers it is not easy to follow because there are some that are in administrative items as school buses, which service the whole of Tasmania, and then you have an output group which is dedicated to rural and special needs bus services, of which 16 are special needs and I think there is about \$2 million. We would have to do a back calculation.

Ms O'CONNOR - We are trying to get the quantum of funding in non-Metro general access.

Mr ROCKLIFF - If you want to articulate that in a note to the clerk, I am happy to put that on notice. We can extract that information for you.

Can I just correct the record of Mr O'Byrne? The Mowbray roundabout was delayed due to the redesign after public consultation.

Ms O'BYRNE - Right. That's a straw, clutched at. Nice work.

Ms O'CONNOR - I only asked one question.

CHAIR - We are at 16 for Labor and eight for you, so Labor has a few more.

Ms O'CONNOR - For the record, I've counted 21 questions coming from Mr O'Byrne so it is possible that you are not picking up questions. Members at this table should be given the opportunity to ask more than one question when the round comes to them. It is manifestly unfair.

CHAIR - Ms O'Connor, I hear you and I will ensure I come straight back to you. I don't agree with your numbers but I hear your point.

Ms O'CONNOR - I have written a note every time Mr O'Byrne has asked a question.

CHAIR - I have given the call to Mr O'Byrne and we will come straight back to you.

Ms O'CONNOR - Is it standard operating procedure that I will only have one question in a turn?

CHAIR - No, it is not.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, back to the Derwent ferries, what is your understanding of what the Kangaroo Bay terminal infrastructure might look like? You have said on a number of occasions that park and ride is crucial to successful public transport - buses and ferries. How does park and ride fit there?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is part of the work. A ferry service between Bellerive and Hobart will see one of the city's greatest assets - its waterways - utilised as a public transport option. It is clear through community feedback and the expert report that what people want to see and will work most effectively is a comprehensive seven day a week Derwent ferry service that caters for both weekday and weekend travel. Metro's expert report into the ferry service indicates that, beyond its capacity to reduce congestion, such a service will provide a broad range of benefits improving the visitor experience by linking attractions -

Mr O'BYRNE - I am only asking about park and ride, where does that fit?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Part of the work is planning supporting infrastructure, including cycle networks, parking and integration with bus services.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, are you aware of a proposal put by UPC Renewables to run a high-voltage cable through numerous regional reserves in your electorate of Braddon?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, I am.

Ms O'CONNOR - Are you concerned about the proposal to take the UPC cable through the Duck River regional reserve, potentially the Powranna regional reserve, the Arthur River regional reserve and the Level Canyon regional reserve?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I'm guessing this question is not in my portfolio -

Ms O'CONNOR - It's an infrastructure question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's an infrastructure question, but it is a long bow with regard to my responsibility for Infrastructure, with respect. A lot of consultation has been done with landholders around overhead powerline transmission. Some of that consultation with landholders has resulted in a change in where transmission lines go. My understanding is that a lot more consultation work has to be done. I don't have the information in front of me because it is not my direct responsibility.

Ms O'CONNOR - Would it concern you to know that UPC Renewables, according to constituents who contact us, are threatening local Tasmanian families with compulsory land acquisitions under the Land Acquisitions Act for this infrastructure?

CHAIR - Minister, I will rule that out of order. It is not in your portfolio area and you have already explained that.

Ms O'CONNOR - That's unfortunate for your constituents in Braddon, who probably would have liked some reassurance.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Any constituent of mine can visit me to discuss their concerns.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, when will the new *Spirits* be delivered?

Mr ROCKLIFF - There is an expectation the new *Spirits* will be delivered in November 2021.

Mr O'BYRNE - An expectation, but you cannot guarantee that?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is difficult to guarantee, given the variables in such large infrastructure projects.

Mr O'BYRNE - When was the last time you were briefed by the TT-Line Board on the potential delivery date?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will have to take that on notice. It is much less about the delivery date as opposed to the project itself.

Ms O'BYRNE - You are aware of the concerns around the shipyard. Have you any update for the committee on some of the financial difficulties affecting the shipyard contracted to build the ships?

Mr ROCKLIFF - TT-Line has signed a contract with FSG for the building of two RoPax vessels. While international media reports earlier this year indicated that FSG is in a difficult financial situation, I am advised that at this stage TT-Line has received no advice that FSG will be unable to fulfil the terms of its contract.

Mr O'BYRNE - Since that time and, yes, there was some media earlier this year but there has been media in the last few weeks in Europe, again, casting doubt on the ability of the shipyard to make contracts. It is under significant financial difficulty. Deputy Premier, this is one of the most significant investments in the state's history and it is very important that we get this right.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I agree.

Mr O'BYRNE - To say you don't have any more information is not good enough. Surely you would be doing more to find out about the delay of those ships. What are you doing to ensure this matter is being fully investigated?

Mr ROCKLIFF - TT-Line has been very diligent in this project. I am advised at this stage that TT-Line has received no advice that FSG will be unable to fulfil the terms of its contract. I understand that since these reports were first made, FSG has received a fresh equity injection and some of its outstanding debt has been converted to equity.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is the status from a number of months ago but reports have surfaced in the last couple of weeks that indicate the company is still undergoing difficulties. They have made a public announcement saying that they are under difficulties. What have you done to ensure that this is still a contract that can be delivered by that shipyard and the promised date of November 2021 can be delivered on?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The advice remains the same. TT-Line has received no advice that FSG will not be able to fulfil the terms of the contract. I recognised the importance of the project to Tasmania and the significant investment.

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr O'BYRNE - When was the last time you discussed this matter with the chair of TT-Line?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Probably in the last few weeks. I will have to take that on notice in terms of the exact date. We are in regular contact with TT-Line and if there was anything that the chair wished to advise me in terms of an update of the status of the project, the chair would advise me in that case. You have had a briefing as well; I am open to the honourable member having a briefing as well.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, how can you explain the recirculating of money you are clawing out of them, a \$157 million dividend, has now been pushed out to 2022-23? If you are of the view that it can only be delivered in 2021, you would assume the ability of TT-Line to meet cashflow and expense, why have pushed the time line of the investment out to 2023?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Treasurer answered the question this morning, Mr O'Byrne. I am advised at this stage that TT-Line has received no advice FSG will not be able to fulfil the terms of the contract. I am happy to tell you the price is different.

Ms O'BYRNE - The Treasurer said in a hearing that -

The Budget countenances that we will purchase them over the next four years although there are some challenges TT-Lines is working through.

What are the challenges? if you are confident and you have received no formal advice, why is the Treasurer saying there are challenges they are working through?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We recognise the challenges with the ship, Mr O'Byrne, but the advice remains the same. I last met with TT-Line I am advised on 20 May in a regular briefing.

Mr O'BYRNE - You say you are confident of 2021 but you cannot commit to that?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I did not say I was confident. That is the expectation.

Mr O'BYRNE - So you are not confident of the 2021 date?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am not going to allow you to put words into my mouth, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - I need to be clear about what you are committing to. This is a big issue.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are committed to two new ships, absolutely committed to two new ships.

Mr O'BYRNE - You have announced that you have brought them forward with a big hoo-ha in the lead-up to the last election, that you were bringing them forward to be delivered in 2021. Tourism is a big important industry for Tasmania as is their time-sensitive freight movement.

CHAIR - And your question is?

Mr O'BYRNE - You cannot commit to the 2021 date. Is that what you are saying?

UNCORRECTED PROOF ISSUE

Mr ROCKLIFF - I recognise the importance of the investment both in freight capacity and passenger capacity, Mr O'Byrne. I recognise that as Infrastructure minister and as a local member.

Mr O'BYRNE - You cannot commit to the 2021 date?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am advised at this stage TT-Line has received no advice that FSG will not be able to fulfil the terms of the contract. That is the advice that I have.

Mr O'BYRNE - From a media report from just a week-and-a-half ago, the famous shipbuilder which is currently constructing a vessel for Brittany Ferries ahead of starting a new second ferry for Irish Ferries, has had a number of skilled engineers leave for elsewhere. This resulted in a slowdown on the progress of their current work. If this is publicly available surely you should be seeking an urgent briefing from TT-Line and the board of TT-Line and asking them to take all necessary steps to convince you that the commitment that you made to the Tasmanian people on the delivery date will be met.

CHAIR - That is a statement. I need questions please, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr ROCKLIFF - TT-Line has a contract. That contract remains in place. There is no advice that FSG cannot meet and deliver on the terms of the contract and if that changes then we will inform the Tasmanian community in an open and transparent way, Mr O'Byrne.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, can you point to any actual and practical measures in this year's Budget to relieve congestion today. We have \$1 million -that is it - to commence feasibility studies on alternative traffic routes through Hobart. I am quoting from the Treasurer's Budget speech, 'including considering whether bypasses, tunnels or a mix of both form part of the broader cityscape in coming years'. Is it not a fact, minister, that five years into your Government's term congestion in Hobart is worse? All you have allocated this year is \$1 million for feasibility studies, investigations to consider future options to deal with congestion.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Are you talking about infrastructure. I have mentioned an area of traffic management in my opening statement this afternoon. There are a number of projects underway as part of the \$73.575 million Greater Hobart Traffic Solution which have short and long-term transport initiatives to manage peak commuter demand in the Hobart area.

Ms O'CONNOR - What are they?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am happy to detail those for you if you like.

Ms O'CONNOR - Could you summarise it because of the restrictions on my capacity to ask questions and the time? You would know this off the top of your head.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are doing so much that I would like to get it right for you. The express fifth lane for the Southern Outlet - planning is currently underway for an end-to-end park and ride solution for the Kingborough area, including a passenger transport and multi-occupancy vehicle transit lane on the Southern Outlet.

Ms O'CONNOR - What is the time line on that?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - I am happy to provide time lines for you about our expectation but that is out for consultation at this present time. Discussions have commenced with Hobart and Kingborough councils following initial stakeholder consultation for what will be an important project for the city and potentially a model for other arterial corridors. Also, \$35 million has been committed to the additional lane, with the Government providing an additional \$20 million through the city deal to address congestion issues, which may include the development of a bus interchange to support park and ride services.

Ms O'CONNOR - It may? I thought you were committed to the underground bus exchange. This is at Kingston, okay?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I've had good discussions with the mayor very recently on traffic management and infrastructure at Kingston. Davey and Macquarie streets: we took ownership of Macquarie and Davey streets on 26 December 2018 and through January 2019 a number of traffic signal changes were made to improve traffic flow. Associated with the change of ownership is a \$16 million funding commitment for various measures to improve traffic flow, including intelligent transport systems. The next step is to work with the City of Hobart to reconfigure these streets to better manage peak demand and improve passenger transport levels of service.

Ms O'CONNOR - In terms of tangible investment that relieves congestion today, what have we got? Not much.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Department of State Growth and Tasmania Police have developed operational protocols to improve on-site coordination of traffic incident response to ensure traffic disruptions due to network incidence is minimised as much as possible. I am talking about the traffic incident response team. A suite of predetermined incident response plans has been developed to allow a coordinated response to a crash or breakdown across the city road network, as mentioned earlier. The department has sought tenders for the provision of tow truck services for incident response at four strategic locations around the network. We've got bus priority measures on key feeder routes.

Ms O'CONNOR - It's all pretty ad hoc though, minister, isn't it? In terms of a long-term response to congestion.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It's not ad hoc at all; it's actually a pretty comprehensive plan.

Ms O'CONNOR - Well, commuters aren't feeling it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - All these measures will assist in traffic management.

Ms O'CONNOR - When? You've had five years and it's getting worse.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The \$1 million study: we look forward the outcomes there as well.

Mr SWAIN - When congestion first really manifested it was in February 2016 and there was a significant budget response to that but as we've talked about generally with the capital program there is a lead time on any capital project. What we are trying to do at the department level now and through the city deal is work with councils, in particular, to deliver all the related congestion attacking projects - both capital and non-capital - then through the implementation of the city deal.

There is a lead time on this capital project which is why some of the other things like incident management and adjustments to our traffic management are progressing as an immediate priority.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, we've made some good progress on the Midlands Highway. Will the minister please provide an update of the action plan progress and the next projects to be built?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We're almost half-way through, Mr Tucker, in terms of the 10-year action plan and by August we'll have 62 per cent of that construction either completed or commenced, which is a great project. Our 2019-20 state Budget will deliver an unprecedented \$1.6 billion into our roads, rail, bridges and transport infrastructure across all parts of Tasmania and it is all about maintaining momentum in Tasmania and investing for growth. It includes a substantial \$112 million allocation towards the continuation of the Government's \$500 million Midland Highway 10-year Action Plan, in partnership with the Morrison federal Liberal Government. Since 2014, we have delivered transport infrastructure projects across the state including significant progress on our Midland Highway action plan which is the biggest Midland Highway upgrade ever, transforming our key north-south corridor.

Our action plan has delivered 14 upgrade projects along the highway and five more are currently under construction including the biggest single road project in the north in decades, the \$92.3 million Perth link road. By August this year, we expect 92 kilometres or 62 per cent of the action planned works will either be completed or under construction.

When complete, the Perth projects will link up to a four-laned highway connection between Launceston and south of Perth. Everyone will have noticed recently, the huge improvement been made on the sections upgraded, especially the provision of a much wider and safer-feeling highway with regular protected overtaking opportunities on previously narrow single lane straights like Epping Forest, for example.

The remaining, yet to be upgraded sections of the Midlands Highway are being scoped for delivery as part of the second five-year agreement with the Australian government within the 10-year action plan. Two of these; Spring Hill and Melton Mowbray to Lovely Banks will go to tender this year with the remaining sections to follow from 2020 onwards. Using the AusRAP methodology, which is the international roads safety audit approach adopted by the combined national automobile associations to underpin our investment strategy, the objective is to raise the standard of this strategic highway to a minimum three-star AusRAP rating out of five.

One of the key safety measures involved the installation in high speed areas of flexible safety barriers in a central median, to separate traffic. Using the two plus one protected overtaking lane provision in the upgraded sections increases the overall AusRAP safety rating of the highway dramatically. This is a globally endorsed safe system of infrastructure design, which virtually eliminates the risk of head on crashes of the catastrophic type that have traumatised so many over the highway's history.

It is important to note the vast majority of the Midland Highway was rated as unacceptably low, one or two stars only AusRAP safety rating in the 2012 national AusRAP highway safety report. Of course, that is not good enough. We have acted as a government and upgrading the Midland Highway's safety and traffic efficiency. It is frustrating to use the roads with some significant ongoing roadworks in parts, the results are worth it and people already recognise some of the areas mentioned.

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Ms O'CONNOR - Point of order, Chair, standing order 48. The minister has had sufficient time to answer this question. In the other committee there is a time limit on Dorothy Dix answers.

CHAIR - I note that but will allow the minister to wind up.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will wind up because I have a very important safety announcement. I ask for everyone's continued patience as the roadworks continue. Please take notice of all messages, reduce speed limits and obey them. Please respect all of the people who work on our roads, our traffic managers and civil contractors who are making such a difference with their hard work.

Dr BROAD - Minister, how many kilometres of the upgraded Midland Highway will only be two lanes?

Mr ROCKLIFF - How much of the upgrade will only be two lanes?

Mr GREGORY - I do not have the exact number, but generally it will be through towns like Campbell Town. Generally, there will be some short sections where there will only be one lane in each direction. Generally, it is a two plus one approach for the length of the highway. There are some squeeze points over bridges where it will not be more than two lanes but in the minority.

Mr O'BYRNE - What about that long stretch south of Campbell Town?

Dr BROAD - The road out of Epping Forest has recently been opened. There is a section of at least 1.5 kilometres in the open road with only two lanes with a wire opening between it.

Mr GREGORY - One and a half kilometres in 165 is a small minority. The section south of Campbell Town has not been addressed at all yet and will take a standard approach. The approach is regular overtaking opportunities, you do not drive more than 10 minutes without an opportunity to overtake. The strategy is quite clear. The strategy addresses the traffic volumes and in the middle of the highway volumes are less than 4000 vehicles a day, a low number. It is a safety driven strategy response.

Dr BROAD - This is in the context that was promised to deliver four lanes. The vast majority is three lanes at best and now we are starting to see as the roads are upgraded substantial sections are only two lanes.

That is the context of this question. Furthermore, if you do not have an answer to that question, how many kilometres currently four lanes will be reduced to three lanes or less?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I know of one particular section.

Mr GREGORY - We will have to take specific details of length.

Mr ROCKLIFF - In terms of length, on notice I am happy to.

Mr GREGORY - When making those adjustments, it is typically in an area where extremely constrained and relocating those overtaking opportunities. We are not taking them away, simply shuffling it up the road so within a stretch of road there is the same overtaking opportunity, but in a slightly different configuration.

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Dr BROAD - Again, the context is the promise, the rock-solid promise from the Premier. It is up on billboards the Premier will deliver a four-lane Midland Highway. As it rolls out we are seeing three lanes and substantial sections of two lanes. Will you take on notice the breakdown of those two components?

Ms O'CONNOR - Sounds like a waste of the department's time to me.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There was a lot of discussion about a four-lane Midland Highway in 2010 but we are producing a more efficient well-designed highway, safer for commuters and also increasing our freight efficiency.

Dr BROAD - Why isn't the Leith Overpass mentioned in the Budget, considering in 2017 the Premier in a press release said that the overpass at Leith was to address safety concerns on the Bass Highway and planning would immediately commence on design work on the \$10 million overpass and it would be delivered within two years.

This was back in 2017, why was it not mentioned in this Budget, the forward Estimates up to 2022-23 make no mention of the Leith Overpass.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question, Dr Broad.

Mr GREGORY - We have done a lot of work into the crash statistics at those two intersections and the majority of the crashes appear to be related to decision-making and choosing of gaps to enter the traffic.

We have been working towards is a solution removes that risk. Various ideas have been put forward - roundabouts, speed limit reductions - and we have looked at all of those in terms of whether they are suitable for the location.

A roundabout is not because of the type of road and the grades.

Speed limit reduction as a blanket reduction is unlikely to be effective given the very high standard of the road. We have pursued grade-separated options and have an option from a technical point of view works, but the operation does not meet the community's full expectations.

There is an interim measure in place, warning lights to provide advice to motorists on the Bass Highway when someone is entering. That low-cost option has proven very effective to date.

We have not yet been able to establish a concept that meets everybody's expectations and technical requirements. We are looking at other opportunities including a new development in New Zealand that maybe suitable which introduces a variable speed limit triggered by vehicles.

That is a new approach only recently done in New Zealand and we need to look at this. It is about getting the right answer to provide access for the community in delivering that response without taking out a large part of the community, because of the scale of the project. That is where we are at. That planning continues and we continue to look at what is the best option. The interim measures have proven effective to date.

Dr BROAD - Minister, no commitment for an overpass over the forward Estimates period?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are recognising the intersection.

Dr BROAD - Intersections.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, intersections. We remain committed to an overpass and look forward to the design work.

Dr BROAD - With no money over the forward Estimates it is at least five years away?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Once we have a full understanding of the project design, then we will have a better idea of investment that is required.

Mr GREGORY - We need to work through the planning and come up with a solution that works for all the stakeholders. Once we have that and costed, it is really the first step.

Dr BROAD - The Premier put out a release saying it would cost \$10 million to address safety concerns.

CHAIR - You do not have a question?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Cycling is active transport investment specific to Hobart. There was a greater investment more broadly in Tasmania. The Tasmanian Government is also committed to a \$2 million grants program, in partnership with the southern councils to create or extend bicycle routes that connect areas within towns or regions. We look forward to

Ms O'CONNOR - To be fair, \$2 million is a pittance relative to what is needed.

Mr ROCKLIFF - \$2 million is not a pittance. I disagree with you there.

Ms O'CONNOR - Compared to \$1.6 billion you want to spend on roads and other infrastructure.

Minister, are you able to update the committee on the negotiations over the potential establishment of a pilot school at Devonport Airport?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No.

Ms O'CONNOR - Minister, you would be aware there were negotiations confirmed by a Government spokesperson to be at an early stage between China Southern Airlines and TasPorts on 6 April. This was confirmed to Fairfax Newspapers more than two months ago. Are you unable to provide any update on the negotiations over a potential pilot school at Devonport Airport?

CHAIR - Minister, do you want to answer this?

Ms O'CONNOR - This is an infrastructure question and the minister is responsible for TasPorts. That is why we have also had a private discussion about this.

CHAIR - No it is not.

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Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, we have. This is a question for TasPorts. I am advised the Coordinator-General has been in discussions with minister Gutwein on these issues. I cannot provide you with an update, but can take on notice and provide you with an update.

Ms O'CONNOR - Yes, I would like that. Can you confirm even though we are talking about TasPorts' property, that the Office of the Coordinator-General is engaging directly with the Minister for State Growth and not you, the Minister for Infrastructure?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have not had any discussions with the Coordinator-General.

Ms O'CONNOR - Would you expect to have a discussion with the Coordinator-General about the use of TasPorts' infrastructure for a pilots' school.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This is also a matter for TasPorts. I am not sure if we can provide any other information for you, Ms O'Connor. I am happy to provide if that is appropriate.

Ms O'CONNOR - Mr Evans is at the table; Mr Evans works with the Office of the Coordinator-General, and the Coordinator-General. Perhaps he has some information he can share with the committee.

Mr EVANS - I am aware of the proposal and have had a number of conversations with the Coordinator-General. I don't have the specifics.

Ms O'CONNOR - When you say you don't have the specifics - the specifics of what's being proposed, or where the negotiations are at?

Mr EVANS - Where the negotiations are.

Ms O'CONNOR - When was the last time, through you, minister, that the Coordinator-General spoke to you about the potential pilot school at Devonport?

Mr EVANS - Half a dozen times over the last six or eight months.

Ms O'CONNOR - Is it your understanding the negotiations are progressing?

Mr EVANS - Yes.

Ms O'CONNOR - There is an ongoing discussion between the Coordinator-General and the Chinese aviation authority over a pilot school at Devonport Airport?

Mr EVANS - I can't confirm it's the Chinese aviation authority.

Ms O'CONNOR - It's China Southern Airlines.

Mr EVANS - There is a company he is dealing with, yes, but I can't confirm exactly who is talking to.

Mr ROCKLIFF - This is really a matter for State Growth, Ms O'Connor.

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Ms O'CONNOR - It's an infrastructure question that relates to TasPorts property, for which you are responsible.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We can also canvass these matters within GBE for TasPorts as well.

CHAIR - I take the minister's ruling on that.

Ms O'CONNOR - As soon as it gets a bit hot, and questions you don't want to answer, the Chair steps in. It is a matter of public interest. There is all this opacity here referring me to another minister, your secretary saying it's all been dealt with by the Coordinator-General. What's the secret?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am happy to provide information for Ms O'Connor. There's a need to be like that.

CHAIR - The minister has undertaken to do that.

Ms O'CONNOR - The Greens are being shut down every time we start asking questions.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, the Bruny Island ferry. It's been a summer of chaos. The lines have gone up past the cemetery, in fact -

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is a classic David O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - Let me finish. When I raised the issue around the TT-Line today - that there's a problem with the shipyard, you say, 'Oh, it's outrageous, it's scaremongering'. Now, you acknowledge there's a problem, so let me finish my question. This is a very important matter.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Don't put words in my mouth.

Mr O'BYRNE - Your press release or maybe your media advisors put words in your mouth.

Bruny Island has had another summer of chaos. There have been long lines, even up past the cemetery. A woman contacted me and said she was coming up from the south and effectively had to park at Woodbridge and walk the four kilometres to engage in a meal at the Kettering pub. As of yesterday, on social media there were a number of reports of essentially a single vessel, the *Moongalba* - which has a capacity of 30 vehicles - being the only ferry on the run, and people at Roberts Point being delayed by two hours with the new implementation of the winter timetable on Bruny Island.

Ms O'CONNOR - That was the name of the Stradbroke Island ferry.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, it's a very old vessel. They were delayed by two hours with the release of the new timetable. This is a chaotic implementation of your much-lauded new ferry service. When are you going to intervene to try to fix this?

Mr ROCKLIFF - You are a very good exaggerator. You really are.

Mr O'BYRNE - Sorry. You think it is acceptable - that busloads of tourists yesterday afternoon waited two hours on Roberts Point is exaggerating. This is from the Bruny Island -

CHAIR - Order, Mr O'Byrne. The minister is answering the question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We don't hear a peep out of you when everything is going well, and mostly it is going well.

Mr O'BYRNE - I am not here to pat you on the back, mate.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We don't hear a peep out of you complaining about SeaLink when things are going well, and mostly it has gone very well. They are a very professional outfit and you must acknowledge that.

Mr O'BYRNE - I'm not blaming SeaLink. I'm blaming the nature of the way the Government has managed this tender process. The tender you agreed to is manifestly inadequate.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I disagree with your description, Mr O'Byrne, but I think you need to acknowledge that the implementation of a new ferry service has largely gone well. There have been some instances and some challenges, but SeaLink has done a very professional job of this implementation, and you would have to recognise that, I am sure. I believe what you are talking about is with respect to the winter timetable, and the latest concerns you may have, is that right?

Mr O'BYRNE - The new winter timetable was implemented yesterday.

Mr ROCKLIFF - SeaLink commenced operating the Bruny Island ferry with the timetable on Monday, 3 June. One month later than ever before. The commencement of the timetable coincides with the maintenance of the *Mirambeena* survey in July. Some issues were experienced on the first day of the winter timetable, resulting in delays exiting the island. Shuttling of the *Moongalba* will be undertaken to provide additional capacity to avoid such a reoccurrence.

Mr O'BYRNE - There were significant delays over the Christmas holiday period. In the announcement of the new ferry tender, you said services would be improved to the island, when they haven't been.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I beg to differ. In the first quarter ending 31 December 2018 - the first full quarter since SeaLink took over in December - SeaLink carried 46 251 vehicles, an increase of 2.6 per cent over the same period in the previous year. This includes a significant 18 000 vehicles for the month of December, which equates to an average of 585 vehicles per day.

There has been no reduction in capacity this year. I am advised there has been an increase, and there will not be any reduction in capacity in following years. The three vessels have worked well dealing with peak times over the Christmas New Year and long weekends, including the recent eight hour day long weekend. I can advise that the eight days after Christmas, including Boxing Day, were the busiest on record, and that SeaLink ran three ferries continuously for those days. SeaLink continues to ensure that access to the ferries is available for important travellers like emergency services, school buses, regular service providers and special needs travel.

This is really a very good news story when you consider the new ferries that will be built by Richardson Devine Marine. We expect that the first new ferry for the Bruny run will start being built this year, and we expect it to be in service by the end of this year. We have completed the first stage of infrastructure changes at the terminals, and a lot on engagement has happened with the

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Bruny Island Ferry Reference Group. It continues to be a valuable link between the company and the wider Bruny community, and the group is ensuring the community has all the information and facts that it needs.

Just recently we recognised that Richardson Devine Marine won the tender for the second ferry as well, so built in Tasmania, and I congratulate them for that.

Mr O'BYRNE - We congratulate them as well. But with the current vessel capacity, you have three vessels on the run now. You have the *Mirambeena* at 72, the *Bowen* at 34 and *Moongalba* at 30. The new vessels, the first one was 36, and you indicated that the second vessel may very well be built larger, depending on discussion, but has been announced at 36. We know it is a peak service, so it is morning and night, and that's where the issues are with the queues. The queues are getting longer at peak times. There was an opportunity when you awarded the new tender to improve it, and you chose not to.

You currently have three vessels - 72, 34 and 30 - to be replaced by two vessels, two at 36. How does that meet peak demand in the morning and the evenings? It is not about speed as well, because that is not true. Because when there were lines, the previous ferries shuttled, and they didn't stick to the half-hour timetable. Even with the two new vessels that move quicker across the water, they would not be able to match the same capacity at peak times - the morning and nights and leading into public holidays. Then your current capacity, why are you reducing capacity?

Mr ROCKLIFF - There will be no reduction in capacity, despite your claims. SeaLink has added extra crossing times and an extra ferry. There has been an increase in capacity this year, and there will not be any reduction in capacity in following years. The existing vessels on the Bruny run are old, as you'd appreciate, and slow compared to modern passenger and vehicle ferries. The new SeaLink vessels will be faster to load and unload, with a more efficient terminal system, and the journey travel time will be much shorter. Currently the crossings are only on the half-hour, with -

Mr O'BYRNE - That's not true when things are busy.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Currently the crossings, I am advised, are only on the half-hour with the older, slower ferries. The new ferries would mean more trips, and there will be back-up ferries available for extra sailings for peak days as required.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, I think you're poorly advised on that because -

CHAIR - Mr Tucker, you've got the call.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, can you please inform the committee of the Government's important new investment in this year's Budget for our tourist roads?

Ms O'CONNOR - That is a cracker of a dixer. Did you work all morning on that?

Mr TUCKER - Please do enjoy.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes I can. Mr Tucker has asked two very good questions -

Ms O'CONNOR - Written by your office.

Mr ROCKLIFF - particularly pertaining to his electorate of Lyons. The visitor roads are a very important part of Mr Tucker's electorate of Lyons. He has represented his electorate extremely well in the short time he has been there. In fact, the \$58 million the Budget provides will further deliver the Hodgman Liberal Government's roads to support Tasmania's visitor economy, where some projects have already been delivered over the last year.

In developing our visitor economy roads policy, we listen to strong feedback from local communities, as well as tourism advocates - the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania and the RACT. Visitors, of course, love coming to Tasmania. The past year has seen a record almost 1.3 million people visiting Tasmania. This trend is set to continue, with Tasmania on track to reach and exceed our target of 1.5 million visitors a year by 2020.

But we know that with growth comes additional pressures, and a good example of this is the increased use of the roads that lead to our attractions. Upgrading these roads benefits both visitors and locals. We must continue to ensure our road infrastructure meets the needs and expectations of not only the visitors, but importantly the locals who call these areas their home and also need to be able to access their communities as well.

The Government's \$72 million roads to support Tasmania's visitor economy program is the first ever tourism roads-specific investment program to help ensure Tasmania's reputation as a premium destination is protected. This investment will seal gravel roads, widen roads, build more passing lanes and add new courtesy stopping bays, which are critical for the thousands more driving visitors, campervans and caravans. It's the single biggest investment ever in visitor road infrastructure, and of course the Budget will help deliver a number of safety improvements to roads, including the Great Eastern Drive, Eaglehawk Neck, Fortescue and Stormlea roads, Glenora Road and Bruny Island Main Road, and will continue to support thousands of jobs in the hospitality sectors.

This work will improve the experience of the growing number of visitors to our state, as they will travel to experience fast-emerging icons such as the Three Capes Walk, Bruny Island, the Tarkine Drive and the Great Eastern Drive.

Just on the Great Eastern Drive very quickly, that program includes \$6 million for tourist and slow-vehicle stopping bays over The Sideling to Scottsdale; \$9 million for road widening and safety treatments, including entry points to popular tourism facilities; and \$8.3 million for safety improvements and overtaking lanes between St Helens and Dianas Basin. This is currently in the planning phase of course. I have a long list of projects -

Ms O'CONNOR - You've nearly cracked three minutes.

CHAIR - He's not cracked three minutes.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am mindful of the fact that I've nearly cracked three minutes; how long have I got until I crack three minutes?

Ms O'CONNOR - You've just done it.

CHAIR - To me, about 15 seconds.

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Mr ROCKLIFF - Okay - \$8 million to seal the length of the Bruny Main Road and assist Kingsborough Council in installing new waste collection or toilet facilities, and it is currently in the planning phase; funding to seal the Hastings Caves Road; \$2 million to the Huon Valley Council for widening and surface improvements to the Arve Road; and \$2 million to improve Sumac Road by resheeting and improving drainage and edge maintenance. There are more, but I've taken three minutes.

Ms O'CONNOR - We've had representation from cyclists and representative organisations about the dangerous conditions for cyclists on the Tasman Bridge. What kind of planning is in place, or resources being allocated, whether they be human and/or financial, to ensure that cyclists can cross the river safely?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That is a good question. Prior to my answering the question about the bridge, the new ferry service across the Derwent will also cater for cyclists, being able store and carry -

Ms O'CONNOR - But they will have to pay for that.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have mentioned that in the context of the question as well. On the bridge upgrades, Mr Gregory, would you like to talk about those?

Mr GREGORY - We are currently exploring a range of options to upgrade the shared paths on the bridge. They are quite narrow. They were originally designed as maintenance access ways. Over the last six months we've been working through different options.

It is quite a complex piece of work. The current footpaths are an addition to the Tasman Bridge, post-1975. We need to look at how that connects and what is the best way to operate those paths to make them wider and improve safety generally, and improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians and all users of the bridge between the walkways and the road surface, and also the walkway off the side of the bridge. We are looking at all of that, working through a range of options and then we will use that to inform advice to the minister and the Government.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thanks, Mr Gregory. The conversations that the Greens have been having with Government relating to the Tasman Bridge infrastructure and potential upgrades date back to 2015. We keep hearing the same sort of language: that it is under investigation, that you are exploring options. The bridge remains unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians, but it doesn't sound like there is a tangible plan there to upgrade that infrastructure and make it safer for cyclists and pedestrians and safer more broadly.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I refer you to Mr Gregory's previous answer.

Ms O'CONNOR - The question then is: what is the time frame?

Mr GREGORY - We would expect the initial planning piece of work to provide the options and I think there will need to be several options. We are not talking about a simple, low-cost project. It is going to be quite a significant project. I expect that we would see that by the end of this year to inform Government thought and budget processes.

We have engaged consulting engineers to look at all the structural elements, and that commission includes an urban designer to look at fitting something to the bridge that complements

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the bridge structure rather than look like a maintenance walkway. That piece of work is moving along quite well. It has been quite complex because there are a lot of services that hang off the bottom of the footpath. There is telecommunications, there is water, and we have to work within the connection constraints of the bridge and a whole range of issues. When we change the structure, we will change the wind loading. It is quite a complex piece of engineering work.

Another complex piece of the thinking is, once we have decided what it looks like and how it goes together, is how you actually implement it, given that you have services hanging off the existing structure. That's the complexity, and that is all the piece of work we are working through. We have some ideas what it looks like - the width and the aesthetic of it, but now it's the logistics of how you bring it together and what it costs to do that.

Ms O'CONNOR - What is the forward planning for the bridge infrastructure given that it is ageing infrastructure that is very difficult to adapt to modern transport solutions. Are we likely to see any change to that infrastructure in this term of the parliament? You have \$1.6 billion going into roads and it does not look like enough, if any, going into the Tasman Bridge infrastructure, which is just dangerous on multiple levels, minister, as you know, if you are not in a car.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am advised that funding has been allocated for this year and the following three years with respect to the Tasman Bridge.

Ms O'CONNOR - What for? Mr Swain looks like he would like to answer.

Mr SWAIN - In the Tasman corridor planning broadly, we are very conscious of the need to enable passenger transport coming out of Sorell. On the issue of cyclists, we are also conscious that the connections through from the western and eastern shores are inadequate at the moment. There is always complexity with anything to do with the bridge because it can also relate to suicides, so we are very careful about what is being said about that project and when.

Ms O'CONNOR - I appreciate your caution. It is an ongoing discussion that we've been having, but my particular question related to planning for future cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. It is concerning that it seems to still be taking a very long time and there is no funding allocated to that upgrade work.

Mr SWAIN - As the minister said, there is significant funding across the forward Estimates for bridge works.

Ms O'CONNOR - Not related to pedestrian and cycling access.

Mr SWAIN - Actually, there is; the Greater Hobart Traffic Vision includes \$14 million towards these activities.

Ms O'CONNOR - It's \$14 million dedicated solely to the Tasman Bridge?

Mr SWAIN - Yes, to that specific issue.

Ms O'CONNOR - Thank you.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, when you announced the new tender for the Bruny Island ferry, you said there would be no major impact on fees and charges. Why have they gone up?

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CHAIR - Minister, I have an issue here, I keep looking at this, on the ferry issue, and the only thing on the outputs that I see for you - and maybe I am wrong - is shipping and ferry subsidies.

Mr O'BYRNE - No, it is not about the subsidies, it is about the fees.

CHAIR - I know. I'll leave it with you, but that's all I can see.

Mr O'BYRNE - If you cannot answer that, let me enlighten you. In the old fare structure there was off-peak and there was peak. Off-peak was \$33, peak was \$38. The new charges are now not off-peak and peak, they have gone light and standard. Light is \$32.20 and standard is \$38. The rub is, in the old system the peak would only apply on public holiday long weekends. It was only about eight or nine weekends across the year where the peak was actually charged.

SeaLink has now changed the fare structure so that light and standard occur every day, effectively. Light is only applied to five sailings in the morning - 6.30, 7.00, 7.30 a.m. - and then 2.00 and 3.00 p.m. sailings. There are only five on the light sailing, which was off-peak and effectively maybe 90 per cent of the travelling time. Standard, which is the old peak fare, has now been moved to 19 sailings per day, with extra sailings possible depending on demand - 8.00, 8.30, 9.00, 9.30 et cetera.

It has gone from effectively eight or nine weekends a year where the peak would be charged to now standard, which is virtually every day. Why have you allowed that to occur when your commitment was not to impact the travelling public with a hike in fees? This is clearly a hike in fees.

Mr SWAIN - We have also got the overlay arrangements for residents of the island in the fare that they face.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We were specific, I am advised, in saying there would be no change to resident fares, not visitor fares.

Mr O'BYRNE - You acknowledge that is a bit of weasel words.

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, it's not, I know it is very important to residents.

Mr O'BYRNE - There were absolute commitments. The vast majority of people travelling are daytrippers and you said in your announcement in defence of the new contract that there would be no major change. Effectively, that was what people understood. Now you have the company going from off-peak and peak, peak rarely used, to now light and standard, standard being the old peak, virtually happening every day. How is that right?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Your comments regarding the Bruny Island ferry fares in terms of your announcement around September last year -

Mr O'BYRNE - What does it have to do with me?

Mr ROCKLIFF - You are deliberately trying to confuse residents', or ratepayers' fares, with visitor fares. SeaLink is a highly experienced and proven operators of ferries -

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Mr O'BYRNE - I am not having a go at SeaLink, I am just having a go at your management of the contract.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am advised there was no fare increase for Bruny Island residents and property owners when SeaLink started operations in September. Residents' and property owners' fares will be maintained at or below annual CPI increases for the duration of the contract.

Increase in visitor fares from \$33 to \$38 for cars was the first increase in fares for visitors since 2015.

Mr O'BYRNE - What are you saying to visitors on the island? You can understand people's anger about this. You go from off-peak and peak, peak rarely used or, basically, on the long weekends and we can understand why that occurs, to virtually every day, and you change the name from off-peak and peak to light and standard. You can see that is pretty ordinary.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The patronage has gone up. More people are using the ferry.

Mr O'BYRNE - Not when the two new ferries are on; you won't have the capacity to carry them.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have had that discussion and there will be no reduction in capacity.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, if I may, at the public meeting after the announcement, a very well attended public meeting at the announcement of the ferry, people were very upset with the proposed changes. I acknowledge the great work of the Bruny Island ferry group, led by Trevor Adams, in trying to get the Government to listen. They were quite critical of the Government in terms of your management. I acknowledge he sat down, post your decision to put the contract to manage it, and you have moved it.

One of the issues raised was infrastructure at Roberts Point. At that meeting I know SeaLink said that they would be lobbying government to seek an upgrade at Roberts Point and that is something that they wanted. In their communications they were urging people to upgrade that. Could you talk us through what that upgrade looks like?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, I can get that information for you.

Mr GREGORY - To date, the upgrades are pretty modest. We have extended some of the queueing lanes and we have changed some of the line marking around to make the queueing lanes work a bit better. There is a stage 2 that will provide improvements to a drop-off lane. There are a number of locals who like to bring people to the ferry and drop them off, for a walk-on journey, and we will be providing a turning facility for them to come down and to go back more smoothly. There will be some parking for people who drive to the ferry and park and cross on the northern side of the access road. They are -

Mr O'BYRNE - What is the budgeted cost of that?

Mr GREGORY - The work we have done to date is around \$300 000. I would have to check that number, but we are not talking about a large expenditure.

Mr O'BYRNE - Based on your plans, there is quite a fair bit of work. A bit more than that, wouldn't it?

Mr GREGORY - The work that we have to date.

Mr O'BYRNE - What is the proposed -

Mr ROCKLIFF - We would have to take that on notice.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, in the request for proposal, it was made clear to all of the people tendering, that marshalling areas and car parking, both at Kettering and Roberts Point, and any upgrades should not be considered in that tender, and if their service was reliant on upgrades, that they obviously would not be looked at favourably.

Effectively, the Government had made the decision to go with SeaLink.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Government [inaudible] process. It was at arms' length from the minister and all that.

Mr O'BYRNE - The Government has made the decision to go with SeaLink. A number of issues were raised by the community and others and SeaLink, and your response is to build the infrastructure to make the proposed new service, with a booking service, work.

You can understand how people would be cynical. If this matter was specifically excluded during the tender process, why have you backflipped and allowed it to occur post the tender?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I think we had better further explain the process to you, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr SWAIN - Very briefly in any tender process you have - as you would know as a former minister - to get a tender process comparing proposals on a like basis. That exclusion was part of making sure we had comparable proposals to evaluate. You would have difficulty evaluating one proposal that had boats and no capital and another proposal that had major capital works and no boat.

Mr O'BYRNE - I get that but you can understand people's cynicism when an infrastructure upgrade to make the current service work better for the community, as a response to the community, was considered after you made the decision for one company. Effectively, what people are saying is that you have granted the contract at below expectations or below what is required to do the work and now you are applying an infrastructure fix that no other companies tendering in that process took the benefit of.

CHAIR - Is there a question in that?

Mr SWAIN - The bids are confidential but there was a significant gap between proposals.

Mr O'BYRNE - I understand you may have that view but you can't put that on the table without justifying it and without giving us access. We have made RTI requests not to look at the finances but to look at both - well, all - of the service options. We were denied that under RTI so it is not really fair of you to come and say, 'Trust me, there was a gap' - and I am not saying that I don't trust you, Gary, but it is not appropriate for me to do that.

CHAIR - Through the minister and a question, please, or I am going to call it out of order.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, can you see on the face of it that effectively in the tender process you completely exclude any infrastructure upgrade to assist in a bid? As soon as you appoint the bid and people become aware of the service you are proposing to deliver, there is massive community outcry and all of a sudden you provide millions of dollars in infrastructure upgrade to make the successful bidder work. You can see on the face of it that that looks pretty ordinary.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You are exaggerating again in terms of massive community outcry and -

Mr O'BYRNE - I was at the meeting, the community meeting, and there is still concern.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are working through any concerns. As you have acknowledged, the reference group is doing a very good job.

Mr O'BYRNE - The point we made 12 months ago was that we think you have undercooked this and it is not the best outcome for the community - that has proven to be right, hasn't it?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No, it hasn't. I reject that.

CHAIR - I have let this run and we will have a break for five minutes and will resume shortly.

The committee suspended from 4.04 p.m. to 4.11 p.m.

Mr TUCKER - The Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme helps our Tasmanian businesses. Can you give us some more details about this please?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The TFES, provided and administered by the Australian Government, is very important to the continuing growth of Tasmanian business and our economy.

The stated objective of the Tasmanian scheme is to partially offset the freight cost disadvantages associated with the Bass Strait crossing. It is not designed to fully compensate shippers for the cost disadvantage or to completely equalise Tasmanian shippers' freight costs with those of equivalent mainland firms. The scheme was introduced in 1976, has undergone several design changes and the funding is at the complete discretion of the Australian Government and administered by ministerial direction.

The extension of the TFES to shipment of goods by the mainland to markets not previously covered under the scheme was announced by the Australian Government, as part of its response to the Productivity Commission Inquiry Report on Tasmanian Shipping and Freight. The Hodgman Liberal Government has lobbied hard for this outcome.

We welcomed the extension of the scheme for transshipped international export goods which commenced in January 2016 and argued strongly for the continuation of the extended scheme when reviewed in 2017. The extension represents an additional assistance to Tasmanian exporters estimated to be worth \$203 million over four years. This was a big win for business in Tasmania delivered by federal and state Liberal governments. In December 2018, the Australian Senate moved an inquiry be conducted by the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References

Committee into the policy, regulatory taxation, administrative and funding priorities for Australian shipping, including the TFES. A submission was made by state government to the inquiry which highlights the major benefits to the Tasmanian economy provided by the TFES through addressing the transport disadvantage experienced by Tasmania and affirms the continued operation of the scheme is critical to Tasmania's economic growth.

All aspects of the TFES are also scheduled to be reviewed by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics in 2019, in accordance with the current ministerial direction. Details of this review have not yet been made available but Tasmanian businesses can be assured that the state Liberal government will be strongly reminding the Morrison federal Liberal government that continued operation of the scheme in its existing form is vitally important to Tasmania. I thank the member for his question on this very important matter.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, Grove straight in the Huon Valley has recently had a substantial upgrade to a section of the road outside Willie Smith's Apple Shed. I am not sure what the final figure came to, perhaps you could tell me that? It has provided a turning lane and the argument was toward increasing safety for people who turning into Willie Smith's, so they don't create a back-up along the highway. This is a photo sent to me by a resident and it shows a pushbike. Unfortunately, there doesn't appear to have been consideration of the bike lane.

Mr ROCKLIFF - What is the exact location?

Dr WOODRUFF - This is the truck turning in and that is the new turning area and Willie Smith's will be over here. Cyclists can ride along the Grove straight and there is a verge sectioned off on the side of the road. The new area, where the poplars were taken down and the new road works were made, has shrunk the bike lane to about 30 centimetres. It is hard to tell from this picture, but these are handlebars. A person is riding along, the lane has shrunk and there is a steep drop-off on the kerb on the verge on the left-hand side. It is dangerous for a person. Essentially, in trying to solve the issue of one risk, it has created another major risk.

Mr O'BYRNE - If I may, minister, I have also received inquiries about this.

Dr WOODRUFF - Okay. I have plenty of questions I can ask about it.

CHAIR - This is Dr Woodruff's call.

Dr WOODRUFF - What is going to happen? How did we reach this situation? This was a controversial road-widening because it involved the removal of some poplars that -

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, I remember it. I have received some correspondence.

Dr WOODRUFF - people really loved but they are gone. There was also a discussion about why wider due diligence wasn't done on other road safety measures, which could have been undertaken at the same time. This is a real example, a red rag to the bull, of people who were concerned that proper planning and wide consultation weren't done on this. What is going to happen? It has created another safety issue.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for the question. Mr Gregory has indicated his willingness to address your concerns.

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Mr GREGORY - We considered a range of options for that location and the treatment we put in is the most appropriate treatment for the crash history that appeared there. The barrier wasn't originally part of the design. It was added in late in the piece. That is an error and we are looking at the options to resolve it because it was never intended to be a very narrow shoulder. We have maintained the lane that went through and we have a turning lane that meets the relevant standards. This is an error we need to rectify, we are working through the solution to that now and it is likely that the barrier will come out.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, is it the case that the barrier would be removed but that the road will be extended out in a suitably safe width for cyclists? Removing the barrier could create another risk in people falling off the side of the road. The sealing would need to be extended, possibly with some building up of the shoulder to make sure it could be sealed safely and widely enough. Especially if cars are turning, it will be a pinch point that needs extra space for cyclists. It needs to be abundant, not tight.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I understand what you are saying.

Mr GREGORY - It won't be a pinch point. It is a pinch point at the moment because the barrier is there. The through-lane is maintained at the current width all along the Grove straight, at three-and-a-half metres. The turning lane is 2.8 metres, which is still consistent with the Australian Standards and [inaudible] guidelines. When we take the barrier out, we will seal under the barrier, which isn't at the moment. Yes, there would be an additional seal and more width reinstated for the cyclists.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am talking about a pinch point for cyclists, not for car drivers.

Mr GREGORY - What I am saying is, when the barrier is not there and we reinstate the normal shoulder, it won't be a pinch point because the lane widths are consistent all the way through.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. The proper width for the cycling lane will be reinstated at that point.

Mr GREGORY - It is not a cycling lane, it's a sealed shoulder. The sealed shoulder width will continue through.

Dr WOODRUFF - It won't change -

Mr GREGORY - It will continue through.

Dr WOODRUFF - When will that be rectified?

Mr GREGORY - We would say within the next month or so.

Mr O'BYRNE - As an extension of that, it is not a cycling lane but the Grove straight is identified as a tourism cycling road that is up to standard to ensure those who use bicycles can have good, safe access.

Minister, back to the Bruny Island Ferry, the issue goes to the challenge of capacity. The request for proposal states that the crossing is under 2 kilometres or 1 nautical mile. That is not true. The crossing is 1.72 nautical miles, which is over 3 kilometres. If proponents are relying on

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those distances for their time and fuel calculations, surely that causes an issue in the tendering process? Why was this mistake made in your request for proposal?

Mr ROCKLIFF - When you are saying my request -

Mr O'BYRNE - The department's request for proposal. I am not saying you measured it. You are the minister. It is on page 30 of the request for proposal.

Mr SWAIN - I will take your word for it. I don't have that level of detail. It was never raised with us as an issue through the tender process, that I am aware of. Companies would normally do their own due diligence to ascertain the cost of their bid. I am happy to check it but it was never an issue that I am aware of in terms of people relying on that and feeling that it was wrong.

Mr O'BYRNE - If the argument is given that capacity is an issue, and one of the productivity uplifts that SeaLink or the successful company could guarantee is that they think they can go across quicker and have more movements, if they calculated on your request for proposal and you are out by 1 kilometre or 0.72 nautical miles, that would have an impact on their calculations.

Mr ROCKLIFF - There is no reduction in capacity, Mr O'Byrne.

Mr O'BYRNE - You currently have three vessels, which is 136 cars, and you will go to two vessels at 36, which is 72 cars. Despite you saying there will be more trips, there can't be. When there is a queue, the current or previous operator shuttled and didn't keep to the timetable. We say SeaLink tendered on the timetable but, minister, the previous operator was required to submit a quarterly report detailing the number of scheduled trips and extra trips completed. Therefore, the Government would have been aware that the scheduled departures were not enough and extra crossings were being conducted. The Government could have provided this information to proponents but chose not to. Why didn't you?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I want to repeat, Mr O'Byrne, that existing vessels on the Bruny run are very old and very slow compared to the modern passenger and vehicle ferries. The new SeaLink vessels are built in Tasmania; it is good news for jobs and local industry. They will be faster to load and unload with a more efficient terminal system and the journey travel time will be much shorter. Currently crossings, as I am advised, are only on the half-hour with the older, slower ferries. New ferries would mean more trips and there will be back-up ferries available for extra sailings on peak days as required.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, can you provide an update on the 2019-20 state road and bridge construction program?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Tucker, and thank you for your interest in this. The Budget provides record funding to deliver our election commitments in roads, rail and bridges, public transport and congestion management in the cities and regions right across Tasmania. We are funding major infrastructure programs in a number of smaller, but important budget projects: significant freight rail upgrades to support resource industries; further investment in upgrading popular visitor travelling routes - we have spoken about that; the iconic West Coast Wilderness Railway to support regional tourism; and programs to manage traffic congestion and make public transport more attractive, especially in Greater Hobart, Launceston and the Tamar Valley. In total, the state Budget delivers a record \$1.6 billion in partnership with the federal Liberal government to build the job-creating transport infrastructure our growing state needs with total state funding of

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\$925.7 million and total Australian Government funding of \$690.8 million across the forward Estimates.

Our budget has been warmly welcomed by the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Civil Contractors Federation, Australian Logistics Council, the RACT, Traffic Management of Australia, the Tasmanian Transport Association and Roads Australia. Infrastructure investment supports local businesses, sustains jobs, provides skills development and training opportunities, and improves the lives of individuals and families right across Tasmania.

The last year has seen record investment in our capital works program and has delivered an outstanding amount of work, both on construction projects and planning for future works. Our Government, in partnership with the federal Liberal government has delivered over \$280 million, including maintenance in the road and bridge construction program for the last financial year, which was cause for discussion earlier on. This is significantly higher than previous years and investment delivered.

This represents \$200 million of new construction projects, an \$80 million increase from last year's delivery. This includes the Midland Highway 10-year Action Plan projects at Mangalore, Epping Forest to Powranna, two projects in the vicinity of St Peters Pass, and the new Perth Link Road. Safety upgrades on the Bass Highway at Wynyard, new road sealing including Highland Lakes Road, which is very popular, and sections of the Waterhouse Road, Prossers Road and Hastings Caves Road. The strengthening of bridges between Burnie and Launceston of the Freight Access Bridge Upgrades Program, we spoke about.

Our strong commitment to infrastructure and investment continues in this financial year with a total budget of \$323.5 million in the capital investment program. Work is continuing on the Perth links road project of \$92.3 million, and over a dozen new separate projects will be underway in the coming year, some of which were mentioned earlier today.

The Tasmanian Transport Association Executive Director Michelle Harwood said about the budget -

The continued commitment to improvements to roads, bridges, rail and infrastructure for key freight corridors is welcome for our industry and those industries we serve.

I look forward to working with the department and they will, of course, look forward to working with the civil construction industry to deliver on our committed projects.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Save the Tasmanian Program Devil Roadkill Project has been going since 2009 and collects information about devil roadkill around the state. Tragically there have been at least 3000 devils killed by cars on roads since the recording started, an average of around 350 devils a year. That is a lot. The department has put some virtual fencing in around the state. Would you please tell me where the virtual fencing is at the moment, what areas and other roads will be fenced in the coming financial year?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The department records and retains data relating to the location and amount of roadkill on the state road network. It has identified the amount of roadkill on state roads over the past three years has declined by 50 per cent. This is good and I am not saying we are there yet and achieved everything we would like, but it is a significant reduction.

Dr WOODRUFF - Is that devils only roadkill, or total roadkill?

Mr ROCKLIFF - That would be total roadkill, not specific to devils. Do we have those figures? We can get those figures if you like. We did discuss the virtual fencing last year.

Mr GREGORY - We have a trial of virtual fencing at the moment on the Huon Highway with the University of Tasmania.

Ms O'BYRNE - Is that the blue lights?

Mr GREGORY - No, it is not the blue light that hits the Saddleback, that is something different. The trial is aimed at testing the effectiveness of the fencing because it is still an unknown quantity how effective it is. That is a very structured trial that the University of Tasmania is working through for us. If that is proven to be effective then we will look to put out into other locations.

We have some other mitigation measures on the project in the Tarkine, we have rumble strips, we have different coloured sealing aggregates to make the animals obvious at night. There are a range of things we are doing and we are testing the effectiveness of the virtual fencing. I am aware there are some mining companies that have invested in virtual fencing on parts of the network they use a community service obligation and to help mitigate their impact. At the moment, I guess the jury is out on the effectiveness of virtual fencing.

Dr WOODRUFF - The take-home message is that this is a bit of a promo on the website talking about virtual fencing. It is suggested as though it is being rolled out, but clearly there is nothing, no action this financial year on virtual fencing other than what UTAS is doing but you do not even have the results of whether that is effective or not?

Mr GREGORY - No, not yet, we don't have the results of that trial yet.

Dr WOODRUFF - When are they going to come through?

Mr GREGORY - I would need to take that on notice.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. With regards to the Tarkine, the biggest threat to devils in the Tarkine is your Government's proposal for logging and the coupes that are slated for logging in the Tarkine. There are some warped priorities going on here when we are trying to protect devil habitat. The Government has committed to going into coupes that are known devil habitat -

CHAIR - This is the Infrastructure portfolio, so I am not quite sure how that's related.

Dr WOODRUFF - Clearly the best way to respond to the Save the Devil Program would be to protect those coupes.

CHAIR - Minister, you can choose to answer that or not.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The Tarkine is a great part of Tasmania but I also recall, back around 2008 or 2009, for your interest and a bit of history, there was a proposal to put a road right through the Tarkine, which we opposed as the state Liberal Party. In fact, we came up with a very good proposal for upgrading bridges and the road network around the Tarkine. I was charged with that

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responsibility and it is great to see that investment has been realised. We are all for very sensible construction that enables access to these areas while protecting the important brand in that area.

Ms O'BYRNE - On the Bruny Island ferry, in your previous answer you mentioned that other vessels would be able to be accessed. You announced the successful tender as having two ferries with 36, and they might be slightly quicker and over the day they may get a couple of extra sailings in, but it is a peak service. Essentially, you have gone from three vessels with 136 cars currently, down to 72 with the capacity to have more vessels at a time of peak. With the offer of more vessels presented - maybe Mr Swain can answer that - did other people who tendered for the job come up with that suggestion as well? The announcement you made last year about the successful tenderers, two vessels, has now changed significantly. You have upgraded, you have allowed extra vessels, you have allowed a change in the fee structure, which is a significant change, and the current service looks very different to the one that you agreed to tender for. My question is -

Mr ROCKLIFF - The current service looks very good, given there has been an increase in the number of people on the ferries, and you can't argue with the professionalism also of SeaLink.

Mr O'BYRNE - I am not having a go at SeaLink.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Who are you having a go at then?

Mr O'BYRNE - You and your Government because this has been a shocking job. You can't even get the nautical miles right on your request for proposal.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I do not accept that.

Mr O'BYRNE - You ruled out infrastructure upgrades, and then as soon as the community raised that with you and the companies that tendered for the job may have said this could work with an infrastructure upgrade, you didn't do that. SeaLink, through no fault of their own, won the tender and they have made it very clear to the community and to you that they need an infrastructure upgrade - which you specifically excluded in the tender process, and now you are responding with over \$1 million of taxpayers' money.

Mr ROCKLIFF - With respect, and I stand to be corrected, but I believe the reference group was very keen on the upgrade.

Mr O'BYRNE - The reference group was absolutely keen on the upgrade and we welcome the upgrade. That is not the point I am making. The point I am making is, you specifically excluded that. You chose a tender and a company that could not do the job that you are asking it to do and you responded by an infrastructure upgrade - because we know that the upgrade is connected to a booking system.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will throw the question to Mr Swain about the process.

Mr SWAIN - The tender was outcome-based, so it was not really centred around how many boats you did or didn't have, it was about your ability to improve on the existing service in terms of frequency and relevance to the community. That is the first point. The second point is, in the tender it was a point-in-time assessment; we had to get comparable proposals. We used a range of mechanisms to do that in the way that we described the service and the requirements on the bidders. We allowed for conforming and non-conforming bids. We had a probity auditor; we picked what

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we believed was the best bidder through a standard assessment, and then we contracted to that bidder. That is all point in time. Since then, we have worked with them, listening to the reference group to try to make improvements to that service where possible.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you think that work should have been done prior to the tender being put out? Clearly, the announcement at these Estimates last year didn't look much at all like what is being delivered. You've got three vessels on; there will be two new vessels brought on and it is fantastic that they are being built in Tasmania, and then other vessels will come on as well. You can understand that in the tendering process -

Mr ROCKLIFF - As required. Back-up ferries available for extra sailings, for peak days as needed.

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes, you can understand the question - that you picked a two-vessel tender, it has not worked out and now you are doing all this work to try to make it work. How would the other people tendering for the ferry service feel if they are of the view that this looks very much like the service that we tendered for?

CHAIR - Thank you, Mr O'Byrne, let the minister answer now.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The important thing to always remember is that capacity will not decrease; it has been demonstrated that capacity is in fact up. That is a good thing.

Mr O'BYRNE - There is an organic growth anyway; you've got three vessels on, of course it is going up.

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, please allow the minister to answer the question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You'd appreciate there is a lot of visitor growth to Bruny Island and there will continue to be. We have an organisation such as SeaLink, a professional organisation, that has an enormous amount of experience in operating ferries. We will have two new ferries, one expected to be completed by the end of this year. We have another ferry that is being built and that has been awarded again to Richardson Divine Marine. Capacity will continue to increase and certainly not decrease.

Mr O'BYRNE - Have you been approached by any businesses on the island about a loss of business over the last summer?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Have I been approached by any businesses?

Mr O'BYRNE - Have any businesses contacted you and informed you of loss of trade over summer since the new ferry has been brought into place?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The advice I have is that I can't recall that. If a business has experienced that, as you point out, they are welcome to contact me - of course, they are - and their local members as well.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, West Coast Wilderness Railway is a key visitor drawcard for the west coast. What will the Government's \$16 million investment in the railway achieve?

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Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you, Mr Tucker. It is a \$16 million investment that will entail upgrades to track and bridges on the line and also provide a fourth locomotive. I encourage people to visit the West Coast Wilderness Railway. I remember a time when the honourable member and myself were at a public meeting in Queenstown, which I won't forget.

Mr O'BYRNE - That's right, you mentioned this last year.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I did.

Mr O'BYRNE - You also said last year that there is no forward Estimates for the wilderness railway and there was no need for extra money and we told you there would be, and you're back here with \$16 million.

CHAIR - All right.

Mr O'BYRNE - Isn't that a remarkable turn of events, minister?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will never forget that public meeting, Mr O'Byrne, because I spoke first and you changed your position five minutes later.

Mr O'BYRNE - Not at all.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You did.

Mr O'BYRNE - I think Darryl Gerrity won the day. We had a draw and he won.

Mr ROCKLIFF - He would always win, in that sense.

The funding will allow the replacement of 18 kilometres of track, upgrades to bridges to improve safety and the introduction of a fourth heritage steam locomotive to further enhance the visitor experience. It is a crucial investment to ensure the ongoing viability of the West Coast Wilderness Railway as a safe, unique, authentic and enjoyable interactive heritage tourism icon.

As a government, we will always stand in support of the west coast and back investment in this unique region and its people. The natural environment that the West Coast Wilderness Railway operates in is as challenging, as you would appreciate, as it is extraordinary. That is part of the unique charm of the railway and a testament to the will and creativity of the people who built it.

There is no doubt, however, that it also adds to the challenge of maintaining the railway and complying with the modern rail safety standards. This investment of \$16 million will support capital upgrades to secure the long-term future of the railway and drive additional visitor growth. In particular, the addition of a fourth heritage locomotive, the last of the original Abt locomotives, will ensure that more services can be operated under the steam power and will considerably improve the visitor experience. These steam locomotives have the Abt rack-and-pinion system, capable of driving the locomotives over the steepest gradient of the track at 6.67 per cent, gradients that diesel engines are not able to achieve.

The heritage locomotive is currently held at the Glenorchy Transport Museum and this \$16 million investment will enable its restoration and return to operation on the West Coast

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Wilderness Railway, which is something all rail enthusiasts will appreciate. It will provide a further boost to the already growing railway visitor numbers, which are increasing.

If you have been to the Queenstown, or for those who have been to Queenstown recently and seen the upgrade in the aesthetics to the café, it is excellent and inviting. When I had a cup of coffee there -

CHAIR - It was warm and inviting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It was certainly the place to be in Queenstown with the number of people there.

Mr O'BYRNE - Not the Empire?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I didn't go to the Empire on that particular day.

CHAIR - Not for morning tea anyhow.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I also had a discussion with the management and the people who work on the railway and within the workshop. They do a fantastic job. I was there during one of the restorations of the carriages. The attention to detail was extraordinary. The amount of preparation work they have undergone in ensuring that it has longevity, passenger comfort, but also maintaining the heritage value of each of those carriages is absolutely extraordinary. They are unique skills. They are skills we need to build upon, which is not easy in that sense. I know a growing number of visitors are coming to Tasmania to visit our railway heritage, including places such as the Glenorchy Transport Museum, which I have visited in the last eight months, and which is fantastic. Some unique trains are on display.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, what has happened in 12 months? When we discussed the West Coast Wilderness Railway last year you had no money in the forward Estimates on that. We raised with you and it was in the public domain that the company was seeking extra support and the \$4 million a year is very similar to a figure that we allocated years ago in terms of maintenance, capital upgrade et cetera. You responded last year by saying we do not think they will need it. It will be okay and we are quite comfy. What has changed in 12 months?

CHAIR - The minister says it must be new money.

Dr BROAD - In the Estimates before that, the previous minister, Mr Hidding, also said that.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have provided funding of \$4.5 million in 2017-18 to ensure the ongoing development of this important tourism asset. It is good news to work with the management team to determine the business's needs going forward. Current financial projections and passenger forecasts indicate the railway has sufficient cash reserves for the maintenance of railway operations. I am not sure they used the word 'comfy'.

Mr O'BYRNE - Sorry, I was paraphrasing. Last year we told you that the forward Estimates profile was manifestly inadequate. You said that was not the case and now this year you have allocated significant money over the forwards. What has changed in 12 months that you did not know 12 months ago?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is an iconic railway.

Mr O'BYRNE - You knew that 12 months ago.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The additional capital expenditure supports the business model as well. I can grab some figures if you like on the actual passenger numbers on the railway as well if you are interested in those.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you want to take it on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important to ensure the sustainability of the railway and I got an appreciation in Queenstown as well that the tourism industry more broadly understands that the attraction of that single tourism opportunity people are gravitating towards supports other tourism businesses not directly involved as well.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is why we invested the money.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is important we continue to invest. We have had very good feedback from the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania in terms of this investment. *The Advocate* editorial said 'this commitment will ensure the sustainability of the railway'.

CHAIR - New money.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you. Just before you ask the question, I have an update on the virtual fencing trial. It is a scientific paper and it is in peer review. We expect to provide results in the new few months.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am really glad you mentioned the West Coast Wilderness Railway. It sounds like it is going to be an iconic tourist attraction, in your words, going through that extraordinary natural environment, which is part of the charm of trip and does, as you so sensibly point out, bring visitor growth to the area and is a source of potential economic industry and jobs. It's not going to be much chop when it is clear-felled, which is what your Government is planning to do. The west coast railway runs through the area also known as King River. It abuts the Mount Dundas regional reserve and the Teepookana regional reserve. It is home to the endangered species the Tasmanian devil, the spotted tail quoll, the azure kingfisher, and it also forms part of the forest FPPF, which was meant to go into reserves next year but which your Government has plans to move into a Future Potential Production Forest. This will mean that lot 191, which the west coast railway runs through, would be clear-felled. How do you think that is going to go with visitors? Will you have a special exemption for pet projects?

CHAIR - We are in the Infrastructure portfolio.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is pretty directly related to the value of the infrastructure we are spending a lot of money on, I would have thought.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I am informed there were 29 248 passengers on the rail to March of this year. Some may be aware the line was restarted with the second-hand rail, some of which is now reaching end of life. The harsh west coast environment means there is a continuing need to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure. Investment is more than providing infrastructure, it is about backing the West Coast Wilderness Railway and its hardworking employees. It is about ensuring the railway

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can continue to provide jobs and training opportunities for the west coast and that the café continues to be there for visitors and locals alike.

Dr WOODRUFF - Excuse me, minister, I think you are reading the answer to someone else's question.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You mentioned the environment; I am mentioning environment in my answer.

Dr WOODRUFF - Let's talk about anything then. What are you going to do about it?

Mr ROCKLIFF - With respect, that would be a question you need to direct to the Minister for Resources.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am directing it to you as the Minister for Infrastructure responsible for administering this money, a huge amount of money coming forward in the forward Estimates; \$16 million into infrastructure meant to bring economic prosperity to the region, which it cannot do if the area around it is clear-felled. Tourists will not come to drive through clear-fell when they have come to see beauty and our incredible forests.

CHAIR - The minister has answered the question. I am directing the call to Mr O'Byrne.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I appreciate your question, perhaps you would like to direct it to the Minister for Resources, given the specific nature of it.

Mr O'BYRNE - I want to ask a question about the Bridgewater Bridge. It is wonderful that we have federal government funding for it.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Of \$176 million.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is fantastic. Could you outline what exactly has been done to date to bring the development to this point? Beyond the federal government commitments, we know that is there, what has been done?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have engaged in a business case for Infrastructure Australia. As part of the 2018-19 federal Budget, a \$461 million contribution toward the construction of a new Bridgewater Bridge was announced. This represents 80 per cent of the expected \$576 million construction cost and will be supported by \$115 million from the Tasmanian Government. In the 2018-19 state Budget, we have set aside \$121 million of these allocations for the Budget and forward Estimates period, three years of detailed design and approvals will then be followed by three years of construction, with completion in 2023-24. The business case in support of the federal funding commitment has been lodged with Infrastructure Australia and the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities for an assessment. In November 2018, the finalised business case for a new Bridgewater Bridge site was submitted for assessment as an initiative of IAs Australian Infrastructure Priority List. In mid-March 2019, an update to the business case was provided to both Infrastructure Australia and the department.

Mr O'BYRNE - Was the 18 November document the draft business case and the March submission was the final business case?

Mr GARCIA - That is right.

Mr O'BYRNE - For the record, Mr Garcia confirmed that. I am not playing a game, I wanted it clarified. The draft business case was completed in 2018, with the final business case submitted in March 2019.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are delivering on the Bridgewater Bridge commitment. My expectation is that we will driving on the Bridgewater Bridge in 2024.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is it suffice to say that all you have done since coming to Government in 2014 - it took you four years -

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have secured funding.

Mr O'BYRNE - You secured funding, which is a good announcement, and both sides of federal politics were moving that way. Land acquisition occurred under our previous government. We received money from the then federal minister and we were acquiring the land. That was occurring before your Government. What has happened in five years?

Mr ROCKLIFF - The state and federal Liberal funding is locked into our budgets. The preliminary work is underway -

Mr ROCKLIFF - The preliminary work is underway and a number of approval processes including geotechnical analysis and environmental studies need to be undertaken. The complex design, planning and approvals process is expected to be completed within three years and a two-year construction phase is to begin in the 2021-22 construction season. We expect Tasmanians to be driving on a new four-lane Bridgewater Bridge in 2024.

Mr O'BYRNE - To clarify, minister, before Mr Garcia speaks, you have outlined what happens from now. The only thing I can tangibly hold on to as to what has happened in five years is that we had a draft business case in November of last year and a finalised business case was put to IA in March of this year. Is that right?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr O'Byrne, Labor had no plan for a replacement bridge.

Mr O'BYRNE - We acquired the land in preparation for the work, which has taken five years to commence.

CHAIR - Order. This is not a debate.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Mr O'Byrne, we are delivering what you were unable to deliver. Mr Garcia, would you like to talk through some of the activity you have been engaged in during this process? I would not underestimate the fact that we have secured funding of \$576 million. That is a significant infrastructure project.

Mr GARCIA - Importantly, we had a bridge that was probably not going to be funded. We had a significant costed bridge previously. The first task in that was beyond building a business case, it was in having a broader concept design done; a bridge that could be built at a price that could be funded by the federal government. That initial work was undertaken and formed the basis of the business case.

The IA process requires a draft to be put before them. There was some rigorous analysis, the case was passed back and forward, and it took us some time to respond to all the detail toward the finality of that business case. That business case has been with them since the time indicated and our anticipation is that it will be considered at the June meeting of the IA Board, so that is imminent. As the minister has indicated, funding has been secured. I don't suggest the IA process is rubber-stamping but it is a process that has to be gone through. Following that, it will allow the funding flow to occur. Some significant work now needs to occur with some geotech analysis, approvals and the like.

Mr O'BYRNE - Through you, minister, to clarify: that work, Mr Garcia, occurred. You have basically reformatted it, re-scoped it, put the draft business case forward in November of last year, and here was essentially 3 or 4 months of negotiations of what the business case looked like.

It is going to the June meeting. Will that tick off a final design, or what will it tick off?

Mr GARCIA - They do not tick off the final design. They consider a business case.

Mr O'BYRNE - When will we see a final design connected to the business case.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Perhaps I could invite Mr Gregory to talk about the studies and the planning, including the design process.

Mr GREGORY - There has been quite a bit of work done to get us here today. Mr Garcia is talking about another piece of work we did, through this process, a peer review of the conceptual design.

The Australian Road Research Board specialist bridge team came and compared our costings and validated those against comparable projects.

Mr O'BYRNE - Was that between the drafting business or last year?

Mr GREGORY - During that period.

This is a significant and substantial project. There has not been a bridge built like this since the early 1980s when the Bowen Bridge was constructed. That was the last project of this scale here.

It is not the sort of project in the current delivery modes we would actually do the detail design. That would be part of the design and constraint project.

In that sense we will not be delivering the detail design. The successful tender will do that.

The piece of work now for us is more comprehensive geotechnical investigations of the sediments in the river and to work through the formal approvals process.

We have the background there from environmental and heritage, and Aboriginal heritage studies have been done. It will be a matter of passing all that into a bigger approvals package. One of the first things to do is sign off the business case and then consider the project proposal report by the department in Canberra to allow us to access the money to continue in the next phase.

There will be geotechnical reports. There will be some consideration of what appropriate planning legislation is to progress this under. This project spans three local councils and we will need to consider the most appropriate way to go proceed.

Then obviously we will prepare the relevant documentation to go to tender in design and constructing in 2021.

Mr SWAIN - I am not sure if this was discussed last year. We are very mindful this is a level approach from what we normally do.

In this period while the business case has been worked through. We have been talking to our interstate colleagues, Queensland, Western Australia and New South Wales, and seeking to harness their make of bridge, \$0.5 million and up capacity.

The key work to do through Shane's team, will look at the approval strategy, procurement, contracting and a resourcing approach. It will not necessarily use the standard model used in the department, noting the scale of this project. It is bigger than we normally do. Shortly we will be taking some strategic advice around options in relation to those things in parallel to the money becoming available with the conclusion of the business tenders.

Mr O'BYRNE - That work is all ahead of you?

Mr SWAIN - Yes, and I am saying we have doing what we can in parallel to the business case process, gathering relevant information and leveraging off the experience of those jurisdictions who have been delivering bridges of this scale in recent years.

Mr TUCKER - Minister, we know increasing the overall Australasian New Car Assessment Program of the vehicle fleet is one proven way of reducing serious casualty and crashes. Can you please update the committee on the Government's vehicle fleet safety rating?

Mr ROCKLIFF - In July last, the Tasmanian Government introduced a new vehicle fleet safety policy requiring all passenger and light commercial vehicles on the Tasmanian Government Vehicle Fleet Contract to have a 5-star ANCAP safety rating. The Australasian New Car Assessment Program is Australia's independent vehicle safety authority.

The state Government, along with other jurisdictions, provides a funding contribution to ANCAP to support its work. This is sourced from funds collected through the Road Safety Levy on Tasmanian vehicle operations.

ANCAP safety ratings are published for a range of new passenger, sports, utility and light commercial vehicles entering the Australian and New Zealand markets using as ratings system of zero to five stars. ANCAP star ratings indicate the level of safety a vehicle provides for occupants and pedestrians in the event of a crash, as well as its ability, through technology, to avoid or minimise the effects of a crash. Some of these active safety features, such as anti-lock braking systems and air bags, are better known than others, such as the electronic stability control and its different-named variants and the newer technologies like lane departure warning systems. Other key changes have been made in the way a vehicle's body is designed and built, especially the front, the engine bay and the driver and passenger cabin area.

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Since 1993 ANCAP has published independent safety ratings for thousands of new vehicle makes, models and variants. These independent safety ratings are used to compare the relative safety between vehicles of similar size and have become a critical factor in vehicle selection for private and fleet buyers. The policy is a key action of our Towards Zero strategy and action plans to promote minimum safety standards for all new passenger and light commercial vehicles in Tasmania.

The Towards Zero strategy is underpinned by the safe system approach to road safety which includes four pillars: safe road users, safe roads and roadsides, safe speeds, and safe vehicles. The approach encourages everyone to drive the safest vehicle they can afford, ideally one with a five-star ANCAP rating.

Tasmania currently has the oldest vehicle fleet in Australia with an average age of 12.8 years and this means that many people are not benefiting from improved safety features in new vehicles. This policy will ensure safer vehicles in the government fleet which will then, in turn, be sold into the community through the second-hand car market. The majority of government vehicles are sold to the public after three years or when they have reached 60 000 kilometres.

Consistently around 20 per cent of government vehicles sold on to the second-hand car market are not re-registered in Tasmania and the assumption is that these vehicles may be registered in another jurisdiction. Local government, government business enterprises and state-owned companies can access the government vehicle fleet contract, as can approved not-for-profit organisations, but the annual total number of vehicles purchased by these organisations through the government vehicle fleet contract is not referred to Treasury.

This policy approach is consistent with that of the Australian Government's purchasing policy, which requires five-star passenger and light commercial vehicles. It also allows agencies to procure vehicles outside of the ANCAP rating so as not to unduly impact or limit the achievement of business needs or require specific-purpose vehicles such as for firefighting. Specialised or fit-for-purpose vehicles outside of this policy can still be purchased subject to a business case approved by the relevant head of agency and submitted to Treasury.

The government vehicle fleet contract also includes a range of electric and hybrid vehicles that are five-star rated. We have 10 vehicles as at 3 April 2019, I am advised, and Treasury and Finance will also consider adding other five-star electric and hybrid vehicles as they become available from the manufacturers.

Dr BROAD - I want to talk about York Street in Latrobe. which is opposite the Wattle Hill Caltex. There was a planning application for an industrial subdivision in York Street in Latrobe. The advice from State Growth was for that subdivision to proceed, it would require a slip lane to be built. However, later on in that process that requirement from State Growth to put in a slip lane was dropped. I would like to know why that occurred.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Opposite Wattle Hill, so before the speedway drive? Going towards Devonport.

Dr BROAD - It is directly opposite the Wattle Hill Caltex. There was a bit of debate about the slip lane for the Wattle Hill; this is on the other side.

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Mr ROCKLIFF - There were infrastructure improvements to that area a few years ago as a result of a fatality.

Dr BROAD - Can I put that on notice?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Yes, please.

Dr BROAD - Another question, when will a RO-RO ramp be built at the Geelong Port?

Mr ROCKLIFF - To accommodate the *John Duigan*? I believe Bass Island Line are in negotiations still with Geelong Port around that matter.

Dr BROAD - It has been some time.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Geelong was chosen as the mainland port for the service due to the efficiency it offers for fertiliser handling and storage, which is the primary cargo type for King Island. TasPorts continue to negotiate a port user agreement with Geelong Port. There is a significant capital investment in establishing a roll-on/roll-off ramp at Geelong and costs associated with that are being considered within a long-term lease negotiation. Bass Island Line remains committed to a RO-RO service into Geelong Port and negotiations are continuing with this outcome in mind.

Dr BROAD - No time line?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I cannot advise of a time line. I am happy to seek further advice from Bass Island Line for you to see where that is at in terms of their time line. Negotiations are continuing but the outcome is at the forefront of what the objective is - a RO-RO service. If you would like to put a time line on notice, I am happy to then seek information for you from Bass Island Line and will provide that time frame for you. I know why you are asking the question and I agree with you. We represent the same area of King Island and I know it is important to you.

Dr BROAD - I'll put that on notice. Thank you.

Dr WOODRUFF - The Budget provides funding of \$16.3 million to TasRail for below-rail infrastructure. The purpose of that is to manage, maintain and operate the Tasmanian rail network on a sustainable basis and to provide for essential annual maintenance of rolling stock.

Can you please explain what decision has been made regarding TasRail and its profitability? I understood that GBEs are meant to function as integral units and that they ought to approach profitability themselves. This is a substantial amount of money into essentially regular maintenance. From what is written in the budget papers it looks as though essential maintenance work has not been undertaken and cannot be undertaken in the way that GBE is running. What is going on?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Thank you for your question. It is the type of question that would be asked in the TasRail GBE scrutiny.

Dr WOODRUFF - Money from your Budget propping it up.

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Mr ROCKLIFF - I wouldn't say propping it up. It's about providing a better rail network. TasRail hauls around 3.5 million tonnes of freight annually, equating to more than 140 000 fewer heavy vehicle movements on our roads, for example.

Mr O'BYRNE - It's better for the environment.

Mr ROCKLIFF - It is better for the environment. As members may be aware, the first tranche of the Tasmanian Rail Revitalisation Program is now winding up and is expected to be delivered in full, on time and on budget. Since the \$119.6 million of tranche funding began four years ago there has been a reduction in mainline derailments, record freight volumes and improved safety statistics. Network improvements facilitated by this funding include replacement of sleepers, replacement of life expired rail, bridge upgrades along with formation and drainage works. Co-funded with the Australian Government, tranche 2 will focus on upgrading priority sections of the state's rail network with all key freight rail corridors benefiting from this investment.

As with tranche 1, it is expected that the majority of contracts will go to local companies, who in turn support local subcontractors and local suppliers of goods and services. TasRail expects to be able to utilise the existing local civil construction industry that has already been mobilised for tranche 1, ensuring that the required skills and capability are retained and the expensive process of demobilisation and remobilisation of equipment and personnel is avoided. We have committed to match the \$68 million in funding announced for tranche 3 by the Australian Government in 2021-22 and 2022-23. This funding ensures that our rail network is safe and reliable, helping to improve workplace safety for TasRail and improve the security of rail transport for its customers.

The Government has also committed an additional \$16.3 million over the 2019-20 period in the forward Estimates for below rail infrastructure for TasRail. This additional funding will allow TasRail to manage, maintain and operate the Tasmanian rail network on a sustainable basis and provides for essential annual maintenance of rolling stock. Finally, the Budget also includes an equity contribution of \$575 000 to assist TasRail to fund infrastructure works at the Parattah rail siding. These works are important in helping to facilitate additional volumes off our roads and on the rail network, including from the forestry sector.

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you, minister. That reiterates the question that I started, that's background information. I note in passing Mr O'Byrne's pious little comment about being good for the environment, as if the Labor Party has any credible background in that area. The Greens know perfectly well it's good for the environment which is why I am asking because it is how we -

Mr O'BYRNE - You just erased about 100 years of action by the Labor Party. It may not be to your liking, but goodness me.

CHAIR - Order.

Dr WOODRUFF - Coal mines, anybody? Gas basin?

Mr O'BYRNE - Hydro. Wind farms.

CHAIR - I would like to interrupt the process just to find out when would the committee like to go to MAST because it is going to take 15 minutes or so to get them here so if we go at 5.30?

Mr ROCKLIFF - They're here.

CHAIR - Sorry, they're here. So, when do you want to go to MAST, can I have an indication?

Mr O'BYRNE - I've got one.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, I haven't finished this question. I didn't get an answer.

CHAIR - One, and Dr Woodruff you've got a question before you go to MAST?

Dr WOODRUFF - I've got one more question before I go to MAST.

CHAIR - Thank you.

Dr WOODRUFF - What are the policy directions that are happening with TasRail? We have no problems with this rail network being properly maintained. They must be. What is the policy direction from your Government - from you, minister - to TasRail with respect to them running themselves as an independent unit? At the moment, we have taxpayer money in a period where efficiency dividends are being extracted from every single department going into maintaining the viability of below rail stock for TasRail because it appears that they are not able to do that within their budget. So, what is the policy direction around TasRail having to function as a functioning unit? I would have thought that essential annual maintenance is just basic bread-and-butter work and it is a bit concerning if that is not being done.

Mr ROCKLIFF - More broadly, of course, the rail network is vital. Around a decade ago the below rail infrastructure - I'm not talking about the locomotives necessarily but the below rail infrastructure, if I can call it that - was in considerable disrepair. There were far too frequent instances of derailment and it was inefficient. The importance of tranche 1 and tranche 2 and then tranche 3 investment, which is an investment from both state and federal government - a 50:50 investment each - is to ensure that we have an efficient rail network, efficient for industry and one that is reliable. We want a rail network that can assist in ensuring the pressure is off our road network as well, not only in terms of the maintenance required on our roads as a result of, for example, the 140 000 truck movements, but also the safety of commuters.

Dr WOODRUFF - Is there a particular policy direction with respect to TasRail which means that they are not required to function as an integral business?

Mr ROCKLIFF - We want TasRail to be a functioning entity, and they are. CEO, Steve Dietrich, is an excellent operator and TasRail is chaired by Samantha Hogg. Everyone is doing their job. I don't really understand where your line of questioning is coming from except that it should really be in GBE scrutiny.

Dr WOODRUFF - It is simply that \$16 million is coming out of the infrastructure budget to go to a GBE on what is essential maintenance and I am wondering what's going on?

Mr SWAIN - I wanted to make a general comment through you, minister, that a number of GBEs and state-owned companies have some form of government support or other. The reason they are in a corporatised structure is because they have some commercial dimensions to their business. There would be a number of businesses that had some form of government support and Metro would be an obvious one.

Dr WOODRUFF - I am sure Metro is one of them and that's totally appropriate.

Mr SWAIN - Yes.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, my question goes to the Hobart congestion issue which was touched on earlier. Before the last election, the Premier and the then infrastructure minister, Rene Hidding, announced that there would be an underground bus mall for Hobart. There were extensive designs and -

Mr ROCKLIFF - Possibly.

Ms O'BYRNE - No, they had extensive designs and photos of an underground, like an airport arrivals and an artist's impression underneath the Franklin Square, or wherever it was. We raised that with you last year at Estimates and you mentioned that it might be a possible upgrade and then effectively all you have done since is put out a consultant's report to consult on what's possible.

Surely, the people of Tasmania deserve better than 18 months of nothing. A number of announcements and 'possibles' and we are no closer to getting a transit centre in the centre of Hobart but you're consulting on -

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are closer.

Ms O'BYRNE - How are we closer than an announcement 18 months ago of an underground bus mall?

CHAIR - Please allow the minister to answer without interrupting.

Mr ROCKLIFF - As I recall the policy correctly, we committed to a transit centre, possibly underground. We had -

Mr O'BYRNE - Are you denying that?

Dr BROAD - Possibly now.

Mr O'BYRNE - The only images you produced were underground.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Possibly, underground and we are in discussion.

Mr O'BYRNE - This is Utopia, this is magnificent.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You remember the policy though, have you read the policy?

Mr O'BYRNE - How could we forget.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Have you read it?

Mr O'BYRNE - It's not really worth reading. It's a picture of an underground bus mall.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We are committed to the transit centre. It's an important part of our Hobart congestion plan. I am not sure why you are opposed to it.

Mr O'BYRNE - Opposed to it? We just want some action, minister.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Do you support it?

Mr O'BYRNE - Here's how it works. You are in government, you make the decisions. We ask questions about where you are at. You made an announcement around a transit centre. We're asking where you are at with the transit centre, minister?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I remember being in opposition too, for 12 years, and there were many projects that the state government put forward in my 12 years that I supported.

Mr O'BYRNE - You've announced it. We want to know where it's at. How about we focus on that?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Okay.

CHAIR - Can we come through the Chair please?

Mr O'BYRNE - Sorry, through the Chair.

Mr ROCKLIFF - WSP Australia has been appointed to provide expert advice about a dedicated bus transit centre in the CBD.

Mr O'BYRNE - Are they a Tasmanian company?

Mr ROCKLIFF - No they're not. WSP Australia brings extensive experience in functional design of bus transit centres, including Perth's bus port, which incidentally is underground. They have expertise in underground infrastructure, and the award-winning Christchurch bus interchange in New Zealand.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is that one underground?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I don't know actually but I don't believe it is.

The Hobart bus transit centre study will identify suitable options, a specific location, whether at ground level, partially or wholly underground, and indicative costs of delivering the project. I was quite open about this. We have had our policy of possibly underground, and last year I said it could possibly be as well. I remember, I was sitting here. As part of the Hobart City Deal, the Hobart bus transit centre will deliver a modern transit hub that will cater to predicted growth and demand and emerging technologies over the next 30 years.

Initial work with the department is already underway. WSP Australia has started consulting with key stakeholders, including Metro Tasmania, private bus operators, the Tasmanian Bus Association, the tourism industry and Hobart City Council. I'm advised that it is happening.

Passenger transport is an important part of reducing the pressure on the greater Hobart and road network. A more efficient, dedicated Hobart bus transit centre is key to encouraging people to take up bus travel. We had the discussion last year about that modal shift and the importance of that, and the fact that, for example, Mr Gregory was citing some of these figures as well. My advice is

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that, for example, in school holidays it reduces the traffic volumes by some 6 to 8 per cent, which highlights the fact that if there is a modal shift, it is important in that sense.

Mr O'BYRNE - I agree, for once.

Mr ROCKLIFF - A more efficient dedicated Hobart bus transit centre is key to encouraging people to take up bus travel. I believe, Mr O'Byrne, you should end your negativity across a whole range of infrastructure projects. We recognise the importance of modal shift and you need to stop being anti-bus.

Mr O'BYRNE - I am not anti-bus. When do you expect that report?

CHAIR - Order. Dr Woodruff has the call.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, I would like to ask some questions of MAST now.

CHAIR - We have a minute to go.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Can I respond quickly to a question of Dr Broad's around York Street, Latrobe subdivision. Mr Gregory has the answer for you.

Mr GREGORY - There was a rezoning and development application submitted to council. That went to the Planning Commission. That was accompanied by a traffic impact assessment prepared by the proponent, which recommended a left slip-lane into York Street.

Dr BROAD - And that wasn't from State Growth?

Mr GREGORY - No. We accepted that recommendation. Subsequently, the developer didn't want to do that, and the Planning Commission, through the rezoning, included that condition. The developer appealed that, and subsequently provided additional information and a new traffic assessment that indicated it wasn't warranted. We accepted that position.

Mr ROCKLIFF - I want to provide some clarification for Dr Broad on the Tasmanian Liberals' planned infrastructure for the 21st century. Where we refer to the Greater Hobart Traffic Solution, this refers to the policy to plan, design and develop a new - possibly underground - bus transit centre in central Hobart as part of the federal City Deal for Hobart.

Mr O'BYRNE - Read up. An underground design for a major new Hobart bus interchange headlines a suite of measures designed to reduce Hobart traffic congestion under a re-elected majority Tasmanian Liberal Government.

Mr O'BYRNE - suite of measures designed to reduce Hobart traffic congestion under a re-elected majority Tasmanian Liberal Government. So, there's spin here, minister. You gave people the impression it was underground, and it's not. Anyway, we've got a copy because there's another quote from there I want to get to and a question about another matter.

Dr WOODRUFF - Well, can we go to -

CHAIR - Yes, I think we conclude this session and move to MAST and -

Mr O'BYRNE - No, I actually have one more question on this.

Dr WOODRUFF - Chair, it's after 5.30 and I think we agreed as a committee -

Mr O'BYRNE - No, we did not agree as a committee.

CHAIR - Mr O'Byrne, before you ask the question, can you just give me some undertaking about how long the answer is on this question?

Mr O'BYRNE - Well, that's up to the minister.

CHAIR - Yes, I know.

Mr O'BYRNE - But it's one question on this. We can quickly do MAST, if we come back to MAST, I can ask one question?

CHAIR - Yes, I know. Just give me some understanding of your question.

Mr O'BYRNE - Okay, this will take five minutes.

CHAIR - Right. Yes, I know it's your turn, Dr Woodruff. I think it's easier for the table and for Hansard if we aren't swapping backwards and forwards at the table. So, I will time-limit this to when that clock says 25-to. Go.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, in that same document you quote from, it also says, 'We will also invest \$35 million to construct an express fifth lane on the Southern Outlet to ease congestion for those commuting from Kingborough to Hobart.' How's the construction going, and will it cost \$35 million?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I've mentioned that today again.

Mr O'BYRNE - Briefly.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Did you say fifth lane?

Mr O'BYRNE - Yes. You said you would invest \$35 million to construct it. Perhaps update the committee on progress.

Mr ROCKLIFF - So, that's still being consulted on, as I understand it. We can provide you with an update from Mr Gregory on terms of where that project is.

Mr GREGORY - What we had prior to the commitment being put in place was a feasibility study; we just looked at, could it be done? The answer was yes, and that gave an indication on the price. So, now we're in the scoping phase, working through and refining what that means, but also how it ties in with the broader greater Hobart traffic solution in how Macquarie and Davey Streets

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operate. They are fundamentally linked. We're having conversations with Hobart City Council about how we might set up bus priority up and down Macquarie and Davey, and it also then links back to the investment through the city deal back at Kingston, and how we might use that. So, it all links together. We're in that early scoping phase at the moment.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is \$35 million a figure that will do the job, because that's all that's been allocated.

Mr GREGORY - Based on our feasibility study, we think that's an adequate allocation.

CHAIR - Thank you. I thank the officers who have been attending at the table, but I ask that you don't leave, because we're still in overview. We could come back if that is the committee's view, and bring MAST to the table, please. Is that okay?

Mr ROCKLIFF - So, we're still in overview?

CHAIR - We are.

Mr ROCKLIFF - So, I have to my left Lia Morris, CEO of Marine and Safety Tasmania.

CHAIR - Dr Woodruff, would you like to lead off?

Dr WOODRUFF - Thank you. Minister, fish farm debris has been such a problem in Tasmanian waters. It's a problem of plastic pollution, it's a problem washing up on coastlines around the state, and it's a real risk and concern for people on the water. You would have spoken numerous times by email to one valiant yachtie, Sheena O'Neill, who has been a trooper in this area, tirelessly bringing these issues to your attention. I want to follow up on some of the many things she's raised, along with other people of course. Just about the substantial weight and enormity of the plastic and rope that has been released by fish farms. Are you keeping some tally of rates and figures of the quantity and the weight of rubbish that's being produced?

Mr ROCKLIFF - So, for the detail of that question I'm happy to throw to Ms Morris. But I remember this discussion well in terms of the production of the salmon growth plan when I was minister for Primary Industries, and part of that was implementing a zero-tolerance approach to debris from marine farm leases as part of the sustainable industry growth plan.

The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment has authorised two Marine and Safety Tasmania officers under the Living Marine Resource Management Act 1995. Consistent with the appointment of all authorised officers, the department required MAST officers to be approved as authorised officers to complete the investigations skills course. This authorisation allows the MAST officers to monitor and respond to breaches in accordance with the DPIPWE procedures, where marine farm equipment is found outside marine-farm lease areas.

DPIPWE has briefed finfish companies on implementation of the zero-tolerance approach, which includes establishing deadlines for the universal adoption of best-practice tracking technologies for marine farm equipment, and simple ways to identify the source of debris. Not all debris of course is marine farm debris. We need to point that out as well. I am happy to talk a bit more about that.

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The compliance management approach to this debris has also changed. Each instance of marine farming equipment found out of area is investigated with a view to undertaking enforcement actions required. To date, MAST authorised officers have issued eight infringement notices under section 94 of the Marine Farming Planning Act 1995. The penalty for these breaches is four penalty units.

Dr WOODRUFF - \$157 a penalty unit.

Mr ROCKLIFF - Four, yes, that would total \$652.

Dr WOODRUFF - That is like hitting a rhino with a feather.

Mr ROCKLIFF - MAST receives reports of marine debris via phone, Facebook and email, where notice to mariners is issued to alert mariners of the dangers posed by debris if it is floating in the water.

The Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association has funded the establishment of a 24-hour hotline and mobile application for the reporting of marine debris in the state's waterways. The app allows people to lodge information directly from smartphones, including the GPS coordinates and photographs of debris. These systems have been established to streamline reporting and to ensure that swift action is taken.

Information reported through the hotline and app is sent to MAST and the marine farming branch of DPIPWE for collation and any necessary actions. Reports are also sent to the salmon company closest to the debris, so that it can be removed quickly. Of course, personal details of those reporting the debris is not sent to the salmon companies.

Do we have any information on tonnage, bearing in mind the debris is not all related to salmon companies or finfish companies?

Ms MORRIS - Just so we are clear, the marine farming side of things is regulated by DPIPWE, not MAST, so we come into play just in terms of the safety on the water.

I believe the marine farming branch is collating a central register of marine debris, so it might be something that needs to be directed to the appropriate minister. I know that the actual finfish farmers are collecting that data. Whether they are providing that to the marine farming branch I am not sure, but I know they are collecting it individually.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, the 1300 hotline: what happens when someone calls it, because the previous hotline went to a person interstate, and it was really just about taking a geographic location and nothing came of it? It was simply a recording exercise. What happens when someone picks the phone up when they are confronted with a piece of debris?

Ms MORRIS - It gets recorded by Tas Maritime Radio, or Golden Electronics who do the after-hours monitoring for Tas Maritime Radio, and the appropriate notifications are sent through, like the minister said.

Dr WOODRUFF - To the fish farms?

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Ms MORRIS - To the fish farmers, to MAST if it needs a notice to mariners issued, to Tas Maritime Radio if it is out of hours, and they can issue a notice to mariners or an alert via the radio. It was an issue, the previous 1300 number, and it was something that we raised with all the fish farmers to ensure that this time round it actually worked. It was a positive.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, does this get logged? It can be answered by different agencies, so where is the logging of somebody calling in and what they've called about?

Ms MORRIS - The reporting is collated by the app and the notifications are sent through.

Dr WOODRUFF - Sorry, is this for the hotline?

Ms MORRIS - That's also recorded. To date we have received, just ourselves, three notifications since the app went live on 30 April.

Dr WOODRUFF - How many phone calls have been made to the hotline?

Ms MORRIS - I'm unaware of those, I would have to take those on notice.

Dr WOODRUFF - You aware that Tas Maritime Radio is a volunteer-based organisation and they are doing the work of three large corporations with profit in the order of \$40 million to \$50 million a year. It seems incongruous that a volunteer-run organisation is expected to do the work of cleaning up and logging requests. Why can't fish farm companies fund this activity, and what is the benefit to Tas Maritime Radio? Are they given some money for their rent or heating? Are they receiving any money for the service they provide?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I will take that question on notice unless Ms Morris can answer?

Ms MORRIS - I'm unaware. That would have been under separate negotiations between TSGA and Tas Maritime Radio.

Mr O'BYRNE - TasPorts operate under a deed from Marine and Safety Tasmania. The deed governs safety and operations, et cetera. Could you outline the breaches they have acknowledged in the last year or so? That is concerning to the Tasmanian community regarding piloting services. Could you outline those breaches and the concerns you raised?

Ms MORRIS - As you are aware, we have the deed of agreement. It is a tripartite agreement between EPA, ourselves and TasPorts. Under that deed we delegate regulatory powers and functions to TasPorts. MAST audits TasPorts from our perspective on an annual basis. The last audit undertaken in August 2018 had four non-conformances.

One related to the critical organisational resourcing capacity to achieve the expected the whole-of-state response to a port or marine emergency. The findings were that TasPorts lacks sufficient resources to adequately meet this responsibility, including a failure to ensure an adequate number of staff were available to attend appropriate training. The second breach or non-conformance was in Tas Ports' employees exercising statutory responsibilities without written nomination to act as an authorised person in accordance with the instrument of appointment for authorised persons that we issue to them. The third non-conformance was that TasPorts, as a piloted service provider, has been unable to maintain the capacity of providing service throughout a 24-hour period on an on-call basis at a primary port. The fourth non-conformance was that TasPorts has reportedly sought to exercise

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regulatory powers in coastal areas outside those delegated to the company under the deed of agreement, and outside of the regulatory powers contained within the Marine and Safety (Pilotage and Navigation) Regulations.

Mr O'BYRNE - These are very serious breaches. Safety is a very serious issue. With the increase in cruise ships we saw an incident occur in Italy only a matter of days ago, which follows a number of incidents off the other side of coast of Italy, Sicily, if I remember correctly. An inability for TasPorts to respond to a marine emergency is probably one the most serious issues that could confront an island state. What measures are being taken to ensure these matters are addressed? When you find a non-compliance do you then, instead of doing a six-monthly or 12-monthly audit, do you change your procedures to ensure that rectification occurs?

Mr ROCKLIFF - Perhaps Ms Morris could answer the last part of the question. Any delay in the provision of piloted services is of serious concern. Safety must always be the first priority when managing vessel movements. Since these incidents occurred, TasPorts have taken action to secure the delivery of pilotage and marine navigation services. This includes revised protocols for the approval of leave to ensure there are appropriate staffing levels at all times and the announcement of recruitment of two additional pilots, which was recently announced by TasPorts. TasPorts takes its obligation to ensure safe port operations and the provision of pilot services extremely seriously. This recruitment is being conducted to ensure the company can meet its obligations under the deed of arrangement with MAST and that the shipping requirements of its customers. Under the deed TasPorts is required to provide dedicated pilotage services on a 24/7 basis at all primary ports around the state. TasPorts currently employs 11 pilots to provide this service, ensuring safe shipping navigation around Tasmania.

TasPorts will now employ an additional pilot to roster in the south and one in the north, providing additional security over the maintenance of 24/7 pilotage services to Tasmania. In addition to meeting TasPorts' obligations under the MAST deed and managing shipping movements in the state's ports, the additional pilot resources would assist in the management of leave balance and any fatigue issues for the pilot team. TasPorts noted in their announcement last week that there was a great diversity in the pilot services offered and increasing shipping movements in Tasmania, which supports the recruitment of the two additional pilots. In terms of the protocols since -

Mr O'BYRNE - When an incident of such a serious nature occurs, is there a change in audit process or review processes to ensure rectification?

Ms MORRIS - We always audit against the requirements under the deed of agreement. That's the process in terms of the audit. This year we have brought EPA in and an external third party. The board have requested that external third party be involved in the next audit. We have port audit meetings with TasPorts where we discuss these issues on a regular basis and our board has asked for more regular reporting in relation to the pilotage issue.

Mr O'BYRNE - Is MAST confident that enough steps have been taken to ensure safety in our waterways?

Ms MORRIS - I think the addition of two pilots will be a great step forward in ensuring that emergency response. In terms of MAST's obligations, it is the safety of the port operations. From our perspective, the pilotage issue was an issue from an emergency response position only. If something happened in the middle of the night, pilots were unavailable and we needed to get a vessel off a berth or to a berth, that's when we need to have the pilotages available.

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Mr O'BYRNE - These breaches occurred last year and it's now June the year after. That is a delay of over six months and they have only just announced extra pilots. Should we have been concerned about that? I know that they have done it now but that is a significant delay in recruitment given the breaches were identified last November.

Mr ROCKLIFF - The recruitment announced last week is, as Ms Morris said, a very good step forward. I'm not sure if you'd like to comment any further?

Ms MORRIS - The issue of pilotage is quite complex and my understanding is, from the reports we've received from TasPorts, that they have gone through a full review of the pilotage service. That takes a little bit of time and they have come back with the answer of an additional two pilot resources being required.

Mr O'BYRNE - Minister, since the breach, have you changed your regularity in terms of meeting and being briefed by TasPorts?

Mr ROCKLIFF - TasPorts? I have had a number of meetings with respect to TasPorts.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you have regular meetings with TasPorts?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have regular meetings. We continue to have regular meetings with TasPorts.

Mr O'BYRNE - Has the regularity of that changed?

Mr ROCKLIFF - They have been reasonably regular. We meet regularly.

CHAIR - I am going to give you the call, Dr Woodruff. The infrastructure staff have been here for a very long time, do members require them to stay? We will conclude at 6.09.

Mr O'BYRNE - That is all the questions I have of MAST but I have questions regarding Infrastructure.

Dr WOODRUFF - Minister, Mr Matsayek from South Hobart, Bruny Island and Ms Sheena Neill wrote to you last year and you responded to them. They wrote with regard to a number of things around marine debris. Their concern was that the goal of zero tolerance was in words only and it didn't have real substance to it. You wrote a response to their concerns and I want to check progress on a couple of those. You said that marine farming equipment identification registers have been supplied by finfish operators to the department to assist MAST in identifying the ownership of marine debris.

Mr ROCKLIFF - That would be the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

Dr WOODRUFF - It says to MAST.

Mr ROCKLIFF - You said the department before, sorry.

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Dr WOODRUFF - Sorry, you didn't write this letter. It was DPIPWE. My question is to you as the responsible minister for MAST. Is MAST doing any checking to make sure fish farm operators have undertaken to mark their debris as they are required to do? Is there a zero tolerance to them not marking and are those found in breach being fined?

Ms MORRIS - That is a requirement of the marine farming branch, which regulates marine farmers. It is not our requirement but we have been provided with documentation from the major companies as to how they are marking their equipment. My understanding is that not all equipment has not been marked at this point in time.

Dr WOODRUFF - This is the nub of the problem with marine debris in Tasmanian fish farms. There is this gap that always seem to fall in between who does the checking and who enforces the policy. You can't have a zero tolerance policy if you are not the person who does the enforcing. What is the role of MAST in making sure companies are doing what they are meant to be do? Are you riding the marine farming branch to make sure that information is provided? Minister, your job is to keep people safe on the water. There is still evidence that fish farm material is floating free and there is definitely evidence that is not marked. What are you doing to make sure that is happening so that it can be attributed and that zero tolerance approach can be enforced?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I thought the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment was the regulator and I am mindful that MAST has their responsibilities, which directly relate to me. The activities of MAST are the activities that I oversee.

Ms MORRIS - I can add some information. MAST does regular audits of the fish farms and we have a zero tolerance policy in relation to any issues we find outside the farm. Sometimes it is very obvious that it is relating to a particular farm, other times it is more difficult to prove because of the marking requirements. We have seen a vast improvement in ownership of the issue from the actual farmers themselves over the last six to eight months. Their progress in marking the equipment has been fairly rapid.

Dr WOODRUFF - Do you undertake an audit?

Ms MORRIS - We do we do mooring audits because we regulate mooring across the state. Any time we are out doing a mooring audit we will look at any nearby fish farms. We provide marking requirements to the marine farming branch in terms of how the leases are marked so we feel we have a duty of care to ensure those lease markers are in place with the right lighting requirements and in working order. We audit those, very much so.

Dr WOODRUFF - Through you, minister, what is the fine if they are not in place and is a fine given on spot fine like it would be for parking a car in the wrong place? Given that it is so dangerous for yachties or anyone else on the water if the lights aren't working or there aren't other mooring markers -

Ms MORRIS - For black and white matters, MAST go back to the office, document it and issue an infringement notice.

Dr WOODRUFF - Has that happened? Has there been fines for fish farm companies not having proper mooring, lighting and safety material?

Ms MORRIS - Yes, and lease markers not in the right place.

Dr WOODRUFF - People have been calling for lease boundaries to be marked properly, including static AIS beacons, making them visible to AIS equipped vessels in appropriate locations and notifying the Australian Hydrographic Service to display leases on official charts so sailors and other boaters from other areas they up to date charts. Making sure the navigation charts in Tasmania are updated regularly. Making sure pens undertow have an AIS attached to them so that boaters can determine where they are and whether it is safe to go around them. Have any of this happened, what is the progress on those things?

Ms MORRIS - Regarding the AIS marking of marine farms. We have had some initial discussions with the fish farmers on the Storm Bay expansion and the fact this is a highly trafficked area for larger vessels. AIS has been put on the table in relation this. There are some challenges with AIS as they need base stations to make them work properly and there is an issue depicting the AIS and the actual lease on an AIS plotter to join the dots. You would see actual dots on a map and our preference would be to have the lease boundaries very visible on the plotter.

We are in earlier discussion with the marine farming branch about the marking of Storm Bay and definitely AIS has been put on the table there. We have also raised the issue of the potential for the AIS marking on the leases on the D'Entrecasteaux Channel too because it can very confusing at night on the Huon.

Dr WOODRUFF - And the Huon.

Ms MORRIS - Yes.

Dr WOODRUFF - When is the expected completion of those conversations?

Ms MORRIS - They are in very early discussions at the moment because of the challenges AIS does provide. Technology is moving very fast and I sure we can come to a reasonable solution. Marking of the leases is a decision made by DPIPWE, not by us, we just provide them with advice.

Dr WOODRUFF - But it is true AIS is standardly used in commercial operation vessels. It is not that hard to make it happen it is just not the practice at the moment of the fish farm industry. It would be inconvenient to their business model but a little downward pressure and it could happen immediately if it had to. If there was a proper zero tolerance approach.

Ms MORRIS - Some information in regards to AIS: not all vessels can receive AIS data, very few recreational vessels have them. The individuals you have been talking to definitely do and the cruising yacht fraternity does, but the average recreational boater which is a 4.8 meter tinny does not have that facility. On our website, we have put the marine farms on our MAST GIS freely available to the recreational boater to be able to determine where the marine farm leases are.

Dr WOODRUFF - Safety is all about incremental improvement isn't it. Do what you can where you can.

CHAIR - Thank you, Dr Woodruff, I am mindful Mr O'Byrne has questions for infrastructure and we have only 10 minutes left. Thank you very much.

Mr O'BYRNE - A number of civil construction industry players have raised concerns about the next 12 to 18 months work being tendered. There is no doubt there is a range of jobs being

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worked on, for example the Perth bypass will finish early and there will be potentially a hole in the civil construction work over the next six to 12 months. What action are you taking to try to fill that? There are a number of jobs that are finishing and you have yet to decide on a number of tenders.

Mr ROCKLIFF - We have engaged the Civil Construction Federation. I am aware of some of their concerns, including the earlier completion expected of the Perth links project. For the coming 2019-20 financial year, investment in roads and bridges will further increase to \$323.5 million. So far this year there have been a total of nine tenders, approximately \$65 million. The construction of roads and bridges have either been awarded or are currently open for bids with a further 15 tenders, again approximately \$65 million, scheduled to be released in the next quarter. Of these 24 tenders, the release of three tenders were unavoidably delayed a month as a result of late identification of stakeholder and design issues. The availability of resources, both internal and external, to prepare projects for the market remains a critical constraint. To address the internal resourcing constraint, the department has issued a tender for the project management services and is packaging works to reduce the project management resourcing requirements. To date, four contracts have been awarded, including the Murchison Highway road improvements, the Arthur Highway Carlton River Bridge replacement and various bridge strengthening and sealing works.

When I look at the \$323.5 million of expenditure, it is approximately spread across the infrastructure program as follows: new construction or design and construction contracts is around \$130 million; continuing construction contracts, \$50 million; scoping, planning and design, \$30 million; maintenance activities, \$90 million; and strategic planning and other is around \$24 million.

Ms O'BYRNE - But you understand the hole in the middle?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I understand. There are currently five tenders open for bids, with a further six to be advertised before the end of June, and nine more scheduled for release through August to October 2019. To mitigate the impact of the resourcing constraints, as I spoke about before, the department is currently tendering for a panel contract for project management services. There has been considerable interest and we are optimistic that this process will enable us to supplement our current internal resources to deliver the 2019-20 and 2020-21 programs. In the coming months, some design consultancies will be tendered to the open market as a further measure to increase the pool of available resources. Both of these strategies will require broader reach beyond the local market. Another strategy for mitigation is the packaging of works for delivery through the existing panel consultancy to reduce the number of separate procurements and thus the project management resourcing requirements.

It should, however, be understood that where new projects which have not previously been worked on are announced through federal and state processes, there is an unavoidable project scoping phase that takes between 12 and 24 months before going to market with a design or design and construct contract. I am aware of the issues. I have met with the CCF in the last seven days. There is engagement between the department and the civil construction industry to see what might well be possible to ensure that any gap is mitigated to the extent that people can continually be employed. I will pass to Mr Swain to provide some more information on that.

Mr SWAIN - Broadly, last year, as the minister said, there were 29 contracts, \$124 million of new work. This year it is 24 contracts, just slightly less but bundled up, and \$130 million. It is

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broadly comparable. The case for individual businesses is that they have to make their own decisions about what to -

Mr O'BYRNE - Staffing and what they're able to - that is a major concern.

Mr SWAIN - That is at the macro level, but for individuals they will have to look at the jobs more individually to see what they will bid for. Overall, there is more work coming out this year in tenders than there was last year.

Mr O'BYRNE - But it is the next six or so months.

Mr SWAIN - We are aware of the issue that you raised with the Perth links.

Mr O'BYRNE - Given the importance to the industry and the last thing we would want is larger companies, although they have openly said they have a greater potential to smooth things out, but there are a whole lot of small subcontractors and others that feed into those larger contractors - given the request from your Treasurer to deliver on an efficiency dividend, will you agree to quarantining the resources and support for the civil construction industry and getting those tenders out the door and doing the work from any potential budget cuts?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I consider that line of work essential to maintain the momentum for getting money out the door or projects underway. I met with the CCF and I have met with the major civil contractor as well. We have set up a meeting with the Treasurer and TasWater because TasWater and Tasmanian Irrigation have big projects as well, including the State Growth projects. The Treasurer and I are engaged with the civil contracting industry and the department is engaged as well. I am mindful of that challenge; it is one that has been brought to the Treasurer's and my attention, which we take very seriously.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you agree then, in quarantining those resources from the budget cuts and the efficiency dividends which you will necessarily have to follow through with?

Mr ROCKLIFF - In delivering on our infrastructure program across the forward Estimates and getting the funding out the door, it's very important that we have the resources at that interface level with these civil contractors so we can insure that funding that we've committed to can flow out the door to infrastructure.

More broadly, State Growth and Treasury will work with agencies to find savings in key areas - travel advertising, consultants and the like. We are very mindful of the importance and we have this discussion today about the fact we have put more resources in this project management area over the last 12 months. I have no desire to reduce that resource at all.

Mr O'BYRNE - It shouldn't be a desire but surely you have a choice to make. You can either protect that resource from dividends or not.

Mr SWAIN - It is probably well understood by the committee but the issues are broader. The capital program that has been sponsored by the federal government is absolutely enormous. They are talking about a \$100 billion program, so quite aside from anything in this Budget about the efficiency dividends, we are already looking at trying to develop a more flexible delivery model because it is so hot for project managers and program managers across the eastern seaboard of

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Australia. We went to recruit nine or 10, we have recruited five or six, and we do need to think laterally about alternative delivery mechanisms because of the general market.

Mr O'BYRNE - Do you have a deputy chief of staff, or have you ever had a deputy chief of staff in your office?

Mr ROCKLIFF - I have had a deputy chief of staff.

Mr O'BYRNE - Have you got one now? I can see the wise heads behind you, shaking it off.

CHAIR - I advise that the time has now concluded for the examination of this area. I thank everyone for your attendance, I thank members and we will see the committee back tomorrow.

The committee adjourned at 6.09 p.m.