

# PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 - TRANSPORT AND THE ARTS

Friday 6 September 2024

Examination of proposed expenditure for the portfolio areas

## SPECIAL MINISTER OF STATE, ROADS, ARTS, MUSIC AND THE NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY, JOBS AND TOURISM

UNCORRECTED

The Committee met at 9:15.

### MEMBERS

Ms Cate Faehrmann (Chair)  
The Hon. Mark Banasiak (Deputy Chair)  
Ms Abigail Boyd  
The Hon. Susan Carter  
The Hon. Anthony D'Adam  
The Hon. Wes Fang  
The Hon. Stephen Lawrence  
The Hon. Cameron Murphy  
The Hon. Natalie Ward

### PRESENT

**The Hon. John Graham**, *Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism*

## **CORRECTIONS TO TRANSCRIPT OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS**

**Corrections should be marked on a photocopy of the proof and forwarded to:**

**Budget Estimates secretariat  
Room 812  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000**

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**The CHAIR:** Welcome, everybody, to the second hearing of the Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts inquiry into budget estimates 2024-2025. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of the lands on which we are meeting today. I pay my respects to Elders past and present, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales. I also acknowledge and pay my respects to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining us today. My name is Cate Faehrmann and I am the Chair of the Committee. I welcome Minister Graham and accompanying officials to this hearing.

Today the Committee will examine the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Special Minister of State, Roads, the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, and Jobs and Tourism. I ask everyone in the room to please turn their mobile phones to silent. Parliamentary privilege applies to witnesses in relation to the evidence they give today. However, it does not apply to what witnesses say outside of the hearing. I urge witnesses to be careful about making comments to the media or to others after completing their evidence. In addition, the Legislative Council has adopted rules to provide procedural fairness for inquiry participants. I encourage Committee members and witnesses to be mindful of these procedures. Welcome, Minister, and thank you for making the time to give evidence. All witnesses will be sworn prior to giving evidence. Minister, I remind you that you do not need to be sworn as you have already sworn an oath to your office as a member of Parliament.

**Mr JOSH MURRAY**, Secretary, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

**Ms TRUDI MARES**, Deputy Secretary, Greater Sydney, Transport for NSW, on former oath

**Ms CAMILLA DROVER**, Deputy Secretary, Infrastructure and Place, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

**Ms BRENDA HOANG**, Deputy Secretary, Finance, Technology and Commercial, Transport for NSW, on former affirmation

**Mr GRANT KNOETZE**, Executive Director, Customer Journey Planning, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

**Mr CRAIG MORAN**, Executive Director, Customer Journey Management, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

**Ms SALLY WEBB**, Deputy Secretary, Safety, Environment and Regulation, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

**Mr BERNARD CARLON**, Chief of Centre for Road Safety, Chief of Centre for Maritime Safety, Transport for NSW, affirmed and examined

**Mr MARK HARE**, Acting Deputy Secretary and General Counsel, the Cabinet Office, affirmed and examined

**Mr MICHAEL RODRIGUES**, 24-Hour Economy Commissioner, sworn and examined

**Ms ANNETTE PITMAN**, Chief Executive, Create NSW, affirmed and examined

**Mr STEVE COX**, Chief Executive Officer, Destination NSW, affirmed and examined

**Dr MICHAEL BRAND**, Director, Art Gallery of New South Wales, affirmed and examined

**Ms LISA HAVILAH**, Chief Executive Officer, MAAS Trust, affirmed and examined

**Ms MARY DARWELL**, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Museums of History NSW, affirmed and examined

**Ms EMILY COLLINS**, Head, Sound NSW, affirmed and examined

**The CHAIR:** Today's hearing will be conducted from 9.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. We are joined by the Minister for the morning session from 9.15 a.m. until 1.00 p.m., with a 15-minute break at 11.00 a.m. In the afternoon we will hear from departmental witnesses from 2.00 p.m. to 5.30 p.m., with a 15-minute break at 3.30 p.m. During these sessions there will be questions from the Opposition and crossbench members only and then 15 minutes allocated for Government questions at 10.45 a.m., 12.45 p.m. and 5.15 p.m. We will begin with questions from the Opposition.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, welcome. It is good to see someone who appreciates the importance of estimates here—an enthusiastic person in opposition. We welcome your attendance today.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I turned up early.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, what is New South Wales's unemployment rate?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The unemployment rate at the moment in New South Wales is 4 per cent. It is a little bit lower than the unemployment rate across the country. That's good news but, of course, we are concerned about the fact that it's a difficult economic time at the moment. There's no question that businesses are under pressure in New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Certainly. What is the underemployment rate in New South Wales?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There is certainly a question about whether unemployment is under-reported. That is one of the issues that does come up, where people are—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Just the number. It's just a number.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't have that number here, but there's certainly an issue with people wanting to work more hours.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I might help you out. New South Wales's underemployment rate sits at 6.1 per cent. Is that acceptable to you?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As I was saying before you asked your question, we're certainly concerned that businesses are under pressure; and when businesses are under pressure, then jobs are under pressure. That is a concern. I will say that unemployment rate and the number you've quoted for underemployment are historically low compared to the long-term averages, but it's still of concern and it is still rising under pressure, given the economic issues.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Going to that, then, as jobs Minister, I'm interested in the specific role you play in the Government when it comes to jobs growth. Can you list the initiatives that you have personally implemented as jobs Minister which have delivered on that jobs growth that we need in New South Wales?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You've started off by asking about the macro-economic figures for the country. The Federal Government—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I asked about New South Wales.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. The Federal Government has a key role to play in those macro-economic settings. When it comes to State levers that can be used to shape jobs, they're very much about investment and very much about working with the companies we've got in the State.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can you speak to the initiatives you've personally implemented as jobs Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Some of the programs are, for example, the Jobs Plus Program, which is rolling out. I've certainly met with key companies in the State to talk to them about their investment plans and their employment plans for the State. We're also in the course of setting up sector plans for a range of sectors. I'm happy to go through those in some detail with you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So we've got some plans and you've had some conversations. That's helpful. But which of those initiatives are actually delivering jobs growth right now?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Let me take you through some of those. Obviously, the Jobs Plus Program is a specific intervention tied to specific jobs numbers. A range of those discussions with key employers have been very much about their plans to bring employment to New South Wales or to grow employment. When it comes to the sector—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm interested in the jobs numbers, though. What are the jobs for Jobs Plus? What are those numbers?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can get you some of those details. Let me talk to you about how the program works. There are specific investments and they're tied to specific employment numbers for these firms.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Let's get to those numbers, though. We don't have a lot of time; the clock is ticking. Can we get to those numbers?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can certainly get you those numbers. These are detailed arrangements with each of the firms. The way the program works is to have a specific investment into a firm tied to certain milestones for job payments.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But what job numbers are we looking at for each of those initiatives? Is it an advocacy role? Are there set numbers? What are the targets? What are the jobs numbers that you are driving on this?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They are very specific numbers. These are tied to specific job numbers.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What are they?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They vary for each firm.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Let's start with one.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We'll get you that just now. But these are tailored for each firm. They're tied to specific jobs growth. They're tied to particular initiatives.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Surely, as the Minister, you should know these jobs numbers. That would be an important thing, and you're clearly concerned about it. You would know how many jobs you've created.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I've been briefed on them in detail, and I'm very happy to run through some of that detail here with you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How many jobs have you created?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's a superficial question and a fundamental misunderstanding about the traditional role in New South Wales that we've seen in job creation. This has been one of the arguments we've had with other States over time, and that both my side of politics and your side of politics has advocated for. In New South Wales, our view is to get the fundamental settings right—the planning system, the economic conditions and the regulatory system—and then allow that to have jobs grow, tailored with some specific job interventions such as the Jobs Plus Program. That's one example. Or my colleague Anoulack Chanthivong—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. We'll get to that. Now you've got the piece of paper, we're interested, Minister, in how many jobs you've created. We don't want your role to be superficial. This is all about other people's jobs, Minister. We want to know the numbers that have been created through these initiatives—practical numbers.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** What I'm indicating is that's a fundamental misunderstanding of the settings, under your Government and our Government, about the way jobs are created in New South Wales. It is not the result of a single Minister pulling levers. It's about the planning settings, the economic settings and the regulatory settings—getting those right and then allowing jobs to grow. Historically, we haven't taken that detailed intervention except where there is a real case for intervention. That is the case with Jobs Plus and it is the case with a range of the programs that Minister Chanthivong is raising.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Let's talk about those interventions, then, and one of those that the Government seems to have put in place. It seems to me that they are all high-level things, but we're interested in very practical initiatives in these. The recent Jobs First Commission media release, issued by Ministers Houssos, Chanthivong and Whan, left you out. We're just wondering why you weren't included in that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There are only so many Ministers you can fit on the one release, is one way to put it.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You're the jobs Minister, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I am a supporter of that project. Without going into the Cabinet deliberations, I've certainly been involved in discussions.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** A media release has gone out announcing this Jobs First Commission. It's very important. You're the jobs Minister. Are you not up to the job, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think you might have written that question before my answers. I won't respond to that, but can I give you some specific job figures here? This is a bit of a snapshot of where Jobs Plus is up to. For example, 52 projects approved and 53 agreements in place. The current projects at the moment are expected to support 12,278 jobs. Some 4,317 of those will be direct and 7,961 will be indirect.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Are they new jobs?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. These are jobs that these firms are expected to deliver above—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sorry, new jobs created?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. Spot on. They're expected to deliver above their ordinary business.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Great. Which industries are they in?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's a range of industries.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Small bars?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No, not to my knowledge. There are no small bars under the program. There's quite a wide range of industries here. It was generally applicable to the economy.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which ones?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can get you some of that detail. The point I want to stress, though, is here's a specific intervention that is part of the toolkit, but overall, the New South Wales approach has been very much focused—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can you name the industries, Minister? You're the jobs Minister. You've got these industries. What are they?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** A number of these are in the tech sector. A number of these have been in the screen sector. A number of them have also been—I know some of them have moved then into some of the broader—I think there some primary industries ones, but we'll get to those specifics during the hearing.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** My colleagues will be pleased about those. Which part of the tech sector? The tech sector is obviously very broad. Which part of the tech sector?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm very happy to get you the specifics during the hearing. We'll come back to you with some real details about exactly who is getting it.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That would be very helpful.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** But I do want to stress—don't get distracted by specific intervention.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It would be good if you could answer the question.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The overall Jobs focus here is about getting the settings right. I think you would have seen the focus the Government's had on changing the planning rules and changing some of the regulatory settings for business. That is a key part of the jobs approach of this Government.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, it's your job as jobs Minister. We thought that you would be ready and enthusiastic about telling us the numbers, the industries and what you're doing. It sounds like it's a lot of talk and a lot of consultation but not a lot of on-the-ground practical delivery of jobs. Let's get those specifics. That would be good.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's not how I would describe more than 12,000 jobs. Given the current economic pressures that people are under, I think that's not an appropriate comment that you're making.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I think it's appropriate that we have specifics on where that is so we can have some hope in New South Wales. This is your new industry and your priority as jobs Minister. I'll move on. What is your definition, Minister, of "local content" as it relates to the Jobs First Commission?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think the local content provisions have been spelt out by other Ministers who are responsible for those. That issue has already come up in estimates. It's spelt out in the budget. I would direct you to the budget papers.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm interested in your definition. You're the jobs Minister and it's your Jobs First Commission. What's your definition of "local content"?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'd direct you to the budget papers, as I was saying before you—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Whereabouts? Which page?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As it refers, for example, to the investments in local rolling stock. As I was about to say before you interrupted, the definition of that is—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I don't think I've interrupted. I've been very well behaved today, actually.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's all relative.

**The CHAIR:** That's true.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** "Before you move to your next question" is perhaps a better way to put it. The definition of that is Australia-wide—I think Australia and New Zealand, if I'm correct, although I'm happy to be corrected by the team.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Do you consider a New Zealand-based enterprise to be a local business?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That is the definition in the budget. I'm directing you to the definition in the budget. The Government's commitments are clear, and I think it would be fair to say the reason the Government has those commitments is clear. The procurement under the previous Government—without going into all the details here—clearly caused some major issues. We're still waiting for some of those key projects to deliver. It has been a major challenge for this Government to get those projects procured under your Government into the country and up and running.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Let's talk about that. Are we talking about jobs in Australia or jobs in New South Wales? That is unclear. Are you interested, as jobs Minister, in jobs in New Zealand?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Here's my answer to that question. The reason why the Government's got the local procurement approach it does is that it is appropriate, given the scale of the Government's capital expenditure here, that we look to what the jobs impact is. It is significant. You can spend that money and actually boost local jobs at the same time.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You're spending the money in New Zealand.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** However, it also matters that we don't act in a way that really stops the very successful export businesses in New South Wales. There is a balance to be struck there. What we don't want is Victoria stopping New South Wales businesses from exporting to there. We certainly don't want—under the closer economic arrangements with New Zealand—to produce punitive action from the New Zealand Government. That would actually set back the very successful exporting businesses in New South Wales.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Are more jobs in New South Wales—

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's the philosophical reason for the policy settings that you're questioning.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I understand. Are more jobs in New Zealand part of your remit as jobs Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If you're suggesting that we—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's in the Jobs First Commission on the website.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If you're suggesting that we stop trading with New Zealand and produce—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No, I'm interested in your role as jobs Minister and your Jobs First Commission.

**The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY:** Point of order: Chair, I've let a few of these go, but the Minister is attempting to answer and the honourable member keeps firing off another subsequent question and a snipe here or there. As a matter of fairness, the Minister should be given sufficient time to answer before the next question comes.

**The Hon. CHAIR:** At this point I uphold the point of order, but also say that I won't uphold every point of order that is called if the member is genuinely trying to get an answer and the Minister just keeps talking—which can happen, I have noticed, with all Ministers—to avoid the next question. We are aware of that tactic. I uphold the point of order.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, according to Jobs and Skills Australia statistics, south-west Sydney's unemployment rate sat at 5.2 per cent, which is above the 4 per cent New South Wales State average. What funding has been allocated in the 2024-25 budget to specifically address these higher unemployment rates across south-west Sydney?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I direct your attention to the budget papers, where there's an excellent—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Where? What page?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Well, the section specifically on Western Sydney.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The specific funding is where, in the budget, for south-western Sydney?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's very specifically set out—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Where?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's not in that budget paper you're holding; it's in the supplement that follows in the Western Sydney statement. I direct your attention to, for example, the funding—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How much is it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If you turn to the page—just find the page there.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You're the jobs Minister; you tell me. It's your budget.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm directing you to where it is. If you turn, for example, to the Campbelltown page in the budget paper that you've got there—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So tell us what the number is.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You've got it in front of you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. You tell me. You're the jobs Minister. You're on the big bucks. You've got thousands of people here. Someone can look up the number somewhere. You're the jobs Minister. How much has been allocated to south-western Sydney?

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Somebody must be able to pass the Minister a note.



**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Someone get on the text.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We'll certainly be happy to provide that and run through it for you in some detail, but it's sitting there in the budget.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But it's your job, Minister. It's your job. You're the jobs Minister. It's your job to know. We have this very clear rate of 5.2 per cent—that is high. What funding has been allocated in your budget to address this?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, I want to recognise that the rate is higher in south-west Sydney.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So where's the funding?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's sitting in the budget papers—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How much is it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —spelt out in detail.

**The Hon. STEPHEN LAWRENCE:** Point of order: There have been about four questions on this point. The Minister has made his position crystal clear, and it's really just badgering at this point.

**The CHAIR:** I won't uphold the point of order. I think there is a fair amount of questioning in this way that is allowed during budget estimates. I think it has been pretty civil. I just remind the member to at least try to allow the Minister to answer the question.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Certainly. Minister, specifically what programs has the New South Wales Government initiated since its election to bring south-western Sydney's unemployment rate back down closer to the State average?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Let me run you through some of the examples. Here is one example: the \$550 million we put into Fairfield Hospital, the \$60 million we put into the Western Sydney Freight Line—into the business case for that; the \$110.2 million that is set out in the budget papers for the M7-M12 interchange. There's a range of—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How many jobs will those initiatives create?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can get those for you. It varies, instance to instance. In Liverpool, for example—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But you're the jobs Minister. On those projects, surely you would be asking, "How many jobs are we getting? We're investing \$550 million. What are we getting for that? How many jobs are we creating?"

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, and we have all those figures. We can get them for you. There's no problem with providing those during the estimates process. We'll have those for you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But you just referenced them. Surely you've got the jobs numbers there.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You asked me for specifics; let me give you some of them. Liverpool—\$780 million, for example, in the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct. On the Roads side, \$65 million for planning for south-west Sydney roads. Of course, there's Heathcote Road—rolling out a \$183 million project.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. But for each of those, how many jobs will result for south-western Sydney?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can get you those specifics. Of course, \$25 million for the Eastern Ring Road and Badgerys Creek South—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, how many jobs does planning create?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We are talking here about thousands of jobs. I've just run through a small number of the initiatives, but let me talk to you about Campbelltown—the page I was directing you to in the budget papers in front of you. Here are just the transport initiatives, but there are others as well: \$45 million for St Johns Road being upgraded at the intersection—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure, but how many jobs?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We'll get you the jobs numbers specifically for these.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I don't need you to read the budget out. I've got the budget; I can read it. I want to know how many jobs, because it doesn't list in there what has been created for this spend. How many jobs will you create this financial year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As I was running through—you asked me about the specific projects. I'm running through the specific projects. You're now interrupting. I directed you to the specific budget paper in front of you. You've refused to crack open the budget.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But my question—Minister, it's not a laughing matter. These are jobs and a huge expenditure, and no-one can seem to tell me. Can anyone say how many jobs have been created out of this spend? That's all we want to know. You're the jobs Minister. It's your job to create jobs. How many jobs will you create this financial year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Ms Ward, your first accusation was that I couldn't name any projects; now you're not letting me run through the projects which the Government is running through.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You've run through them, but I've asked specifically, a number of times, how many jobs come out of those. That is what we would like to know.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** And now I am saying we will be able to provide those jobs numbers for you—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You can't tell us.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —for these projects. The scale of the work that is going on is a challenge here—the scale of the work and the number of jobs that are being driven by these projects.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Surely you're asking, Minister? "I'm the jobs Minister. I want to know, for all these initiatives, how many jobs are we creating? South-western Sydney is worse off. We want to know what we're doing for this spend. How many jobs are coming out of it?" Surely someone can send you a message or pass a piece of paper saying that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Let me give you some more examples. The \$79 million that's going into the Campbelltown Arts Centre project—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, how many jobs?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —will be a significant boost there.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How many jobs?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can certainly get you projected jobs numbers for something like that. I've been out to talk to the team there, and it will have a very significant boost to the project.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Talk is cheap, with respect, Minister; jobs matter to these people in south-western Sydney. How many jobs will you create this financial year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think that's a very dismissive way to discuss these particular projects.

**The CHAIR:** Order! That is the Opposition's time. Minister, in budget estimates in February this year, you said that the difficulties our music festival scene was facing was a national problem. But you said it was more of a problem in New South Wales. You acknowledged that one of the things that is contributing is that the costs that are being applied to festivals are out of step with costs elsewhere. What have you done in the last almost seven months to fix this?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, I think I may have said it's an international problem, a national problem, but also we accept it's worse here in New South Wales. It's worse here in New South Wales because of some of the specific regulatory and cost pressures we've had here in New South Wales. I think that is broadly accepted and it is something that the Government wants to change. There are two focuses: firstly, landing that Musical Festivals Act review, and secondly, tackling some of those cost pressures that festivals are under. On both of those, I do expect the Government will be able to say something publicly shortly.

**The CHAIR:** This was seven months ago. Again, in that budget estimates you said that you were examining the evidence and that the results would be released shortly. It is now 6 September. They are still not released. Everybody is planning their festivals—indeed, the festivals that have managed to survive are very much underway. Police are still charging through the roof. There is no relief, really, I would suggest, for festivals this summer because everything is being locked in now.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think it is accurate to say that the Government hasn't announced its position on either the review or the costs. I don't think it's accurate to say that that means there will be no relief before summer. On both of those, the Government is planning to act—planning to release its position. I expect to do that imminently. But I accept there is an issue. I accept that we have to deal with both those issues: the regulatory environment to make sure it's supportive of the festivals we've got—the festivals that have survived—and also the cost pressures that festival operators are under.

**The CHAIR:** When I asked the police Minister about user costs policing charges during budget estimates last week, she said that she had been working with you specifically in relation to festivals. What have you been working over with the police Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Those two things have been the focus: the regulatory environment and the costs.

**The CHAIR:** So, can music festivals in this State expect a reduction in police costs any time soon?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Those questions are best directed to the police Minister.

**The CHAIR:** She said she has been working closely with you. I'm now here. You're the music Minister. You would have seen today's *The Sydney Morning Herald*, where yet another festival is saying that they are close to not being able to operate because of the charges that are being laid on them compared to other States. Yet again, we've got Mode—this is Mode Festival on Cockatoo Island, with an art festival as well. In Victoria, the police don't charge a cent. Here, for exactly the same festival, they charge more than \$50,000 for the presence of 30 police officers. Do you think that is fair?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I've seen those individual reports about the Mode Festival, and I've seen evidence from touring festivals who are operating in Queensland, New South Wales and in Victoria. Some of those costs clearly are higher in New South Wales. I couldn't put a different case to you. Those are the facts that are being presented.

**The CHAIR:** It's a bit groundhog day for us, isn't it, Minister? Every budget estimates you are appearing before this Committee and I'm asking you about the costs of festivals, and you're saying that you are working on it and they will be reduced. It's still going on. We've had dozens, probably; at least more than 12 festivals have closed, who've said they won't be running because of costs—obviously, cost of living as well, but these costs are adding to the ticket prices. It's a substantial addition. It's one thing that you can do something about.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I would say that it's costs, and cost of living. It's both the rising cost of putting on a festival, the falling Australian dollar, and the rising costs of freight. Clearly, there is a case that's been made by the industry about government charges, including user charges, contributing to that. Also, the rising cost of living is dropping audiences. All three of those things are a problem. That's why we need to look both at the regulatory settings, but also at the cost base for those festivals.

**The CHAIR:** So in terms of the regulatory setting, the Australian Festivals Association has got a petition out at the moment to reform this regulatory environment—the whole idea of the subject festival, which isn't the case in any other State or Territory. Nowhere else do we get this, basically, treating some festivals are though they are more dangerous. Mode Festival, again, on Cockatoo Island—late 20-somethings heading over, curated with art. I mean, surely, that is just ridiculous. You are the Minister in charge of this. You've sat on this review for many, many months. Can you commit today that festivals are going to see a huge relief and a reduction in costs from you and from your Government in the next month?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We will be releasing the review, is my expectation, in the next month. That is required in order to meet the commitments that the Government has made to deal with this issue before summer. Absolutely, that is the timeline we are working to. The goals here, just to remind you, are to take that Act and really make it supportive of festivals. And it should be health focused. That was the original intent of the festivals Act; that is one of the things that the review has focused in on, making sure that it continues to be a health-focused regime. But I do want to stress, even if we make the regulatory environment more supportive, festivals are still under major cost pressure caught between those two dynamics: the costs, and cost of living.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, you are aware, though, in terms of festivals, the same festivals that are operating in Queensland and in Victoria—the same festival operates in New South Wales. They are not deemed subject festival. They are just as safe, if not safer, in fact, than here in New South Wales. So it's the very definition of "subject festival", the fact that these festivals have to pay ballooning costs for paramedics and for medical services. Yes, there has to be some, and that exists in the other States. But they don't have to pay, probably, in the vicinity of another \$80,000, sometimes \$100,000 more than in other States, because of this ridiculous law that deems some festivals subject festivals. Are you going to commit to scrapping that ridiculous law?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Here is one of the contradictions in the law at the moment in New South Wales. We don't ask for a health plan, for a safety plan, from every festival. We do from some festivals, and that is certainly a concern to me. Each of these festivals should be planning to make sure there are health arrangements in place.

**The CHAIR:** Does that mean you are going to increase the regulatory environment for all the other festivals as well?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. We are working closely with the industry to make sure that this is a health-focused plan. But that is one of the contradictions in the way the existing program is set up. We will continue to work through those. It is the case that good festivals will be planning to make sure they keep people safe. We will be working closely with, particularly, the health agencies. One of the things that is clear is that we have a safer environment as a result, today.

**The CHAIR:** I don't think that is clear, Minister. I don't think that is clear that we have a safer environment as a result today. Have you compared New South Wales music festivals to the exact same festivals as they operate in Queensland and Victoria? They still have the medical tents. They still have the paramedics. They still have a few police officers and security, but they don't have the heavy-handed, over-the-top police presence with the dogs as much as we do. They avoid the ridiculous user-pays policing charges that the police charge themselves—they chose—of \$80,000, \$100,000, \$120,000. But in most cases, they are potentially safer, if not maybe as safe. Have you done that work? Because you're just saying, "They keep people safe," but that is based on no data whatsoever.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** This is certainly an issue that the review addresses. We should release that review for you to make a detailed judgement about that work. But certainly I have found it really useful. In particular, what I was referring to was the fact that previously there was no dialogue between the festival industry and the agencies of government. The fact there is now a Festival Roundtable, the fact there is a dialogue, has absolutely improved safety in New South Wales. That particular intervention has been important.

**The CHAIR:** I think people want more than dialogue, Minister. They want action. My time is up. Mr Banasiak.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Minister, after 15 long years Oasis have finally announced they are getting back together, with potential rumours of an Australian tour. They once said, "All the roads that lead you there are winding". Are you hoping that one of those roads lead them to New South Wales?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They would certainly be welcome in New South Wales. Can I give you this small fact? February was the biggest month ever for hotels in New South Wales, even with more capacity, partly off the back of the Pink and Taylor Swift tours coming through, on top of Mardi Gras—

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Don't look back in anger! Answer his question.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** That's right. Are you going to be the one that saves me from missing out on Oasis live?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Having these big acts through is a real boost to the visitor economy in New South Wales.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Minister, if you do deliver that, I'm sure you'll be many people's *Wonderwall*. Minister, on to some serious questions—

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I thought those were the serious questions.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** They might be. Can I go to regional—or road safety in general. You made a joint announcement with Minister Aitchison outlining your plan to partner up with 10 regional councils over the next 18 months to accelerate safer speed reviews for towns and villages on high-risk routes. Which regional towns are going to get that focus?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, we are looking at those. This is consistent with the work of the former Government, but we are rolling it out in a range of communities and we are looking at those speed reviews, working through with councils to make changes where it does have a big impact on local road safety. I will defer to Bernard as to whether we are in a position to detail the programs in regional areas. Obviously, my colleague Minister Aitchison is dealing with those, but if we've got some information here for you today, I'd be happy for us to run through it.

**BERNARD CARLON:** This is a part of the ongoing speed zone review program with councils. Essentially, in the regional areas last year we saw a significant increase—an unprecedented increase, really—in

the level of urban fatalities in country urban areas across New South Wales. We've already seen some councils come forward—Cootamundra, Bathurst, a range of councils who've come forward suggesting and requesting support in review of their speed zones in their town centres.

We have around 1,000 towns and villages around regional New South Wales that don't have any speed zones that are below 50, so there's a substantial opportunity for reducing the risk, particularly for pedestrian fatalities.

We know that there is a 90 per cent chance a pedestrian will survive a crash at 30 kilometres an hour and that the difference between 40 kilometres an hour and 50 is double the chance of actually being killed in a crash, as a pedestrian, with a vehicle. We know that, over the years, the introduction of the 40-kilometre, high-pedestrian-activity areas—a comprehensive evaluation showed that, in fact, those high-pedestrian-activity areas eliminated pedestrian fatalities in those locations. We're working with those councils who are coming forward. There's a program to accelerate the support for local regional councils, and we'd be happy to provide, on notice, the details of those councils that have come forward.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** While I have you there, Mr Carlon, during the Transport estimates the other day, it was alluded that the Centre for Road Safety and the Centre for Maritime Safety share a budget or share funding. I'm just wondering whether you could indicate what your portion of that funding is?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Just to be clear, from a budget perspective, the Centre for Road Safety resources staff program that implements the New South Wales Road Safety Action Plan is fully funded by the Community Road Safety Fund, and the programs coordinated, managed and delivered by the Centre for Maritime Safety are fully funded by the Waterways Fund.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** The information I was given the other day was perhaps incorrect, in that you share a funding allocation.

**BERNARD CARLON:** Those roles, like my own—I work on both. There's internally, of course, an allocation of resources for particular projects and programs where people would be allocated to delivery of a Waterways-related fund project or a road safety project. We can clarify that in response, if you like.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Minister, a few months ago the multicultural consultant at the State Library retired. Is the State Library going to hire a new person for this position to continue to provide those great multicultural services that they provide, or are you looking at a different structure?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm not aware of the operational detail. I think we're happy to get an official to talk to that, if they're here. I've certainly seen the work they're doing for myself down in the library, as it turns out, and it is incredible. From a Government point of view, I'm highly supportive of the work that's going on, but that detail is probably an operational matter for the library.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** We don't have anyone from the library here?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. They were not, I think, called as a witness. Perhaps I can take that on notice for you and we'll get you an answer.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Minister, if we look at the Create NSW policy, there seems to be a fairly strong focus on the contemporary, commercial side of music, and it's been put to me by constituents that there is a distinct lack of focus on more classical music and, in particular, a lot of our smaller organisations. A lot of people come through learning more classical music before they move to contemporary. Is there that unbalanced view, in your mind, in terms of that policy perspective? Are you solely focusing on contemporary music and neglecting classical music?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll answer that at two levels. Firstly, at a top level, I don't accept that it's particularly a focus on commercial music. We have unapologetically moved from a focus on just supporting the incredible cultural institutions from the State and the narrow arts sector to the creative industries, and that is much broader than music. It obviously involves literature, screen, and as far abroad as creative tech. On music specifically, we are absolutely supporting both sorts. There is specific funding for contemporary music, but one of the good things is that that has allowed us to move that out of traditional funding streams—for example, what is called the ACFP funding—and enabled more money to flow back into, for example, classical music, opera and some of those more traditional forms. So it has actually has been good news on both fronts.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** One of the concerns that has been raised with me from some of the smaller grassroots organisations is the increasing hire cost for venues for them to rehearse. I know you mentioned the Campbelltown Arts Centre, and that's one that's been raised with me. There have been quite a few organisations that have had to move out of there and find venues elsewhere because the hire cost is not financially viable. Have

you turned your mind to how you are going to help those smaller grassroots organisations deal with those ever-increasing hire costs for venues? If they can't rehearse and they can't perform, they don't exist.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Spot-on. It is a real challenge at the moment with rising costs. There are a couple of different focuses. Firstly, sometimes we are creating new spaces or really refurbishing, with public support, new spaces, and you have referred to one of those at Campbelltown. Secondly, we are really looking at some funds and logistical support for activating the venues that we do have. The small halls network, for example, across regional New South Wales used to be incredibly important, and activating it is crucial. One of the key levers to do that is a real focus on touring. We are looking at what we can do to help arts agencies or music groups, whether it's contemporary or classical, really move between those venues some more. So there will be an increasing focus on that.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Would you agree, though, some of these organisations are not designed for going on tour, like a band or such. They are really grassroots. They are teaching kids how to pick up an instrument and play and probably giving them their first experience performing in front of a live audience, albeit they're probably parents.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Cynical!

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I have been there! I have suffered through it! Those costs are becoming prohibitive. They are not able to actually give those kids that opportunity. It is not a case of them going on tour and travelling between venues; they need a stable venue that's reasonably priced.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's why I raised that second point: Activating the spaces we have got is really crucial. Also, we need to work with councils to help keep costs down. A range of these are council venues, often for the groups you're talking about.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I just have one procedural issue and then I will hand to my colleague. Minister, earlier, in answering some questions, you said, very helpfully, "We will get back to you." By that, did you mean you will get back to us today or that you would be taking that on notice? You would appreciate, from the procedural aspect of this Committee, that it's important.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Obviously, we covered some ground. Which specific issue were you referring to?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** We just want to clarify, procedurally. For those questions where you said, "We'll get that to you," do you want to clarify if you will get that to us today or if that's something you will take on notice?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** In general, I will take it on notice and we'll respond through the formal process. I am certainly aiming to provide some additional information on the jobs side of things during the course of the hearing.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** By leave, I table a printout of the front page of the Noël Sydney website, which was downloaded yesterday.

**Document tabled.**

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You will see that Noël Sydney has its sights set on a grander, brighter Christmas festival in 2024. Are you here today to announce the return of Noël Sydney this year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I would certainly be interested to see the information from Noël Sydney.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I think it's about to be handed to you. You will see that the website announces that it's "set on a grander, brighter Christmas festival in 2024". When can we expect the commencement date of Noël Sydney 2024?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As a big supporter of Christmas, I am excited to receive this news. This is probably not at the level of detail we need to assess an investment—the short two paragraphs that I have in front of me.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It's your website, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** But I would be excited to receive a submission in return for funding. I will make it clear—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, it's your website, your decision. Has there been a problem with discussions with "Mr & Mrs Claus" that are flagged on this website, with the "elves in the workshop and the reindeers in logistics"? Have those discussions gone badly so you can't announce it today?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm happy to receive any submissions from "Mr & Mrs Claus" or any of the elves in relation to this matter.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It's your announcement on your website. Or are they another union which has rejected your 10.5 per cent pay rise so they won't be turning up this year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm certainly open to receiving any more details about it.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much money did you have to refund to the commercial sponsor of the second, cancelled drone show at Vivid this year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Sorry, the second, cancelled drone show?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The second, cancelled drone show at Vivid this year. How much money did you have to refund to the commercial sponsor?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think you're referring to the third drone show at Vivid.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Apologies. The show that was cancelled. How much did you have to refund?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As people would be aware, the decision was made to cancel the third drone show at Vivid due to the weather conditions at the time. That was a decision I supported on safety grounds.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the refund, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I was informed at the time or just shortly before, particularly having seen the reports—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the refund, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —about hundreds of drones collapsing into the Yarra River down in Melbourne during another incident.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Thank you, Minister. The question related to how much did you have to refund to the commercial sponsor of the drone show because of the cancellation?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** On the issue of any question about the refund, I'm not aware if there was or was not a refund. I'd be happy to ask Steve Cox from Destination NSW to come forward.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps you could take that on notice and it can be provided later today.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Or do you want to ask Steve this afternoon in the session? That's probably the appropriate way to deal with it.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I will do that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** But it certainly hasn't come to my attention.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The 2024 drone show was 10 minutes long. The last three minutes was occupied by an advertisement for season three of *Bridgerton*. Was this an appropriate sponsor for a family-friendly event?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** What I can say is that drone shows have been very, very popular.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Was the sponsor appropriate for a family-friendly event?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't have a strong view. I'd encourage you to perhaps discuss that with Steve Cox in the afternoon.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But you don't have a view about that at all, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I respect the fact that you're raising it with me now, but it isn't an issue I've had members of the public contact me about or have had raised before.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much did you charge Netflix for that *Bridgerton* promotion?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Again, that's really an operational question rather than a Government policy question, so best directed to—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you don't know where the sponsorship money then was spent?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. I've certainly discussed with Vivid the overall sponsorship levels and I've been keen to make sure that, for example, they're appropriately supported. Part of that is what they can raise through sponsorships. But for that level of detail, I think you're more appropriate to talk to Destination NSW.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It would have gone into subsidising other Vivid events, would it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Certainly, Vivid is organised by Destination NSW, heavily backed by this Government and heavily backed by the former Government, I might add. But those commercial partnerships in addition are of assistance to make sure that it's the best Vivid it can be, and it was very, very popular—biggest opening night ever at this Vivid in 2024.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It may have been the biggest opening night but, as you would be aware, numbers were down. In fact, Vivid 2024 had the lowest number of free events in the past seven years. Is this your Government's response to a cost-of-living crisis?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It was the third most popular Vivid ever and the biggest opening night on record.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** With the lowest number of free events. Is your Government's response to a cost-of-living crisis having more paid events for families at Vivid?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As I wandered around, I gained the impression Vivid was bigger than ever. Certainly that balance between free events and paid events is one that I will be keeping a close eye on. I'd encourage you to talk to Destination NSW.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you didn't keep a close eye on it for the 2024 Vivid, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It is certainly one of the things I have been discussing with the agency. The point you asked about, which was a really good one, is that any of those arrangements go back into supporting elements of Vivid or the Vivid program overall, so it all helps contribute to what has been a very successful festival for Sydney. It was more important than ever in a cost-of-living crisis, and that's why it was the most popular even on night one and the third most popular overall.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Yet there were 30 per cent more free events at last year's Vivid than at this year's event. Why fewer free events when families are finding it so hard simply to pay for bread, milk and school shoes?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I mean, they've both been very popular. I'm very clear on how popular the free aspects of Vivid have been. That's why we saw millions of people come out. I think the figure was 1.7 million.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm worried by your answers, Minister, because you keep telling me how popular Vivid was yet you also acknowledge how much more expensive it was this year. Who is Vivid for? Is Vivid for families, or is it for people with lots of cash in their pockets?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Let me tell you about one of those ticketed experiences, since we're here with the Transport people. The Tekno Train, which circled the—

**The CHAIR:** I went on the Tekno Train. It was fun.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'd love to hear about it. I would've loved to have been able to afford to go. What about families and the affordability of Vivid? That's the question I'm asking you, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You should've headed with the Chair on the train. But I really want to thank the Transport team who are here. It was very popular. It sold out, at times. But it's an example—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, I'm happy to join you in thanking the team. But how could families afford to go to Vivid when you've got 30 per cent less free events this year than last year? Is this the trend of your Government—making families pay for everything?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't accept the premise of the question. The point I was trying to make was—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The premise being 30 per cent fewer free events this year than last year? It's hardly up for contention, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't accept the premise of your question. The point I was going to make was that it is a mix here. There are significant numbers of free events. One of the reasons why this was the



biggest opening night ever was the mix that Destination NSW had curated. Some of the most popular bits of that mix were, for example, the transport experience, greatly assisted by the Transport teams and officials.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** With respect, Minister, you're not answering the question about the impact of your charges on families being able to attend Vivid. But perhaps we will move on, if you don't want to answer those questions. In 2024 Vivid engaged only two regional suppliers from New South Wales. Why do they not engage more with regional suppliers? Isn't it for the whole of New South Wales?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Look, wherever Vivid can engage with regional suppliers, I think that would be a good outcome for our regions.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is it an outcome you're driving as Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I encourage you to talk to Destination NSW on that issue this afternoon. There's no question, though, that Vivid is a big, big boost to the city's economy as a result of 1.7 million people coming into the city. It's been restructured to be a lot closer to the businesses of the city. Previously, it was a little bit isolated. Now that light walk really runs right through the heart of the city. That's producing a bigger economic boost, and of course we have a lot of visitors coming through as well.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You're focusing on what it does for the CBD, but what does Vivid do for the artists, the creatives and the suppliers in the regions?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Those people who are able to participate, including those creatives, of course get a significant boost, and they're widespread.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, can I take you to the figures about the participation of regions in Vivid? Vivid engaged three suppliers from interstate, three suppliers from overseas and two suppliers from the regions. That is hardly a great participation of the regions in Vivid, is it? Is your Arts policy for Sydney?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. Clearly, I reject that question. The Arts policy is very much focused on delivering across New South Wales.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But two suppliers from the regions, three from interstate and three from overseas. If we look at artists, five of the artists were from interstate and 12 from overseas. Of the 159 artists who participated in Vivid, one was from regional New South Wales. What message is that sending to our creatives outside of the CBD?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I invite you to put those issues direct to the team who were programming. You will be unsurprised to hear—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, with respect, are you not responsible as Minister for setting these policy settings? You're passing the buck to the bureaucrats.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You'll be unsurprised to hear that, as Minister, I haven't sought to involve myself in the programming of Vivid. I think that's a dangerous path you're encouraging with this line of questioning. I think there is a line there. I'm well on the record as saying while I support fun, government fun—particularly government fun directed by Ministers—isn't always what the public want to receive. That's one of the reasons I'd be hesitant to get involved in the programming of Vivid. However, I do want to acknowledge the validity of the general questions you're raising, and I really encourage you to put them to Destination NSW.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, where in your Creative Communities policy will I see your commitment to regional arts growth?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm very glad you asked about that. When we did the consultation, much of the consultation was really travelling through regional New South Wales. We started, for example—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the fruits of that consultation, Minister, in terms of—

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, the very first place we started, for example, was Lismore, given it was flood affected. I have to say it was quite an emotional meeting. We then travelled to—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Did that consultation bear fruit in dollars in this budget?

**The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY:** Point of order: Reluctantly, I take a point of order because I've let this go a few times. The Minister just gets a few words out, in terms of answering, and then is cut off with a snipe or another question.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** To the point of order: I have been trying to get the Minister to answer the question. The last question was about funding for regional arts, and the Minister was going to take us on—

**The CHAIR:** Through me.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I apologise, Chair. The Minister was going to take us on a tour of every region that he had a chat with about the arts. He was not answering the question.

**The CHAIR:** I uphold the point of order. You asked about regional funding and the Minister did start talking about Lismore. We don't know whether he was just about to say how much he then gave Lismore. I remind the Minister that I will accept interruptions, as the Chair, if he is talking for the sake of talking and not answering the question.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Spot-on. Thank you, Chair. As far afield as Lismore, down to Bega, out to Broken Hill—and let me assure you the people at Broken Hill were very direct about what their needs were. The whole thrust of the policy is to say we're not just supporting the six cultural institutions clustered round the harbour, but we're turning to creative industries and many of those creative industries in these regional towns. That is where the funding will shift to, and we're already seeing that. Some of the touring funding that I've already talked about, for example, is crucial to connecting those towns. One of the things we heard in Lismore was there are incredible things going on but they want to be able to tour those to nearby towns, and they want to see the best of arts and culture from those nearby towns as well.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, can you take me to the page in the budget where I will find this funding?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm certain we could give you the page in the budget where that funding is captured.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But at the moment you can't tell me where in the budget we can see this funding for regional creative programs?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. I will certainly come back to you with the page in this hearing, yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, has your Government broken an election promise with respect to Parramatta's Roxy Theatre? Are you walking back from your pledge to secure its future as an arts and culture venue?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We are fulfilling our election commitment in relation to the Roxy Theatre.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you can guarantee that it will be transformed into an arts and culture venue?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No, I can't guarantee that. Our commitment, as you well know, was to complete the business case, and that business case is now completed. Now we're making plans to work with the council and potentially with the Federal Government, if we can attract their attention to this important project. But I've been out there to the metro site to see for myself just how close this is to that transport hub, and there's no question there's big potential here.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** We all agree there's potential, but what everybody is interested in is what is going to happen to the Roxy Theatre.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, I can understand the interest. It has been a longstanding question, one that was attended to by the former Government in the dying minutes—almost the dying seconds—of its 12 years in government. Now that's fallen to me to deliver, and we're carefully stepping through in order to do that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What are you delivering?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I understand you're in a hurry, but there were 12 years to deliver this under the former Government. We're now working through a serious plan to see what's possible here. I don't want to underestimate the complexity, and some of those complexities—I'll put them briefly—are, first, the private ownership of it and the private owner's intentions; secondly, the planning challenges; and, obviously, there are some costs to doing so.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, why was an interstate hospitality group, the big group from Victoria, chosen over a local New South Wales based company for the MCA's cafe operations? Why didn't you prioritise supporting New South Wales businesses?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The MCA, firstly, isn't a State cultural institution. That is a question that would be best directed to the MCA. Again, I'm not working at the level to direct them who the caterer is, and I'm not sure that would be appropriate as a Minister. Certainly the MCA has talked to me about the new catering

arrangements, and they're upbeat about what it will mean for visitation. If that was the case, that'd be good news because, although there's a very significant number of visitors there, I feel the potential for the MCA is higher than they're achieving at the moment.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Funding in this budget for capital upgrades and new facilities—where will I find that?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** In *Budget Paper No. 03*.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can you tell me what dollars have been allocated for capital upgrades and new facilities?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. You're going to have to be slightly more specific.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** No, Minister, I'm asking you what priority it is for you to ensure that our arts projects receive capital upgrades and that we get new facilities.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't want to question your questioning, but you're going to have to be more specific, Ms Carter. For example, the fact you've said now that you've narrowed it down to the arts budget is helpful, and I'm sure we can run through some of the capital priorities. I have them here.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much for capital upgrades for arts facilities outside of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They're very significant. There's a big program of delivery through the Creative Capital program that's rolling on right throughout New South Wales.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much? What dollars, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The other thing I would highlight that I'm particularly focused on is the Creative Capital investments that are rolling out into three key upgrades in Western Sydney, so those are rolling out. One of them was just asked about before—the Campbelltown Arts Centre—and, obviously, also at Parramatta and Blacktown.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much money is going into providing new facilities at Broken Hill?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I will take on notice the specifics for Broken Hill because there are more than 100 projects.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much at Bega?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There are more than 100 projects, Ms Carter. They're not detailed in the budget papers at that level.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Where would they be detailed?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They're detailed in the information about the Creative Capital program.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Regional arts development organisations—why did you cut their guaranteed funding?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I reject that characterisation.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Well, what did you do to their funding?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There has been a funding reform. This was discussed in those consultations. It was one of the things the sector was calling for, so we are simplifying funding and putting it on a more stable basis. We're moving to funding across the arts sector—which might be, for example, four-by-four funding or four-year funding or two-year funding—which, overall, should see arts organisations on more stable funding. I'm aware that there have been some concerns raised by the RADOs. Will this mean they're destabilised? My expectation is no. If that was the case then the Government would take a very close interest in it. That's certainly not the intention.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, at the last budget estimates I asked you questions about Appin Road because of the koala strikes and deaths that are happening on Appin Road. I received some answers to questions that you took on notice about signage and speed limits. I was told that Transport for NSW reviewed the speed limit for Appin Road but that it remains at 80 kilometres per hour. Transport for NSW has advised that it is based on its function as a primary movement corridor and is appropriate. I was also told:

Transport for NSW is committed to reducing koala vehicle strikes along Appin Road through installing fauna fencing and a third koala underpass ...

Are you aware that 79 koalas have been hit and killed across south-west Sydney since July 2022?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I wasn't aware of the specific number. I'm certainly aware of the issue, and I'm obviously concerned about it. You're asking in particular about Appin Road.

**The CHAIR:** Just to be clear, 37 of those 79 were killed on Appin Road during those two years.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, understood, and it's certainly something the Government is concerned about. Appin Road is a great example of where these pressures really come to bear. You've got both the—

**The CHAIR:** Is there a reason that Transport for NSW can't reduce the limit from 80 kilometres per hour, considering those 37 koalas? They are endangered at the Federal level; this population is at risk of becoming extinct. If it is 37 over a two-year period, that is a pathway to extinction, and Transport for NSW can't reduce the speed limit from 80 kilometres per hour to save the koalas. Seriously, who is in charge of setting speed limits in this room? Why can't that happen, Minister? Surely in other places where there are koalas, people and wildlife, speed limits are set and people respect those. They recognise that. Surely it's not too hard, is it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Let me make a couple of points in response to that question. It may well be something—I'm happy for the agency officials to answer now or later, depending on what suits you, Chair. Firstly, the Government is concerned. Secondly, one of the key things that has happened is a wildlife strike symposium where we gathered key experts to look at how we can deal with this better. There is a real issue across the State. Thirdly, we are supporting specific interventions. When it comes to your specific question, though, about speed limits, that's not something that I will be determining at ministerial level; it is an agency call. We can obviously request a review. I've received significant correspondence in relation to this issue, but I'd be happy to refer you to the officials on your very specific question about the speed limit at Appin Road.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, as a senior member in the Minns Government, in terms of your Government's commitments, stopping the extinction of koalas and saving the koala is a key—I'm not sure it's a key priority, but it is a priority. The direction coming from you as Minister can obviously influence that speed limit, can it not?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, that's one of the reasons why we called together a whole range of experts to really look at what we can do here. There has got to be a range of interventions. Some of them will be technological. Some will be speed limit-related. Some of them will be about road design.

**The CHAIR:** The chief scientist looked into what was needed to save Campbelltown's koalas quite a few years ago. I'm not sure another symposium was needed. What's needed is the fauna fencing that stays up when the wind blows but also those underpasses, which have been talked about for a long time and I think are still a long way away. By leave, I table something now in relation to that.

#### **Document tabled.**

**The CHAIR:** When can the public and the community that are very concerned about these koalas—and indeed, when can the koalas themselves expect to be able to pass under Appin Road safely?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll refer you to the agency on the specific date, but it's certainly been one of the things that has been discussed in detail in my short time in the role. I do want to reject the view about the fact that we should just rely on the chief scientist's work. The wildlife symposium—I am really grateful for the experts who came together. It will deliver a range of new approaches over time. I'm confident of that. We are determined to trial new methods of making sure we can balance—

**The CHAIR:** Was this just for Appin Road or the State?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** This was statewide.

**The CHAIR:** That's fine. That's important and good to know because, yes, wildlife kill and strikes on the road is a very important issue. I'm not speaking against that, but I've just handed you a picture of the koala-proof fence in Appin, which is basically—that's what it looks like now.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, that's obviously of real concern.

**The CHAIR:** It's all knocked over and clearly not doing its job. There are obviously places where animals can now get stuck under that fence as well as climb through it, so the temporary measure is not really working either.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, and I'm really grateful for you bringing it to our attention. I encourage you to ask the officials this afternoon, but I'm committed to seeing what we can do on this issue immediately.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much for that. I want to turn the Western Harbour Tunnel.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Can I just give you some information on festivals that might be of interest? Tell me if it is or is not. I can give you a short sense of what the key themes are that are coming out of the review—a preview of six short dot points, if you'd like it. If not, no trouble.

**The CHAIR:** No, not at this point. We'll come back. I'll see how I go with my questions. I do want it at some point. Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway upgrade projects—at the last estimates, I raised with you the complaint handling in relation to that project. In April, a response was provided to questions taken on notice, which said that all complaints are acknowledged within two hours or attempted to be resolved within 24 hours—and, failing that, within 10 days. However, I've received an update from the residents group Cammeray Voices who tell me that their issues remain—that they've undertaken a survey of their community once again, and that the responses since the March budget estimates is that only 20 per cent of unresolved issues at that date have received a full response. There's another stat here: 60 per cent have received responses that were either evasive or misleading and, of the remaining unresolved issues from last year, half have received a partial response and half have received no response at all. It doesn't sound as though the community is satisfied with this complaints handling process at all, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Thank you for those views—just a couple of top-level comments. Firstly, this is an incredibly big project in an incredibly constrained environment, so it is very difficult. We're sensitive to the residents' concerns. That's one of the reasons we've been reshaping the programming of work. For instance, over January while people were out of Sydney, major work was going on to try to do this more rapidly so that it didn't cause problems. On some of those details, though, I think it would be appropriate to refer to the secretary.

**JOSH MURRAY:** I do recall the questions from the last estimates hearing and we certainly did investigate because our feedback from our stakeholder teams didn't match the statistics that you had in front of you. We would be keen to investigate those further given the community group has given you even more data this time around. Ms Mares, do you have anything further?

**TRUDI MARES:** No. I think we'll need to follow that up.

**The CHAIR:** Okay, I'll come back with a bit more of the information, then, this afternoon.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** On the koala fencing, the strong winds on 28 August caused the problem. It certainly is a problem. There have been efforts by Lendlease to rectify it since. That has been hampered by continuing strong winds; however, conditions have now enabled that work to restart.

**The CHAIR:** Did you direct your department to find a rescue package for Bluesfest?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** In relation to the Bluesfest festival, I've certainly been in discussions with the festival, along with a range of other events across New South Wales, about the current pressures. We are supporting Bluesfest. That's a matter of record, as I place on record the fact that the former Government is. We are providing the level of support that had previously been provided and there's still an ongoing discussion with Bluesfest about their next event.

**The CHAIR:** That's a level of support; there's a grant, basically. When it became clear that they were in trouble, I understand, as a result of COVID—and then that very last-minute cancellation, which has been very difficult for them to recover from. Did you direct your department to find a rescue package for Bluesfest, knowing that they were in financial pain?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think the accurate way to put it would be we've been in detailed discussions with Bluesfest about whether the State could help them. I've been public about that. They are in receipt of DNSW support, as they have been previously. We have completed some close work with them about their financial circumstances, but it hasn't extended beyond that at this moment.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I continue with a line of questioning that my colleague the Hon. Susan Carter was just asking about the arts grants funding. It seems from the perception of arts organisations that, if they want to seek longer term funding from your Government, they have to demonstrate how they're going to change their business model. Why have you gone to that approach where you're asking organisations to potentially change their business model if they want to receive funding?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, we received a lot of feedback during the consultations that arts funding in New South Wales was too complex, was not stable enough and, thirdly, involved a ton of paperwork. They're essentially the way this was put to us. They're some of the key things I've been concerned—

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** But do you think asking a business to change their business structure and turn what they're doing on its head aids in simplifying the process? A lot of these small organisations can't

afford to hire a business consultant to give them advice on how they should change up their business model. How is the Government going to support those businesses to apply for that long-term funding if they don't know how to change their business model?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I wouldn't have thought that was the case. If you do have those concerns, I'd be very keen to hear about it and do some specific work on it. That's not the goal of the changes; it's really to move to more stable funding. We're also focused on cutting paperwork for some of these programs, and that has been successful—cutting the acquittal paperwork, for example, by 25 to 50 per cent. That was something that the sector was really clear about.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** The 10 arts boards that have been created through Create NSW, you have them divided up into different art forms. What are the processes going to be around assessing those grants? My understanding is that they've been put in place to assist you in making a decision around grant funding. Can you talk us through that assessment process that the arts boards will go through, particularly around how conflicts of interest will be managed? In the past, in the film and television space, artists that are on the board have given money to movies and TV that they're going to star in and smaller projects have missed out. I'm interested in how this assessment process is going to avoid things like that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's a really good question. These are relatively well set because they're the art form boards established under the previous Government, and the conflict of interest arrangements are really clear in relation to this. If someone's on the board and either has an interest or knows a person at a conflict of interest level, they have to step out of the decision-making. I'm reasonably comfortable that those arrangements are robust. The idea, the principle, that it's not the Government choosing who gets funding—it's not even necessarily Create; it's your peers in the art form selecting who gets the funding—I think is a good one. We have made some changes, including making them a little bit more flexible. They tended to be very permanent art form boards, so I've made it more about the assessment and people are pulled in for the assessments as required. But we're largely working within the former framework.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** You're not concerned that artists or people in the industry deciding could become a bit cliquey or a bit nepotistic?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** One of the changes we've made is to make them slightly bigger to deal with that. Rather than just having, for example, 10 people who are there for a permanent amount of time, we're moving to, say, 15 to 20, and they'll be pulled in as groups to deal with exactly that perception. I think we can always improve things but, by and large, we're working with the existing framework and it seems to have been successful.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Are any of these board members remunerated in any way? Is there an honorarium, or are their costs or expenses reconciled?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. The previous Government's arrangements were to remunerate them according to the Public Service Commission's recommendation. I've stepped that back a little bit, so they will get less remuneration. They'll be paid for what they're assessing as members of the panel, for example. We've kept the existing arrangements, although I've stepped them back a little bit. Can I give you an answer on the multicultural issue? I have one from the library, if that's of use.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Yes, that would be good.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You're correct that the previous holder of the multicultural consultant position retired last year, after more than 25 years. The role has been reviewed to make sure it still works. The position will be recruited shortly. There's a team of five State Library staff members contributing to delivering the program overall. That's probably the latest update on that one.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Thank you. Coming back to the art boards, I note that one of the categories talks about classical music, opera, choral, ensemble, but doesn't necessarily encompass pre-eighteenth century music, like baroque music.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Shame.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Shame, I know. Where do they sit? It's still widely practised and has an audience. Where do they sit in terms of applying for funding under this stream?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** When I said that we've been able to boost funding for some of the other art forms, that's a great example. There was a contemporary music art form board taking funding out of this pool. We've pulled them out because of the other contemporary music support, leaving more money in the pool for the other art forms, including those sorts of music. Your question about baroque music is a very insightful one. I would

have hoped that they're covered in that pool, but let's find out in the session if that is the case. If they're not, that would be of concern.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** What's your Government doing in the space of AI usage across the arts and music industry to protect artists? The last writers' strike in the US was solely based around this issue of protecting intellectual property rights for artists. What's your Government doing in this space? I could jump on a website and whip up a country song about budget estimates in about five minutes, and it'd be pretty bloody good. Obviously a concern for struggling artists that make their living out of this is that they're going to be taken over by AI.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's a really important question and one that is moving apace. We're doing the strategies, at the moment, for the various sectors. It will feature in the official government response. There are two policy concerns and one action; that's probably the best way I can rapidly describe it. We're concerned about the inputs into music or screen or literature being stolen. What is the return that goes to the people on which, for example, the large language models are built? And also the outputs being licensed in the long term in ways that are inappropriate, like people being told, "We'll only pay you if you sign away your rights for a long period of time about what this is used for." Both of those are of concern.

I'm already seeing examples—for example, in the screen sector—where some of the big international firms are starting to ask this for the first time of Australian-based Australian operators, and it is of real concern. The action that I would start to flag is that this should be of policy concern to all of us as a Parliament and certainly as a Government. Of course the Government will have a view about what's appropriate and not appropriate. Those things will inform how we fund in future.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Are there any discussions happening between your Government and the Federal Government around where this may intersect? They might have to step in and take some action as well, given that it's not just a State-based problem. If we're dealing with international companies that are putting these requests on our artists, they're probably going to have to step in. It might intersect with trade agreements and stuff like that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. In a big, wild world, as this is unfolding fast, it would be better if this is done nationally. But it doesn't mean that the State has no obligations here, and that's why I draw attention to the funding lever. If we are funding, it's appropriate for us to ask, "What are the AI arrangements? What are the licensing and intellectual property arrangements here? Are we comfortable with them?" The Federal Government is doing some good work. The challenge for all of us—the Parliament, and the Federal and State governments—is how quickly this is changing. Can I assure you, too, Mr Banasiak, that baroque music is covered. Your advocacy for it has ensured it is covered in that panel.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** The baroque Shooters of the world will be pleased.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, how do you define a job as jobs Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I tend to take the traditional definition of someone being employed. I note the complexities around this when it comes to the issues around unemployment and underemployment that you were drawing attention to earlier.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You define it as someone being employed. Is that your answer?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, someone being in paid employment.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How does the Jobs Plus Program define a job?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I would be happy to table the guidelines for the Jobs—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Just the definition would be helpful.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'd be happy to table the guidelines, which contain all of that detail, including any of the relevant definitions.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** There's no definition.

**The CHAIR:** In the minute we have, I will hear the themes from the music festivals review.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Chair, what I can tell you is here are some emerging themes from the review. It's yet to be released, but this gives you some sense of what has been found, not by myself but by the agencies as they've started to work on this. Firstly, safety operations and practices have improved at high-risk music festivals since the Act was introduced. Although other States and Territories have regulatory frameworks for festivals, music festivals in New South Wales are the most highly regulated. While safety management plans

have been an effective tool to manage risk, it has evolved away from the Act's initial focus on medical and harm-reduction matters.

There is duplication in the regulatory framework, with some agencies having multiple touch points in the planning and approval process. The Government decision-making processes under the regulatory framework need to be more supportive, transparent and consistent. Finally, the framework has resulted in significantly higher costs to operate festivals in New South Wales as opposed to other States and Territories. That gives you some sense of where the review is heading; obviously there's a lot more detail. The Government will be indicating its response to those initial directions.

**The CHAIR:** Thanks so much. I appreciate it. The Government indicates it has no questions. That means we will break for morning tea.

**(Short adjournment)**

**Ms CAROLINE LAMB**, Chair, Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority, affirmed and examined

**Ms ELIZABETH MILDWATER**, Secretary, Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport, affirmed and examined

**The CHAIR:** We will proceed straight to questions from the Opposition.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Welcome back. Minister, is it the Government's intention to two-way toll the Harbour Bridge and tunnel?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government's position on this is very clear. We've received the—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it yes or no?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government's position on this is very clear. We've received the report from the independent reviewers for the toll review. The Government is yet to release the Government response. The Premier has been really clear publicly that the Government is yet to make a decision about that, as the former Government was.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So yes or no?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government is yet to make a decision about that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So you can't guarantee that you won't two-way toll the Harbour Bridge?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I've spoken about this extensively, publicly. Two reviews now have found that the old system, where motorists in Western Sydney are charged in two directions and their tolls go up every year or every quarter, is in contrast to the harbour crossings, where motorists are charged in one direction and their tolls did not go up for 14 years. The point the reviewers made—and this is their point, not the Government's point—is that if you were going to rebuild a network toll, it would be very difficult to do it on those old principles where there's very much two contrasting systems. The Government is yet to respond to that review.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When will the response be made public?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm not setting out the specific time for that, but it will certainly be before—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** This year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, it will certainly be this year that we're expecting the Government to respond. Some of the other deadlines are well known.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will you guarantee the revenue from the Harbour Bridge and tunnel won't be sent over to Transurban to pay for toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think that's an extremely hypothetical question. I don't think that's in prospect in the way you're describing.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that a no?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's very much a hypothetical at the moment, so I'm not quite sure what you indicate. The Government did make an election commitment—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So that's a no.



**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government made an election commitment prior to the election that any of that revenue from the harbour crossings would be dedicated towards toll relief. We had some commitments in that space.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will the tolls raised go to Transurban or not?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I should say where we're up to in the process, and I think this will be of use to members. The Government has now initiated a direct dealing process with Transurban and the concessionaires in order to act on the recommendations of the review.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I have limited time and I'm aware of the process, so I will move on. Your election commitment was to not toll both ways. That's correct, is it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, just on your previous question, if you were aware of the process, you'd be clear why there are some things I can't comment on while that direct deal process is—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, I'm asking you the question. That was not my question. What I'm asking is what you will—

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Sorry, Ms Ward, I am responding to your previous question. If you were aware—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That wasn't my question, Minister. I'll move on.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If you were aware of the direct dealing process, you'd be aware that there are now some things I can't comment on in relation to that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But, Minister, that wasn't my question. My question was do you intend to two-way toll it—and if not, can you answer that—and when you will guarantee the funding for that won't go to Transurban? There hasn't been an answer on either of those, but I'll move on because there just doesn't seem to be an answer. Where can I find the Government's response to the interim report of the toll review?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government will respond to both the interim report and the final report of the toll reviewers together, and that report will be released publicly.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That was the Government response that you were just asking about previously and I'd indicated will be by the end of the year. But I won't be more specific about the timing.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which organisation did the modelling for the Fels review?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The modelling for the Independent Toll Review?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The traffic modelling.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll refer the specifics about the modelling to the agency.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm just interested in which organisation did that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I understand the question. I'll just make this point and then I'll hand to the agency to answer that question. There has obviously been significant support from Transport and Treasury, and then there have been a number of specific consultants. That's all available publicly, by the way, but I'll refer to the agency, either to the secretary or—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I have time in the afternoon. I just want the specific company that's doing the traffic modelling.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm happy to refer either now or in the afternoon. It's all public, but if you'd like us to confirm it now, we can.

**TRUDI MARES:** It was publicly disclosed on 13 November. Clarity Consult undertook that work.

~break

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What's the background of Clarity Consult? Have they been used by the New South Wales Government before?

**TRUDI MARES:** I would have to check on that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, or Mr Murray, does anyone know? Have you used Clarity Consult before?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'm not aware of their background, but we can take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, are you not familiar with them?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm not familiar with their particular background. I wasn't involved in the selection process for it.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can we get that answer today, Ms Mares and Mr Murray?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We'll take it on notice. If we can supply something helpfully today, we'd be happy to do it. But we're taking it on notice at this point.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No-one knows who they are, and no-one knows if we've used them before. Do you have confidence in their modelling?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Can I just stress that any of these consultants went through a formal government procurement process. As you know, as a former Minister, those are rigorous. If you've got any questions about that procurement process, or any concerns about it, I'd certainly be keen to hear them.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, you're the Minister in charge. This is your landmark reform. You went to the election with it. You've got people doing traffic modelling for you, and no-one seems to know who they are or whether they've been used before. I'm asking you, yes or no, do you have confidence in them?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If the suggestion is that the Minister should be choosing the traffic consultant, then I think that's totally inappropriate.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I think you'd want to know, though, wouldn't you?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That is not the role of a Minister. These are government procurement processes. We're happy to get you their information. I mean, it's publicly available—I'd just stress that again.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You've said that a few times, thank you. I'll move on. I'm limited for time, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I make the point that I believe it would be inappropriate for me to take the path you're choosing.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I think, though, you should be able to have confidence in the organisation that is doing pretty important work for you. Mr Murray, do you have experience with this organisation?

**JOSH MURRAY:** No I don't.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Ms Drover, do you have experience with this organisation?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** No I don't.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Ms Mares, do you have any experience with this organisation?

**TRUDI MARES:** Through the toll review, yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it the first time you've used them?

**TRUDI MARES:** I said I would check whether they've been used before. As the Minister stated, we did go through a whole procurement process that would have looked at their background.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. I'm just asking if you've dealt with them before.

**TRUDI MARES:** No.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No-one has experience with these people. Minister, will you release the traffic modelling that underpins the Fels tolling report?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The independent reviewers have released a great deal of detail in those two reports. I hope you've read them, Ms Ward?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's not about me, Minister. It's your estimates. Will you release the traffic modelling?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I hope you'll realise how much detail is already in those reports.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. Will you release the traffic modelling?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm happy to consider that. Obviously, at this moment, that would be a totally inappropriate thing to do. You'd be compromising the State's—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's not confidential, Minister. The modelling is not confidential. It informs the report. I would have thought that it's a yes or no. Will you release it or not?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Ms Ward, we're in a direct deal negotiation with a publicly listed company. The idea that the Government would release all the information it holds about the particular traffic model, publicly, without appropriately having regard to that consultation, is totally inappropriate.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm not asking for all of the information. I'm asking for the traffic modelling that informs it. It's facts.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We certainly won't be doing that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You will not?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We certainly won't be compromising the State's interest while that negotiation is ongoing.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Why not? What are you hiding in that traffic modelling, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We're protecting the State's commercial interest—the interest of taxpayers who have been left paying \$195 billion worth of tolls under contracts your Government signed.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Surely those drivers deserve to know what the modelling is. Surely those drivers deserve to know.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's why I say I'm open to considering releasing that information down the track, but it's exactly the wrong time to ask that question.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, are you personally involved in the negotiations with Transurban?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. The direct deal negotiations that have been established involve a negotiator on behalf of the Government.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Who is that?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The process for selecting that negotiator is underway. I can ask the officials to update on precisely where we're up to, but that person will be selected shortly.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Have you met with Transurban personally on it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm just answering your previous question at the moment. There will be a negotiator who is driving that negotiation.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes. You said that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** In the consultation structures around it, obviously, Ministers in the Government do have a role there to set the negotiating parameters and the negotiation—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure, but I'm asking you about your involvement, not other Ministers. Can you clarify—have you met with them? I want to know who in this room I can talk to about toll reform. Is it you, or is it someone else?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll just finish making that point. I am informally involved in that direct negotiation process—not in the negotiation but through the advisory processes to it—in order to set the parameters and set the policy frameworks.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** If the Minister—

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm coming to your question. I certainly have met with Transurban along the way and discussed toll reform with them up to this point. I won't be meeting with them to discuss matters that are in the direct deal while the direct deal is negotiating. They're the normal arrangements that apply.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You're not in the room—that's correct—someone else is. What is the policy framework that you're talking about?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's being established by Government at the moment. I think you're referring specifically here to the negotiation principles that we might apply in that direct deal. That's being set by the Government at the moment. Obviously that will be discussed in the direct deal itself. I think what we should do is take that on notice so that I can tell you as much as I can tell you without tripping over the very strict confidentiality arrangements that apply to this. There's a real balance there—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Let's move on and talk about what we can talk about today. Given that we've got very limited time, let's talk about what we can. In relation to Mr Fels' report, is it the Government's intention to follow either of the two models proposed in the report by Mr Fels, or to follow the Transurban proposal?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The point I was making was that there is a real balance here to be struck about what we can say publicly so as not to compromise the public interest in the negotiation. In relation to the models, there are three public positions that have been advocated for. The reviewers put out two models—two of what they described as "bookmarks"—to a potential toll-reform intervention. Transurban and the concessionaires have advocated publicly—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, I'm sorry—I do have limited time. I know that there are three. I've asked you which one the Government intends to follow. It's a yes or a no. Either you don't know or you're not going to say, but I don't need the reiteration of what the reports are. Will you follow Mr Fels' recommendation or the Transurban proposal?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, this is one of the most complex reform processes that the Government is involved in. With respect, it is not a yes or no answer. The idea that you could answer yes or no to the complexities of toll reform—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm just asking which one you're pursuing. Is it Mr Fels' recommendation or is it Transurban's?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm very happy to answer it, but you cannot ask me to answer yes or no to a toll-reform question given the complexities. I'm very happy to run through the Government's approach on these matters.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm just asking about the two models by Mr Fels or by Transurban, and it doesn't seem—all right, I'll move on.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Can I be clear, I'm very happy to answer what the Government's position is on those if you'd like me to.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. Which one?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** What we've said is that they are both on the table. We will look at the reform model, and we're also open to the concessionaires' putting a model on the table which is more focused on corridors. Both of those, the Government has indicated publicly, will be part of the negotiation. The Government's clear preference is to have a negotiation, if possible. Given that—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** With Transurban?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The concessionaires have now come forward and said they believe it might be possible to reach an in-principle agreement by the end of the year. If that's the case, I think the Government should certainly be open to that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** To the Transurban proposal?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think it's inaccurate to describe it as the Transurban proposal. It's advocated for by Transurban and the concessionaires.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'll move on. You previously stated, Minister:

Drivers will absolutely be better off under toll reform; otherwise we won't be proceeding with recommendations.

Can I ask you this: Will all Western Sydney drivers benefit from toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You'll be surprised to hear that I support my previous comments. We wouldn't proceed with toll reform if we couldn't show a benefit. I think no-one believed it was possible to reform tolls, but the review has found it is possible, and now the concessionaires are saying it's possible.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you, but will all Western Sydney drivers benefit from toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Drivers will benefit. Western Sydney drivers will benefit—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** All of them?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —if we can reform tolls. The Premier has been even more specific than that about who we're trying to help—that is, particularly people who are driving long distances, driving often and

don't have access to public transport. That's who we're looking to tip the system in favour of. Both the reviewers and the concessionaires now say that's possible. That's good news.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That's a no. The network toll restructure proposal by Mr Fels shows that drivers along the M7 corridor would be worse off under Mr Fels' proposal. Would that be an acceptable outcome in future toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Professor Fels and Dr Cousins have both been clear that those bookmarks are really important markers so that the public can see how a reform might take, but there's further modelling that needs to be done to finalise the arrangements. I think it's unlikely that—and this is Professor Fels's view—you're not going to land in either of those specific positions, but they're important markers to do further work.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, with respect, these are specific questions in relation to that, that these communities are concerned about. Are drivers going to be worse off on the M7 and, if they are, is that a good outcome?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think I've been as clear as I can be about that modelling which you're asking about. That modelling specifically—this is what Professor Fels says—won't be adopted. It's a very good guide to how we might start to tip the system; it's not the final answer. It won't be the landing.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Page 348 of the Fels report shows that drivers in Liverpool and Fairfield LGA pay the most relative to other areas in Sydney under the current environment. Under one of the proposals by Mr Fels they would pay more. Why would the Government look to increase tolls on people who already pay the most?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think you're referring to one of the bookmarks where, for example, there's no government intervention in the way there is at the moment, with any money available to assist drivers with tolls. Again, that's an unlikely outcome. That's not the Government's view; that's Professor Fels's view. But it is in the report to describe—it's helpful guidance as to what happens without tipping any taxpayer money into the deal and scrapping all toll relief. I would describe that—I won't put words in Professor Fels's mouth—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No, we've got a report that says what he thinks.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —however, that's a very unlikely outcome.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Mr Fels' proposal of the network toll restructure and reduction proposal includes over \$650 million annual expenditure to deliver. Is that quantum of annual funding on the table for the Government?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Again, I direct you to Professor Fels' view on this. But, again, that's a very unlikely landing, but it is a really powerful guide as to how much toll reform could shape prices in Sydney and what happens. These are bookmarks. Fels himself made the sensible point that you'll land somewhere in the middle. So, no, that amount is not available but neither is it being sought by the independent reviewers as they put their position publicly.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** If that's not on the table, do you have a cap of annual funding that the Government is prepared to utilise, or is that up in the air?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think it would be inappropriate to disclose that in the middle of a direct deal negotiation with concessionaires and Transurban, and I won't be doing that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is Mr Fels still involved in the toll reform process?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Mr Fels, just as I sat down to take your first question, was calling me on my phone and I very rudely ignored him. We're certainly in close communication.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is he still involved, Minister? I've got less than two minutes.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, he is?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's the Government's intention that Professor Fels and David Cousins continue to be engaged in some way in the toll reform.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is he still being paid by taxpayers?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Not as we sit here today.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But it is the intention to continue his engagement, given what you've just said.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We haven't settled the terms of any engagement.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure, but your intention is—it's not a trick. You've just said he will continue to be involved. Presumably that's on a paid basis.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No, I don't think you should make that assumption, but we're yet to settle the—I have briefed the agency. Mr Fels has just called. We are yet to settle any terms, but I'd—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Presumably he's not doing it for free.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't think you should have any assumptions.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it a bookmark as well?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm not certain how to answer that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The Treasurer has previously ruled out concession extensions in your toll reform. Under Labor, are concession extensions on or off the table for toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government response, as I've indicated, hasn't been published. I thought the review report discussion around this was really—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Just on or off, Minister? We have 30 seconds left. Concession extensions; are they on or off the table?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think it's very difficult to summarise a complex reform in "on or off, yes or no". I direct you to the review. Its observations about when concession extensions might play a role was, I think, a really important set of principles.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will you privatise future toll revenue to support toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Sorry, you'll have to put that question to me again.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will you privatise future toll revenue to support toll reform?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Ms Ward, I'm not sure I understand where you're heading with this question. However, it would be inappropriate of me to disclose—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Via concession extensions, is what I mean.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —any of the Government's bargaining parameters in public.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But you won't answer any questions on the topic at all!

**The CHAIR:** Order!

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You're not answering anything.

**The CHAIR:** You will get your turn again soon, Ms Ward, but it is the crossbench's time. Minister, are there any plans to convert the Museum of Sydney into an Indigenous cultural centre?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There certainly have been plans, and we've discussed them here—plans under the former Government. I think these are well canvassed in public, that after the attempts to do that elsewhere had failed, there had been a direction that the Museum of Sydney should become the place where this occurs. I have taken a different approach in government. I'm keen to see the Museum of Sydney recognise the important Indigenous heritage of the city, but I think it would be too much of a burden to have it be the only place that happened. That's both true because of its size, but it's also true given its history. It was not the right place to—

**The CHAIR:** Are you looking for a new site for a dedicated cultural centre in terms of Aboriginal cultural heritage?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. We've established that as a goal in the Government's 10-year creative industries policy. We've said, "Look, there is a real gap in Sydney. We do want it filled." That is the Government's long-term aspiration. We'll update about how we want to tackle that soon. But it certainly is something where we'd like it to be more accessible to people who live here or people who visit to accept the generous offer of First Nations people to share their knowledge.

**The CHAIR:** That's a 10-year plan, you said, for a site to be chosen, or a 10-year plan for the whole idea of a dedicated Indigenous cultural space to be agreed upon by the Government? What exactly are you going to commit to in that 10-year plan?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That'll obviously be the subject of close consultation with the First Nations community, so I don't want to set out a Government view about how to get there.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, to be fair, it's agreed by First Nations people, the traditional custodians of this land, that a dedicated cultural space is warranted. I think that can be agreed on.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's why it's in the policy.

**The CHAIR:** The question was whether it's in the policy that a site will be chosen, or that it will be agreed to and built.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That New South Wales should have such a centre.

**The CHAIR:** So it's an aspiration in a 10-year policy at this point?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You might come to that conclusion publicly, but the Government will be setting out a path over the next period of time about how we intend to get there. We certainly won't be waiting until the 10 years. The challenges, to put them briefly, are space—the one you've just drawn attention to. Should it be in a particular place, and where should that be? And should it just be in one place? Also, the capacity to be able to program such a space. We'll be looking at both of those as part of a plan to fulfil that goal that is set out in the policy. We are setting out a plan to do that.

**The CHAIR:** I can't believe I'm about to say this, but even the Coalition had plans, as you are well aware, for a dedicated cultural centre. We've had a number of plans, and they were saying that they were going to do it. But you're sitting here, after being in government for 18 months, and can't even commit to saying, "Yes, we're going to build. We're committed to an Indigenous cultural centre and we will begin that process of finding a site."

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No, I don't accept your characterisation, and I don't regard the current answer as acceptable. That's part of the hurdle here. I'd be surprised if you did. I just think it's an inappropriate place. The former Government's plan, well-intentioned as it was—and I respect exactly why it was chosen—was just the wrong place. Given the history of colonial settlement, having the Museum of Sydney as the place that people come to visit this story—it is the wrong place to solely bear the obligation to do that. That is not to say they shouldn't change their programming; that is well underway. But it was the wrong place. We'll be setting out our plan to reach that goal, but it's an important goal. It is real a problem in Sydney that there is not an easy place to learn about the oldest continuous living culture in the world.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, you've committed in the past, in opposition before the State election, that a New South Wales Labor Government will release the secret plans, the details, that the former Coalition Government didn't release in relation to the Powerhouse Museum, the Ultimo and Parramatta sites—the secret business cases and the designs that haven't been released, the design briefs for Powerhouse Ultimo. That hasn't been released now by your Government. Why not?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We have released important details and documents; we are open to doing more.

**The CHAIR:** For Ultimo?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** For Ultimo, yes. I've very open to doing more. You might want to do this this afternoon, but I encourage you to ask the Powerhouse what additional things could be released. One of the frustrations I have had in trying to work with the community groups who have an interest in this is that some of the documents that are being asked for do not exist. We obviously can't release those. I'm very open to releasing whatever we can about designs and plans. I encourage you to ask some of those questions this afternoon.

**The CHAIR:** I'm asking the officials whether they can release certain documents?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If you want to put specific documents to me or to the Powerhouse directly that you'd like released, I'm happy to consider that. But I indicated to you the Government's view: our starting point is that we are very open to those being released.

**The CHAIR:** The Tamworth Country Music Festival, are you aware whether that festival has to pay for a police presence?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** As I understand it, the Tamworth Country Music Festival does not have to pay for all of its police presence because it is a hallmark festival.

**The CHAIR:** What does a hallmark festival mean?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The information about the way the Government deals with major events is available publicly. But some events are classified as hallmark events, and are therefore able to achieve either a 100 per cent or a 50 per cent discount for some of the user-pay charges that they receive.

**The CHAIR:** Tamworth Country Music Festival this year, police operation:

General duties officers from Oxley Police District and across Western Region will be assisted by specialist police from the Operation Support Group (OSG), Dog Unit, Licensing Police, Bicycle Unit, and Traffic and Highway Patrol Command throughout the operation across 10 days.

Why does Tamworth Country Music Festival get special treatment, for example, and be called hallmark and Bluesfest doesn't?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They are the settings as we've come into government. They are questions best directed to the Premier's Department, which administers that hallmark event status. Certainly I am aware of the policy and am taking a keen interest in it.

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, I'm confused. Why does the Premier have something to do with the hallmark event when you're the Minister for all the arts and cultural and music things? And tourism.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That is historically where it's always sat, in the Department of Premier and Cabinet, now in the Premier's Department. There is an events unit or a community unit in there that is responsible for the hallmark policy.

**The CHAIR:** Do you think Bluesfest should be a hallmark event?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I can tell you what the setting is, but as to the history, you'd need to ask to the Premier's Department.

**The CHAIR:** Is there a reason why the Tamworth Country Music Festival is more a hallmark event than Bluesfest, in your mind as music Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Well I love them both, I have to confess.

**The CHAIR:** Seriously, though, Minister. Bluesfest is now in its last year. It's not, in terms of Bluesfest's situation, I acknowledge; it's not the cost of policing. However, Tamworth Country Music Festival has clearly got a very good deal and is treated in a certain way by this Government. Why are they getting special treatment? Bluesfest, our biggest festival, which is huge on the festival calendar, why isn't it treated the same?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's not a matter of it being treated differently by this Government. That is the long-term setting we've inherited. It's a good question about those hallmark policies.

**The CHAIR:** Long-term settings you inherited. In the mean time, festivals are just dropping like flies around you, including Bluesfest. So you inherited it, but it's 18 months now. You inherited it. You could have overturned it within a month of taking office. Why didn't you?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The question about that policy, you've got to direct to the Premier's Department. However, I can confirm we've certainly been talking to Bluesfest. We are open to continuing those discussions and keen to assist them, if it's possible to do so, within the normal processes of government.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I will just join in on the questions around the Powerhouse Museum. Minister, the operating budget for 2023-24 was revised from \$26.147 million to \$33.782 million. Why did we see an increase of \$7.6 million for only seven months of operation, given that those sites were closed in early February?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I would direct that to Lisa Havilah on that specific operational detail.

**LISA HAVILAH:** The overall operating budget for the Powerhouse in \$127 million for this financial year. That supports us to deliver our responsibilities under preparing the museum for the heritage revitalisation. It also includes staffing to program and operate Powerhouse sites. It's investment into six large-scale exhibitions for the opening of Powerhouse Parramatta in terms of preparation. It includes the delivery of learning programs, events, and festivals including Sydney Science Festival and Sydney Design Week. It includes the ongoing conservation of the Powerhouse collection, and there are two capital items in that, which include the development of solar at Castle Hill and Sydney Observatory heritage restoration.



**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Minister, the president of the board of the Museum of Applied Arts and Science, Mr Peter Collins, had his term extended for six months, to the end of 30 June this year. Has a new president been appointed to that board, or is Mr Collins continuing in that role?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You're correct in observing that his term was extended, essentially until the end of the year. We haven't yet selected—

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** It was 30 June, was my understanding.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** My recollection, but I am happy to be corrected, is his term was extended by six months to the end of the year. I've been grateful for the assistance of Peter Collins and the trust. I've certainly found his engagement very helpful. There will be a new chair of the trust after that. That is yet to be selected. I can indicate that certainly Peter Collins is a former arts Minister, and a former leader of a parliamentary party in New South Wales. He is someone I expect to continue to be relying on for advice in future.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Even if he's not in a board position?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Although not in that specific role, yes.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Does anything preclude him remaining on the board in another role? Are there maximum terms for this board?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There are maximum terms. While we haven't gone through this process yet, there will be a new chair of the Powerhouse trust. I have found Peter's advice very useful, and I'll be working with him to work out—I won't go into details about that further, but I expect to continue to receive his advice.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Can I just go to the issue around floor space? The EIS shows a fairly significant reduction in floor space from around 21,000 square metres to probably around 5,100 if you don't include the theatre, which is, I think, 900 square metres. Can you help explain to people why we're seeing such a dramatic reduction in floor space, given I can't imagine we're getting rid of items and we might be acquiring more as history progresses?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Are you referring to Ultimo?

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Yes.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll direct the specifics on the floor space to Lisa, but I don't believe those figures are correct. I might ask Lisa to put the figures to you.

**LISA HAVILAH:** The current exhibition floor space at Ultimo is 6,850 square metres. After the completion of the heritage revitalisation, the square metre exhibition space will increase to 7,500 square metres.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Does that include the potential theatre as part of that exhibition space, or is that separate?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I will have to take that on notice and check that for you. I can come back to you.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I might just switch tack for a minute. Minister, do you have any update for us on the Memorial Drive, Bulli, bypass proposal—for an extension down there?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm certain we could give you an update. I will direct to the Secretary just so we get the right official to give you the update.

**JOSH MURRAY:** I might ask Ms Mares to comment on that.

**TRUDI MARES:** Could you just repeat that question? Balmoral Drive?

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** The Memorial Drive, Bulli, bypass proposal to extend Memorial Drive either to the foot of where Bulli Pass starts or shortly just before that.

**TRUDI MARES:** In Bulli—sorry, I don't think I have that information with me. We'll take that on notice.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We should be able to update in the afternoon.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I might pursue that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There is work ongoing. I just want to be able to give you the most recent update, so I think if we do that this afternoon—

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** If I go back to your and Minister Aitchison's announcement in April around the increase in mobile speed cameras, I think you're going to increase it to 2,700 new sites, but it's not

going to actually increase the number of enforcement hours. How did you come up with those additional 2,700 sites? I'm not asking, obviously, where those sites are—we'll work that out in due course when we drive past them—but how did you come up with those sites?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Just a quick word on the overall settings, and then I might ask Bernard on the detail of site selection, which is quite rigorous. Firstly, the number of hours is capped at 21,000 hours of enforcement per month, on average. That isn't changing. What is changing is where that enforcement happens.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Why is it capped?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's the current setting for the State, and we're not changing that. What we are changing is where that enforcement happens and spreading it around the State more effectively. What that will mean is that it can be in some places that probably we're now more concerned about. It will also mean that some of those concerns about inappropriate site selection at the moment—communities might see that eased where they're uncomfortable about a particular site, as we spread it out. But that's the principle: the same amount of enforcement over more locations. The site selection is rigorous. I will ask Bernard to update.

**BERNARD CARLON:** Thanks for the question. The methodology is actually around getting the randomisation of the enforcement activity. Maximising the number of sites on which you're actually spending that 21,000 hours of enforcement actually provides a stronger deterrent to people as well. We have had feedback from the community that they were seeing enforcement activity more regularly than they thought was necessary at individual sites, so the expansion is actually to achieve that outcome of more randomised. Over the first three months, May to July 2024, we've reviewed. We do have a contract in place, which was disclosed. We have 500 new sites that have been identified, of the 2,700 enforcement sites. They've been focused principally on the northern region of New South Wales to start with. Site selection is expected to conclude in April 2025. Of course we'll publish those sites, as we do currently on our website, in terms of the locations where enforcement is happening.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** When you, obviously, got feedback around the inappropriateness of some of these sites or their not being randomised enough, was there any explanation from the contractors as to why they were focusing heavily on particular sites?

**BERNARD CARLON:** This is simply a matter of not having sufficient sites to actually randomise and to move the enforcement around the State, so you see more frequency than what we would suggest is actually optimising the program. That's why the 2,700 additional sites have been recommended and announced by the Government. This is simply about having more locations that we can rotate the enforcement around.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** How are you going to track whether these new locations are actually effective in reducing crashes and fatalities? There's a phenomena where people see a police officer or a speed camera and they'll slow down, and then, once they pass that, they resort to old habits. How are you tracking, in and around those locations, whether it's actually effective?

**BERNARD CARLON:** At a program-wide level, there's an evaluation which is being initiated to actually evaluate the effectiveness of the overall program. Principally, this program—mobile speed cameras—is about getting deterrence across the whole of the road network, not necessarily at individual sites. It's meant to provide a deterrent effect 24/7 across the whole of the network to reduce people's speeding behaviour. There will be a formal evaluation which will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the program.

**The CHAIR:** We'll go to the Opposition. Ms Carter.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Before you do that, Ms Carter, I might just indicate that I can give you those specific job numbers that I was referring to. If you'd like me to do that, I am happy to do that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can we have that in Government time, if that's okay? Is your Government ruling out acquiring the Roxy Theatre from the owner?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do you have an idea of what the acquisition cost would be if you are going to acquire it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can you share a rough idea with us, please?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Once again, I'm not going to compromise the public interest by confirming to the Opposition, in open session, what a Government valuation is. You're just asking us to give out money to private interests with your line of questioning, both on tolls—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** We are asking you to fulfil your commitments to arts and cultural space in Parramatta.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's an entirely reasonable set of questions, as you head down that path.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** With respect to that, will you be introducing heritage planning laws, including heritage air space rights, to encourage art and cultural uses for the Roxy?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The way I'd answer that for you, Ms Carter, is that heritage air rights or a heritage floor space scheme, as you know, is a really interesting proposition. We are committed to exploring taking that outside of the City of Sydney, where it exists.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** With respect to the Roxy?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That could include Parramatta. If it went to Parramatta, then it could start to become operative for a site such as the one you're drawing attention to.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I understand that you said that the business case was complete. How can the business case be complete if you haven't considered the heritage air rights issue?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I haven't said that we haven't considered it. In fact, of course, I have been briefed on that issue, and there is work underway on both those fronts.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can I just take you back to the Vivid figures? You were indicating how popular Vivid was this year. It's true, isn't it, that we have to go all the way back to 2018 to find fewer visitors to Vivid than we saw in 2024 and that there were more than three-quarters of a million fewer people attending Vivid this year than there were last year?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We've never had as many people turn up on the first night. It's never happened. It was the most popular ever first night.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The first night was popular, but then 850,000 fewer people over the life of Vivid—it indicates that you were either charging too much or that there's a major issue with Vivid. It wasn't actually working for the families of New South Wales.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't know if you recall the fact it rained just a little bit, including extremely heavily, during the latter part of Vivid, and that did have an impact.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm sure that since 2018 it would have rained during Vivid, Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I encourage you to ask the team about the amount of rain that fell on one of those Vivid nights. It was, I think, a May or June record, but quiz the team on the details.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It's a winter festival, designed to get people out.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's the third most popular ever and I'm not sure why you're trying to talk it down.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm not trying to talk it down. I'm trying to work out why it isn't working and whether it's what you're charging families in a cost-of-living crisis or some other issues.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I categorically reject that it's not working, because talk to the businesses who did get a boost out of it.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I've spoken to the small businesses.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Talk to the 1.7 million people who came and enjoyed it this time around. Talk to the creatives who were involved. I take your point about involving more, but third most popular ever; biggest opening night ever. I don't accept the premise of your question.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'd like to move quickly on to some questions in relation to the Electoral Commission. Dr Phillips testified that, because three of the four submissions that the NSW Electoral Commission put in for funding in the current budget were rejected, he will be forced to "exit staff"; he will have less robust cybersecurity and may have to revert to manual processes for counting. Minister Graham, what steps are you taking right now to assure the people of New South Wales that their elections will be safe and secure?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, I want to thank Mr Phillips and the Electoral Commission team for the work they've been doing. I'm certainly aware of his concerns. I will make sure that you've been directed to the Treasurer's comments in budget estimates, because they were quite important, about the budget process that we're going through. The Treasurer has also written to the Electoral Commission but also, I believe, to the

Parliament now, to the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, setting out the Government's thinking. The concerns with the budget bid—the best way to put it is the concerns of the Government with the budget bid from the Electoral Commission were not so much about the bid and the merits of the bid, but about the Government's fiscal circumstances. It's been clear that the commission will be invited back into a future budget process to assess that. That's very important, given the concerns that you're identifying and the Electoral Commission has set out.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I understand you to say that you are concerned about the fiscal position of the Government.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Of the State.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you just don't have enough money to ensure that there will be adequate cybersecurity at the NSW Electoral Commission. Is that right?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** No. I think that's specifically very wrong because the cybersecurity part of the budget bid was included. The budget, as you know, includes \$15.8 million over the next four years for cybersecurity enhancements prior to the—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But you would be aware of the testimony from Dr Phillips where he said because your Government rejected three out of the four of his budget submissions, he will have to exit staff; he will have less cybersecurity and may have to revert to manual processes. This is evidence from your own NSW Electoral Commissioner that he has been underfunded. Can you assure the people of New South Wales that their elections will be safe?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Ms Carter, if I direct you to some of the spectacular evidence we've had over time from the Electoral Commissioner and the former Electoral Commissioner, there are issues here. I'm on record as making that clear. They're longstanding issues and they're yet to be addressed. I acknowledge all of that. The Treasurer set out in writing the Government's current position. The Treasurer has made clear that the commission will be invited back to a future budget process. He was careful not to specify exactly when that will be because there are some deadlines in relation to the staff that I'm well aware of from talking to the commission. The point this acting commissioner and the former commissioner have made over time is one of the issues is about the number of staff—that the current financial model that they're required to keep is temporary.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Minister, with respect, you're not really answering the question. I'll put it very simply: As the Minister in charge, will you take responsibility if an election delivery failure occurs at the next election?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We will address those issues through the budget process. I recognise today that there are significant issues to address, and I direct you to the Treasurer's letter, which is very informative on this matter.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So is the Treasurer or are you responsible, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Government's responsible. The Electoral Commission reports to both the Premier and me. The Treasurer is obviously responsible, along with the finance Minister, for the budget; but the Cabinet's responsible overall.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Minister, I'm going to turn now—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No, I'm sorry. Chair, I'm seeking the call. It's not your turn, Wes. It's not your turn.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** It's been negotiated.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No, it has not.

**The CHAIR:** Order!

**The Hon. WES FANG:** It's been negotiated by the leadership.

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Fang, we'll go to Ms Ward.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** It was negotiated by the leadership. We're down to the last 10 minutes.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Fang, I'm giving it to Ms Ward.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, at estimates on Tuesday with the transport Minister—

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Point of order—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** —I was asking about the missing \$3 billion.

**The CHAIR:** A point of order has been taken.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You are wasting everyone's time, Wes.

**The CHAIR:** Order!

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You'll get time at the end.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Well, you know that you've been instructed—

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Fang, you are going to speak through me.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Point of order—

**The CHAIR:** Excuse me, I'm addressing this point of order. Mr Fang, you are not down on this agenda to even be here today, so I'm being quite tolerant of you even wanting to take a point of order. What is your point of order?

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Thank you, Chair. The point of order is that the Opposition has allocated time. My understanding is that the leadership between The Nationals and the Liberals has agreed the times.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Oh, please. That is not agreed. You know it. Stop wasting my time.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** It is agreed.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Chair, I ask that I be able to resume questions.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** It is agreed.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Absolutely not, Wes.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** No—

**The CHAIR:** I won't uphold the point of order. Ms Ward has the call.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you. Minister—

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, Mr D'Adam has taken a point of order.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** I'm going to take my point of order.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You're all taking up my time—

**The CHAIR:** Order!

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** —and I actually have questions about the budget.

**The CHAIR:** Order! Ms Ward—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Someone here has some budget questions.

**The CHAIR:** Order! Ms Ward, remember what I said earlier today about not shouting.

**The Hon. ANTHONY D'ADAM:** Mr Fang is not listed as a participating member in the proceedings and therefore has no right to be heard.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr D'Adam. I uphold your point of order, similarly to the earlier point of order when I gave the call to Ms Ward.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you, Chair. Minister, at estimates on Tuesday with the transport Minister—Mr Murray was there at that time—I was asking about the missing \$3 billion in this financial year. Do you know anything about that?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Just be specific about the part of the budget you're referring to there.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure. There was \$20 billion allocated in the last budget. You've had two of them. The 2023-24 allocated \$20 billion. The budget this year, 2024-25, allocates \$17 billion. There's a difference of \$3 billion. Where's it gone?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think you're referring to the total Transport capital allocation for the State.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, capex. Transport capex—\$3 billion gone; \$17 billion this year. Where is it?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'd make three points about that. Firstly, this is about what you were spending when it came to your budgets. If you rewind, for example, to 2021-22, \$18.6 billion—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No. Minister, I've already—

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —\$16.7 billion the year before; \$16.6 billion; \$14.6 billion. In fact, it's higher than much of your—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Where's the \$3 billion? What has it gone on?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm just indicating, firstly, it's higher than a lot of what you were spending in recent years. Secondly, I invite you to—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, you can take it on notice, if you like. There's a difference of \$3 billion. It's a very straightforward question. We'd just like some clarity on where that's gone.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It is a very straightforward question. I'm giving you a very straightforward answer. The second thing I'd direct you to—but you will want to quiz the officials on this—is one of the things impacting this year is a range of transfers between the transport agencies. If you look at the figures on an eliminated view for the budget, then what you actually see is an increase in the capital expenditure from last year to this year. That's as a result of transfers between the general government sector and the public non-financial corporations. But I invite you to quiz; I won't attempt to explain.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That wasn't what Minister Haylen or Mr Murray said. They said it was because projects had come online—Gateway and WestConnex and others—but it doesn't account for \$3 billion. We ask for clarity and we're asking you: Does anyone know where this money's gone?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm glad you asked.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Does anyone know where the missing \$3 billion is in the budget?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm glad you asked me. I'm providing you this information, although I do concur with the answers that the secretary and the other officials gave.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm going in to bat for you, Minister. It's your money for your projects. Where's it gone?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The final point I'll make is not only is this higher than often the expenditure had been; not only on an eliminated basis is it higher. Generally, funding's higher: road expenditure's up; road capital expenditure's up; funding in Western Sydney is up; road safety funding's up; the amount of Federal funding we have in the pipeline is up—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That doesn't align with \$20 billion and \$17 billion.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** —and, of course, the capital expenditure for the budget overall is higher than in any of the Coalition budgets.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Okay. I'll move on.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** But I'd like to refer to Mr Murray just to confirm.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I can deal with Mr Murray in the afternoon. I've got very limited time, Minister, with you and the pleasure of your company.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Have any Roads projects, not currently under contract, been re-profiled or have they changed delivery timelines since the last estimates session?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which ones?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's obviously—we're now moving into a great deal of detail.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's estimates.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, exactly. Why don't you tell me, is there something specific you're interested in? Otherwise, we can—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, I'm interested in whether any roads projects not currently under contract have been re-profiled. I'm asking you, Minister. You've got the budget; you're responsible; you're the Minister.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** This is estimates; you know how it rolls. Have any roads projects not currently under contract been re-profiled or changed delivery timeline since the last estimates session?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which ones?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** A range of them. Obviously, that sort of re-profiling or timeline change happens routinely. Some of that is within the published time frames; sometimes it's not. Obviously, that's even more the case for projects that aren't under contract. They're more likely to be, for example, in the planning or design phase, and they're most subject to movement.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, that's all hypothesis and that's great. That may or may not be. Can you name which projects have changed?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I think I will refer the detail of that to the agency, and I'm happy for you to—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can you name one?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, I certainly could, but I'm referring that to the secretary.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Ms Ward, with dozens of projects coming into delivery, to your category of non-signed contracts, there would be a number of movements within that portfolio. It would be difficult for us to run through those off the top of my head.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can you name one that has changed? Can you get the answer from the agency and provide that today?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We'll take it on notice.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You've had 48 hours; we asked two days ago. It's not a surprise. I would have thought you said, "Yep, she's going to ask this again. There's some projects there. Have they been re-profiled?" Which projects changed timelines?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We do a number of re-profiled during the year based on what comes up through the planning works and the analysis of getting ready for contracting.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The Minister has agreed that it has happened. Are you able to get those details for us today?

**JOSH MURRAY:** Yes, we'll take it on notice.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will you be able to provide that today?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll make this point: It happens all the time in a complex capital program like this. Of course, particularly for the projects you're drawing attention to, there's regular re-profiling or timing shifts. That's not unusual.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But what's to hide, Minister? There's a range of projects. They're good projects; we want to see them done. If they've changed timelines, what's the great secrecy? What are we hiding here? If there's a changed timeline, let everybody know what's going on.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** There's no secret here, but you're asking a very general question about a \$62 billion capital pipeline.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** We're now within five minutes, Natalie.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm asking you to be specific.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** You'll need to be more specific if you want to know about a project.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** All right, I will be.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That's the issue here—it's difficult to provide either a yes or no answer.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** The leadership have sent you a message, Natalie.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You didn't agree anything with me.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** No, the leadership have sent you a message. You need to acknowledge it.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No. Minister, how many projects with full delivery funding are ready to go to tender—

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Natalie, the Nats have indicated—

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Fang, if you are substituting into this Committee, you'll need to send—

**The Hon. WES FANG:** There's been an agreement.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You can get some time at the end.

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Fang, through me.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** This is not agreed.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** This is agreed. You need to check.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You'll get thrown out.

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Fang, I call you to order for the first time in terms of that behaviour. If you want to substitute onto this Committee, you know the process.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** That has occurred.

**The CHAIR:** You need to email the Committee and I need to see the email. Continue, Ms Ward.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Minister, how many projects with full delivery funding are ready to go to tender for roads projects in Greater Sydney in this financial year? What roads projects have you got that are ready to go?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I can think of 20 or so that we've been talking about recently, including with the market. One of the things we've been doing is updating the industry about the pipeline. For instance, all the Ministers were together along with the agency, convened by the secretary, with all of the team there to brief on exactly that question: What are we going to tender with? I want to acknowledge that we're building on the practice of the former Government in doing that, but it is a really useful process. We could give you those details about the industry—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Again, on notice at some time in the future. That would be great. If we could get that today, that would be helpful, and then I can ask in the afternoon.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Those matters were put online with the in-motion pipeline event at the end of July, when we took that to the market.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** They're all public. We can direct you to the—but it's a great example.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which projects with full funding will go to tender this financial year? Can you name them?

**The Hon. WES FANG:** I know you're trying to win some by-elections but, honestly, this was agreed, Natalie.

**The CHAIR:** Order, Mr Fang!

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We've briefed publicly to industry on these, so we certainly could provide that detail.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** This is not going to help you win the three by-elections.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Fang, I'll call you to order for the second time.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** If you want to divide the Coalition over this, good luck.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can Ms Drover help? Ms Drover, how many projects with full delivery funding are ready to go to tender for those roads projects in this financial year?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** There are quite a number, so I'll have to take that on notice to get you the exact number. But for the Epping Bridge Road, for example, the EOI is going out today.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** I hope you know what you're doing.



**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sorry, I couldn't hear you over all of the chatter.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Oh, there's going to be a lot of chatter, I suspect.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sorry, Ms Drover, do you mind saying that again?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** I take that on notice because there are quite a few, but I did want to note that the Epping Bridge Road project is going out today. The EOI is released today.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Excellent, that's pleasing news.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Today!

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** There you go; you learned something. See? Estimates is very useful.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We briefed at the session about it to the industry, and then just today.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** They're only interested because they're trying to win by-elections, but it ain't going to help them.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it possible, Mr Murray, to get some of those projects today, or an indication? I'm sure there are lots of people watching who are keen to tell everybody what your projects are.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** There's a lot of people watching.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Given members of this panel here were present at that—I know we've produced a lot of documents around those available projects that were coming to market with full funding, and we'll see what we can get back to you.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** They think this is going to help Speakman, but nothing is going to save Speakman.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can I just get clarity on that? Are you able to get that today, or will you take that on notice and provide that within the 21 days?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'll take it on notice but, as I always try to do, I'll get something back if possible.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** We do appreciate it when you do get answers back today. The Minister has been helpful doing that today, so I appreciate that. Are any new projects funded in this budget that do not include Federal funding of those projects? Are any of those State funding only?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If the question is are there projects in the capital program in this budget that are State funded only, the answer is yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can you get those to us on notice as well, please?

**JOSH MURRAY:** They'll be included in the former list that you asked for, which is what is ready to come to market.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Terrific, great. You're doing good things and building good roads; let's know all about them. If their timelines have changed, let's know. I'm interested, though, in new projects for this year. Can you name any new roads projects for this year, Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Two of the biggest ones on my radar are really what we've been able to do in putting extra funding into Elizabeth Drive. We've taken that from a \$200 million project to an \$800 million. Mamre Road stage one is well underway, but Mamre Road stage two is a billion-dollar project that'll unlock a whole lot of information. Both of those, I'll note, have been delivered with Commonwealth assistance, but it's meant the State putting in extra funding in the budget. They're big roads priorities.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Go ahead, Mr Fang.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** You're kidding—with five seconds?

**The CHAIR:** Order! Mr Fang, I'm going to call you to order for the third time because your behaviour has been untenable, frankly.

**The Hon. WES FANG:** Understood.

**The CHAIR:** What that means under our new committee rules—I'm sorry to do this to you, Minister and officials. In fact, I'm sure you're fine with it, but we have to go into a deliberative now. This is a private Committee meeting. I'm sorry to do this; however, these are the new rules for disorderly conduct in committees.

If you could please leave the room as quickly as possible, and hopefully you will be back reasonably soon. Any member of the Committee who is not a substantive member of the Committee also needs to leave the room.

**(Short adjournment)**

**The CHAIR:** Thank you for your patience. The Committee has resolved to remove the Hon. Wes Fang until 2.00 p.m. today. We will proceed with questions from the crossbench.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I want to start by asking you about motorised mobility devices on our footpaths, which I understand falls within your portfolio of responsibilities. New South Wales is a bit of an outlier on this in that we're only allowing these MMDs an unladen mass limit of 110 kilograms, whereas Austroads, Standards Australia and the National Transport Commission all think it should be 170 kilograms. Because these wheelchairs are getting so much more sophisticated and more people are using them, there's this disconnect now between our outdated road regulations—or New South Wales Road Rules—and the reality for many people living with disability in our State. Will you revise those rules?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm certainly aware of the issues. I've had both advocates raise it and it has been discussed in some of the national forums as well, I'm aware. It is a complex interaction of the ministerial responsibilities. Minister Haylen is leading on some aspects of this. I have some responsibilities under the Roads Act is my understanding. And Minister Haylen leads at the ITMM process, although we all—that's the national transport Ministers—obviously coordinate across the transport team. It might be best if we get the agency to update you in the first instance, either this afternoon if you want to do it then, or now.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes. I'll do it this afternoon. That would be good.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Good. Let's refer that to the officials this afternoon—but, yes, I recognise the issue you're raising.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** The other one that we're an outlier on is that we require users of these devices to register them or get a licence. I think we're one of only two States that do that. The argument made, which I think is a really good one, is that it's quite discriminatory when other footpath users don't have to register to use the footpath. Effectively, these people do simply because they're in a wheelchair. Is that something you would also look into?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm certainly happy to consider that further. I suggest you talk to the officials this afternoon. I'll pay close attention to the dialogue afterwards, but I'm happy to look some more at the issue given you're raising it here.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I asked a question on notice in relation to the works on the route between the two buildings of the Art Gallery of NSW now. Part of that upgrade of that facility has resulted in a loss of accessibility and a really long path that people have to take in order to get from one area to the other without stairs. I asked about this and I got an answer back that was a little bit disappointing because it didn't refer to people with accessibility needs but rather just spoke generally about public access to that path. Has it been completed yet? It was supposed to be completed a year ago. When will we get accessibility at the new art gallery?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** If I am correctly answering for the area you're asking about, it is still ongoing. I agree that's not on the timeline that had originally been discussed, but this is quite an exciting project that will really complete the two galleries and is best not rushed. However, we are expecting that to be this year. I might direct you to Michael Brand, the director, who's here this afternoon. He could give you some more specific details. Again, I acknowledge the issue you're raising. That's the timeline that we're expecting. That's the most recent briefing I've received.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Because it would be good to—I think it's Jonathan Jones who's doing that work, and I understand the importance of that, but at the moment the route to create any form of accessibility is actually a little bit absurd.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, understood.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** There could perhaps be other solutions put in place, but my understanding is that's not being considered.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I encourage you to ask Michael Brand. I'll formally take on notice the question about is there an interim solution we could use in the meantime, and we'll come back to you formally on that. That's the timing that we're expecting and that should lead to a more permanent answer.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I'm sure you've been following the reporting on the systemic sexual harassment and gendered violence in the nightclub space—both restaurants and bars, but also clubs—where a huge number of people are now reporting that their experiences of sexual assault and harassment are not being dealt with, and that, particularly in an environment where you're told that the customer is always right, a lot of these complaints from people are going uninvestigated. Given that's partially within your portfolio of responsibilities, what are you doing as Minister to clean that up?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, I am really concerned about the reports, as anyone would be looking at this. I'll make a couple of points. Firstly, we're about to relaunch—I'll make this point: In the same way that people have got a right to a safe night out in the city, if you're working in hospitality or entertainment or working after dark, you've got a right to a safe workplace. I think that's the principle from a government point of view. I am aware that SafeWork is involved now in some of these matters, but that should be the expectation. We will drive that into the broad policy approach of the Government as we refresh the night-time economy strategy shortly. It will have a big turn to add night-time workers into the focus of that strategy.

Part of that is about the safety issues for workers at night, including these sorts of issues—people being harassed and people being assaulted. It's not acceptable and it should be a key focus of the Government's policy. Thirdly, it's obviously been the subject of briefings and action by the Government. One of those actions is the night-time commissioner has convened a range of the hospitality groups—and I'm sure Mike would be interested to give you more detail in the afternoon or now—to really talk about what we can do, given the nature of these allegations. My expectation is that industry does have a collective role to play to make sure that night-time workers are safe. The Government expects them to step up to the plate to do that.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I'll come back in the afternoon for some more details.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, you mentioned the night-time economy and reforms around that. The relationship between businesses and the police, particularly the licensing police—is there a round table or an all-of-government group where you are able to work with police around the new changes, around encouraging businesses to be able to stay open late, and the fact that you've sent this agenda within government and you want more businesses to open late and put more offerings on? Are you communicating with the licensing police about that? How?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The first round of Vibrancy Reforms that the Government brought through last year—and we've said we'll come to the Parliament again by the end of the year, so we'll be looking for help and support to drive further changes. It is complex. There are about 10 agencies involved in government. It's a really complex coordination process. I can confirm police are at the table. I want to thank in particular the commissioner for taking a personal interest in this, along with the police Minister. We wouldn't be able to make the changes we have made so far—or the changes we're intending to make—and bring them to the Parliament if that hadn't been the case. They're certainly actively involved in those changes.

**The CHAIR:** I want to bring to your attention an individual situation—which I'm told is not a unique situation—of a business in Kings Cross trying to get an event up. I've been contacted by the management of Club 77 on William Street in Kings Cross, who have had an event proposal called "Sundays at 77". They have had quite a few problems—they say harassment, essentially, by a Kings Cross police licensing division—over quite some time. They've given me quite an extensive list of interactions with the Kings Cross licensing division, including one conversation with one of the officers, who phoned the owner at 7.25 a.m. on a Monday after this event on the Sunday—which goes all night—which is an interesting choice.

He questioned him on why they were doing an event like this and said, "It's not worth it," and, "Why are we wasting our time on it?"—actively discouraging Club 77 in terms of doing that. Do you think that's reasonable?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm broadly aware there have been issues there recently, but I don't know the details and I haven't been—

**The CHAIR:** Allegations of issues, do you mean?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm aware that they had struck some trouble recently, but I'm not aware of the details and I haven't been briefed on it. I'm a little bit hesitant to comment on the specific details.

**The CHAIR:** Would you or your office commit to engaging with Club 77 to find out what is going on with Kings Cross licensing? I've spoken with this venue multiple times. I've been there myself. It does seem as though they are being harassed by Kings Cross police.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes, I'd certainly be happy to receive more details. I'd ask the commissioner, too, to investigate this matter and see what we can do to help. We can't afford to lose more venues.

Over the years, this has been a good venue. I can't comment about what they're up to very recently, but I'm certainly happy to hear some more.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Minister, the National Art School master plan for renovations hasn't been funded in this budget, as I understand it. Why not?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We can get you some detail on the National Art School and their funding. There are so many good projects in the cultural space; we can't fund them all. That is perhaps one way to sum it up. There are some exciting plans underway at the National Art School, but they're working through the process of being able to work out a way to properly fund them all and stage them. That process is still ongoing. You could definitely ask Create to give you the next level of detail below that, though.

**The CHAIR:** We'll come back to that. In a similar vein, the Australian Museum stage three master plan—is that to be funded?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** We have announced in this budget some additional capital funding for the Australian Museum. We haven't announced funding for that ambitious project. The museum has some big plans—some very exciting plans—but I would direct you to the agency if you want to know precisely where those are up to in the process.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, because I do want to know whether it has been funded. If it hasn't, I'll come back to you, Minister, on the politics in terms of why it hasn't been funded.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I don't believe we funded stage three in the budget. We did fund the Spirit House proposal; you'll see that in the budget papers. I might refer that to the secretary in the first instance.

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** Yes, that's right. We have funded some work on a business case for offsite storage, which is a precondition to completing the master plan. We have funded some business case work this year.

**The CHAIR:** So the business case is just for offsite storage?

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** Yes, offsite storage for the wet collections, First Nations collections and Pasifika collections. They have them spread over a few sites and we need to find a solution for where each of those would go first, before any broader changes can be made to the museum footprint.

**The CHAIR:** Is that because if the business case suggests that it's too difficult—it's confusing why a master plan wouldn't be done at the same time.

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** It is not about it being too difficult. There are a few choices as to how that storage is done and whether it all goes to one place. They're using some facilities out at Ryde—whether that moves first. There are a few choices in there to do first.

**The CHAIR:** I might come back with some other questions around funding and everything later. Minister, the Power Up Festival at White Bay Power Station—do you know whether that is planned to become a regular feature? Or, in your view, is it a one-off?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Firstly, my engagement is very much to ensure that we keep this site for cultural use. That's the Government's intention, and it's very exciting to have this incredible site, right where a metro is going to be, for cultural use. We're in the phase where we're experimenting with a range of things to see what works.

**The CHAIR:** In terms of cultural use, are you thinking of a potential art gallery cultural space as well? I know that some in the local community are very keen for that.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The philosophy at the moment is to experiment and see what works. That's going to involve a wide range of uses, and then we'll see what actually brings people in and what works well in the space. The key principle, though, is that we want this space to be a new cultural space for the city, and that's very exciting. This is bigger than the Tate Modern—the actual shell. There are a range of challenges in getting access to it. In relation to the specifics of the Power Up Festival, I'm not the Minister responsible for that. That sits with Minister Scully, so you'd need to ask him about that. I'm closely engaged in the site, though, so I'm aware of the festival.

**The CHAIR:** The Power Up Festival sits with the planning Minister?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Because it's Placemaking, they're taking the lead on that.

**The CHAIR:** Okay, now I understand.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** But it is an interaction between Create and Placemaking. I can't answer your specific question.

**The CHAIR:** But the ongoing use of White Bay Power Station sits within your portfolio?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's a cooperation between Create and Placemaking. It sits with Placemaking. Create is heavily engaged in supporting, and a range of government agencies are at the table assisting the Government's goal, which is to have this be a creative and cultural space.

**The CHAIR:** We have some potential art galleries and cultural spaces sitting within Placemaking and some within Arts and creative industries. How was that worked out? How was that defined?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** This is really just a product of where White Bay has sat as it's been redeveloped. We're not in a stage of settling the permanent plan yet. Then we'd try to align it with other institutions. It's a specific issue not a general problem, is the way I'd answer your question.

**The CHAIR:** Are there other venues that are within Placemaking alongside White Bay Power Station, or is this unique?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** The Cutaway is an example, which is really a Placemaking space but is a key creative space for the city too. They're probably the two—

**The CHAIR:** You'd find it quite confusing, I assume, with these hallmark events with the Premier's and these Placemaking places with the planning Minister, and you're left with others.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It's why we're running a whole-of-government strategy.

**The CHAIR:** It sounds confusing.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** It does take a fair bit of energy to bring it all together, but that's okay.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, do you have any plans to see the restoration and re-use of the Glebe Island Bridge?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'll refer that to the secretary, mainly because—

**The CHAIR:** It has been in the government plans for the precinct for some time.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** Yes. I can confirm there have been Government discussions about it. It really sits a little bit more with Minister Haylen given the nature of it. But I might refer to the secretary to give you the latest that we can officially say.

**JOSH MURRAY:** I don't think I could provide any latest information, except to say that it is part of the ongoing consideration of the Bays Precinct and activating the long-term future of that, which is the subject of a separate Government piece of work.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, we had the Rozelle interchange inquiry and heard from members of the community once again about the fact that the exhaust stacks for WestConnex in Rozelle aren't being filtered. Is there any move or any commitment from your Government to filter those stacks at some point in this term of government?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I want to recognise the community concerns. The information from the chief scientist formerly, that work that had been done, was really clear that there is not a health risk and it wasn't required. But I am aware that there have been community concerns. That's why we asked for that additional work to be done. I'm advised that that should be complete by the end of the year. We're committed to making sure the public are aware of what the conclusions of that new work are, and that will guide any Government decision-making from there.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, I have one last question. The Rozelle interchange inquiry found that design decisions increased traffic congestion and there was a lack of transparency and accountability in those design decisions. What action have you taken as Minister to find out exactly who was responsible for those design decisions?

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I want to thank the committee for its work. The appropriate division between the governments is we can't go back and rewind and see the information that briefed a former government. That's an important protection in the Westminster system. I'm deeply grateful to the parliamentary committee's work for peering behind the curtain and revealing the financial fix that went in.

**The CHAIR:** It didn't open very far, I tell you.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** That has really impacted on people around Rozelle. We're doing the best we can with the circumstances we've been left in. Work is continuing, particularly in Drummoyne.

**The CHAIR:** That's the end of our time. Are there any Government questions?

**The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY:** No questions.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I think there were some answers, Chair, that the Minister was trying to helpfully proffer earlier. Did you want to do those now?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, I'm happy for that to happen.

**The Hon. JOHN GRAHAM:** I'm happy to briefly touch on some examples. I said I would give you some specific examples so you had a sense of what the Jobs Plus funding had been going to. Here are a couple of examples of firms that have received funding. DNEG, for example, which is classed as digital and cybersecurity but is working in the PDV sector, committed to 123 jobs being delivered. Reinforced Concrete Pipes Australia had a project where they were funded and committed to 11. Cochlear had a significant project, committing to 80. Nanosonics, in the med tech and health biomedical sciences area, committed to 73. The guidelines are publicly available. However, I've committed to tabling them and we will do that.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much, Minister. That's the end of your time with us today. We will now break for lunch. We'll see the rest of you back here at two o'clock.

**(The Minister withdrew.)**

**(Luncheon adjournment)**

**The CHAIR:** Welcome back. Before we commence, I'd just like to make a short statement. Earlier, I called the Hon. Wes Fang to order three times for disorderly conduct during today's PC 6 budget estimates hearing for the Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism. I would like to put on record, as Chair, my reasons for doing so, as this is the first time a member has been removed under the sessional order since it was adopted by the House on 15 August 2024. The repeated disruptions of Mr Fang were disrespectful to the member to whom question time had been allocated.

It was also disrespectful to the Committee and witnesses present. Mr Fang's conduct in persisting with those disruptions, despite multiple warnings and being called to order for a first and second time, made the continuation of the hearing untenable. As such, I called Mr Fang to order for a third time, which ultimately led the Committee to resolve that he be removed from the hearing until 2.00 p.m. Under the sessional order, the Committee will make a special report so that this is drawn to the attention of the House. We'll now resume the afternoon session with questions from the Opposition.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Ms Havilah, would it be convenient to ask you some questions about the operations of the Powerhouse? I just want to follow up with some further questions from those of my colleague the Hon. Mark Banasiak this morning. We understand that the Powerhouse Museum at Ultimo is not currently operational and the Parramatta site is not currently operational. Yet we see from the budget papers that the operating expenses have increased by more than 22 per cent. You gave some indication that that was to do with ongoing conservation work and things like that. If it's costing 20-plus per cent more not to run a museum, what do you expect the operating costs to be when the museum is actually open again at both of those sites?

**LISA HAVILAH:** If it is helpful, I can go into a little bit more detail about the budget as it stands in terms of what our responsibilities are.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I understand you have responsibilities, but you see my confusion. No operations—operating expenses more than 20 per cent higher. Once Parramatta opens and once Ultimo can open its doors again, what will the operating expenses of the Powerhouse be then, as a percentage, compared to what it is now?

**LISA HAVILAH:** It does appear a little askew because there are very significant responsibilities in terms of the decanting of the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo to prepare for the heritage revitalisation works. That being said, I'll now go on and answer your question. Once you don't include that amount of money—in terms of what we have in the forward estimates, that was all evaluated as part of a business case for both Powerhouse Parramatta and for the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo. The total, both opex and capex, is \$83.4 million for the first year of operation.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What would the opex be for the first year of operation compared to what the opex is in the current budget?

**LISA HAVILAH:** It will be less than the current budget, because it doesn't include the amount that we've had to expend on the preparation for the museum to be ready for the heritage and revitalisation works. There's a significant amount in there that we won't require going forward in terms of that work.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can I ask you a question about the capex. *Budget Paper No. 02* shows that capital expenditure has dropped by a bit over 60 per cent. If renovations are underway, why has capex dropped by that significant amount?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The capital budget sits not within our budget—it sits within Infrastructure NSW. The overall budget for the revitalisation in Ultimo is \$250 million plus \$50 million, which is our philanthropy target.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry—I still don't understand why capital expenditure drops if you're renovating.

**LISA HAVILAH:** The Powerhouse itself isn't doing any reactive maintenance because the work is undergoing capital development.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Somebody else is paying. It's coming out of another budget.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Correct. Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the \$50 million philanthropy target—how are you going with achieving that?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'm really happy to report that we have raised \$10 million through a partnership with the University of Technology Sydney. We are moving forward with our campaign to raise the remainder of the \$40 million.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What's your target date for achieving that?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We've given ourselves a period of 24 months.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So two years.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How long did it take to raise the first \$10 million?

**LISA HAVILAH:** That commitment from UTS was at the very front end of the project. That was announced earlier this year. We're really thrilled with that partnership because it also includes a whole range of other programming partnerships and benefits, including internships and pathways for young people into tertiary programs. It's not only the capital but also other types of research and education partnerships.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Those research partnerships and those internships—are they counted in that \$10 million?

**LISA HAVILAH:** There is a small component that is.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Let me try and find out for you. I'm sorry, I was incorrect. It's actually all towards the capital. Those partnership programs are a co-investment in terms of how we work together—apologies.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** When do we expect Parramatta to open its doors?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Infrastructure NSW are working with Lendlease on the finalisation of the base build, which we expect will be completed at the end of next year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the base build will be—

**LISA HAVILAH:** It's the construction.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How long until the museum can operate?

**LISA HAVILAH:** There is no date set for that. The museum will require a period of fit-out because we are working on the development of major exhibitions for the opening.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The building will be ready at the end of 2025, but we don't have a date yet for when the building will be fitted out.

**LISA HAVILAH:** That's correct.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** When can we expect that date to be determined?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We are working closely with Infrastructure NSW to work towards finalising that date.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You can't give us an indication when that's going to be?

**LISA HAVILAH:** As we get closer towards the completion of the base build.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do you have any concern that the base build won't meet its target?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No. I feel very confident with the amount of progress that's been achieved over the past 24 months. There have been some rain impacts, but Lendlease has been able to work through those.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I guess I'm struggling to understand how you can plan for major exhibitions when you don't have a date for opening.

**LISA HAVILAH:** As we get closer to that date, we'll get closer to announcing a date for the opening. At this point in time there is no plan to do that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I note that your employee expenses for 2023-24 were nearly \$10 million higher than the budget. What was the reason for that blowout?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'll have to take that on notice, but I'll get an answer for you.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I notice that the current budget only allocates a little over \$46 million for employee expenses when the actual was \$54 million. Are you confident that that figure will not be similarly exceeded by \$10 million?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes, I am confident.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Because?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We are just working through the actuals for the 2023-24 financial year, but the actual will be less than the revised budget and in line with the 2024-25 budget.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I note that the sale of goods and services is expected to increase by over \$4 million. What programs are in place to meet this additional target?

**LISA HAVILAH:** That target includes sponsorship for Powerhouse Parramatta exhibitions that will be part of the opening. It also includes other types of—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry, when would that sponsorship be received if we don't even have an opening date for the museum at Parramatta?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We're in the process of finalising partnerships for those exhibitions now, and they're realised now, even though we're working towards exhibitions that will open in the future.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you will be accounting now for income that is to sponsor an exhibition at some unspecified date in a year or so?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We're expending budget now on the development of those exhibitions, and some of the expenditure—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But this is income. This is \$4 million additional income from sale of goods or services. You're accounting for that income now, and you'll be receiving that now, even though the exhibition to be sponsored is at some unascertainable future date?

**LISA HAVILAH:** It's because they're in development now, so we're expending resources on the development of those projects.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** All of your goods and services budget, then, is sponsorship?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No, it's not all sponsorship. I can give you a breakdown of that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm just wondering, if the Ultimo site is closed and Parramatta is not yet open, from what site are the goods and services being sold?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We also operate Sydney Observatory and Castle Hill, and so we do things like night tours. We have events and programs that work across both of those sites.



**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** This is essentially all the observatory and Castle Hill?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We also have programs that occur across Parramatta and Western Sydney, which are really focused on community engagement and audience development leading up to the opening of the museum in Parramatta.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** When you say audience development, what is an example of one of those projects?

**LISA HAVILAH:** For example, we work in partnership with TAFE NSW to deliver a whole range of holiday programs that are focused on creative industry and technology skills that we present in Parramatta. We are also working closely with Parramatta council to deliver programs. They co-invest in those programs with us.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I note from *Budget Paper No. 02* that funding from the department has increased by 42 per cent in this budget. Why do you need 42 per cent more?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The key increase is to deliver on our responsibilities to prepare the past museum in Ultimo for the heritage revitalisation. Within the museum—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry, the operating expenses have increased to prepare for that, and the funding from the department has also increased to fund that?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'm talking about our overall opex.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I'm looking at *Budget Paper No. 02* at 8-20. It shows that funding from the department has increased by 42 per cent in this budget. I'm just wondering what the reason for that 42 per cent increase is.

**LISA HAVILAH:** I believe it's the opex to prepare for the revitalisation of Ultimo, which is the decanting of 3,000 objects and 142 very large objects.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Just logically following through—what was the number of objects you said you were decanting?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Let me just double-check that.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Just the figure you gave me there. A rough figure is fine; I just didn't want to misspeak.

**LISA HAVILAH:** There was 3,000 altogether.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Logically, if it's costing you that much to decant 3,000 objects, when they're reinstalled in place, won't you want the same budget to do that?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes, there is budget allocated for the re-canting of those objects back—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I wasn't sure whether that was the verb or not.

**LISA HAVILAH:** —into the museum in preparation for its reopening post the revitalisation.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Where are they all being stored?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The majority of objects are being stored in Castle Hill. There is one object, the Catalina—we have worked with HARS in Albion Park, and the Catalina will be on display at HARS in Albion Park for the period of the revitalisation.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** With respect to the Catalina and where it is being stored, does that meet international museum standards for environmental conditions?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Our collections team worked very closely with HARS to assess the environmental conditions to ensure that it was safe and secure and appropriate for the presentation of the Catalina, and their assessment is that it is.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Your team's assessment is that it meets appropriate standards?

**LISA HAVILAH:** That's correct.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And there's 24-hour security on that site?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I would have to take that on notice, but I believe that there is.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If you could take that on notice, that would be great. Is the Catalina currently at HARS, or is it still at Ultimo?

**LISA HAVILAH:** It's at HARS.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I understand that there was a period of time when the Catalina was removed from suspension on the ceiling and was sitting on the ground level at the Ultimo site. Is that right?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The Catalina, last year, was lowered for a period of time, and the purpose of that was to support an exhibition about the history of P. G. Taylor in relation to the Catalina. The exhibition included other material that the family donated, but it also gave our audiences an incredible opportunity to connect with that very special object in a new way.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Was any damage done to the Catalina when it was part of that exhibition when it was lowered to the ground?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many times was the Catalina touched by visitors during that exhibition?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I would have to take that on notice, but we have a process where we have staff protecting that object. But also our collections staff assess any type of interactions and make adjustments accordingly.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Would you be surprised to know that I have been informed that the Catalina was touched over 1,000 times?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I would have to take that on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Would that concern you, when you think about the fragility of that very important artefact?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes, but we—of course the protection of the Powerhouse collection is the utmost priority for the museum. That's why we have such an incredibly skilled collections team that work with us to manage the collection and how it is presented.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Once all of the sites are operational, do you expect your budget to remain the same, or do you expect it to increase—your opex?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The opex does increase, yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** By how much? What's the percentage?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'd have to take that on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It's interesting, actually, because you're acquiring a new site, so we could colloquially say you are doubling in size, and your opex is increasing?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** The Art Gallery doubled in size and they lost funding. Why is the Powerhouse being treated so specially in funding?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I can't comment on the Art Gallery.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It is interesting. When you're decanting the objects, what's happening to the interactive exhibitions and the display cases?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The display cases and the exhibition furniture and display material that was in the Powerhouse Museum in Ultimo—it was a combination of some things were retained and preserved for use in the future, but there was also some exhibition furniture that the museum assessed that it didn't need into the future. We developed a program to make that material accessible to regional museums and regional organisations, including schools.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So there'll be no need to reacquire any of that?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No. The material that is useful for the future for the museum was retained, and the material that was assessed as not useful for the future was what was—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the intention is to again display all of the items that have been decanted?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We'll create a series of exhibitions that will feature the Powerhouse collection, and the three key iconic objects—the Boulton and Watt, the Catalina, and Locomotive No. 1—will be on permanent display. We will move collections and exhibitions through the exhibition spaces.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If you're gaining an extra site—effectively doubling—why will less of the collection be on display at any one time?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No, there will be more.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry, I understood you to say that you would be exhibiting certain parts of the collection at certain times. Locomotive No. 1 and Catalina would be on permanent display.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Will everything else be on permanent display?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Why not?

**LISA HAVILAH:** With Parramatta, the exhibitions will change more so than at Ultimo. The collection will be on long-term display, but we'll continue to update exhibitions and update collections. One of the things that we are really committed to is—we have 500,000 objects and we want to provide as much access to those objects as possible. It's really important not only to rest those objects but also to tell new stories all the time.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many of those objects are on permanent display now?

**LISA HAVILAH:** There were 3,000 objects that we decanted.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many will be on permanent display under the new iteration of the museum?

**LISA HAVILAH:** There will be more than 3,000 objects that will come back into the museum.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** On permanent display?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Not on permanent display.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many will be on permanent display?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Three will be on permanent display.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So we are going from 3,000 objects on permanent display to three objects on permanent display?

**LISA HAVILAH:** So what we will do is—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** No, I understand exactly what's happening. I am concerned about it, but I understand. The floor for Locomotive No. 1, will that be strong enough so that it can be exhibited exactly in its present form?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes, absolutely.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So there will be no need to move any part of it? The entirety of everything associated with Locomotive No. 1 will be able to be displayed?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Absolutely.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Excellent. STEM opportunities for girls, how important is that as a role for the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences?

**LISA HAVILAH:** It's incredibly important. At Powerhouse Parramatta we're establishing the Lang Walker Family Academy, which is 60-bed accommodation that will deliver an immersive program that will be focused on providing opportunities for young people across Western Sydney and regional New South Wales. We are developing that program in partnership with the NSW Department of Education, and there are elements of that program that are focussed on women in STEM. We're expanding those partnerships into industry as well.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Carlon, I want to get some information, if I can, about speed cameras and the road death tolls. There was the change of course to speed cameras and the warning signs that were put back in place. Has the Government commissioned research or got evidence before it to show what impact those warning signs have on people speeding and the death toll? Have you been able to draw a correlation there?

**BERNARD CARLON:** There is an evaluation of our automated enforcement strategy, which has commenced. There will be an evaluation of the impacts of the whole strategy as well as the individual programs. In terms of the timing, we'd have to take that on notice for when all that will be available. We normally would do, based on the Auditor General's previous advice around speed cameras and those policy changes, a five-year analysis in order to determine whether or not, and the degree to which, any particular policy change had an impact on trauma reduction. That is basically the way in which that is happening. Certainly in terms of the trauma on our roads, last year we saw a significant increase in the fatalities. So far this year we have seen that moderate to a degree. In February, we had around 95 more deaths than the previous 12-month rolling average. By the end of August, 27 August, that had moderated to be 26 deaths compared to the previous 12 months. So we are starting to see that increase moderate.

As of today, we are 227 fatalities compared to 225 for the same period last year, which is two more fatalities. I should have prefaced this with, clearly the impact of the loss of loved ones and the serious injuries incurred by individuals is tragic in these preventable crashes. I think there is a moderation of that increase that we've seen in the number of fatalities on our roads. We're hoping that the measures that have continued to be implemented as part of the Road Safety Action Plan will continue to drive that down over the next four months so that will see us under the amount of fatalities that we had last year by the end of this year.

**The CHAIR:** That 227 figure you just gave us, was that for the previous 12 months from today?

**BERNARD CARLON:** No. The 12-month rolling figure, as of yesterday, the latest figure is 342 deaths for the 12-month period. When we compare that, though, we're back at about 2019 levels, in terms of a 12-month period.

**The CHAIR:** So 2019 levels—high or low? Not low, but comparatively to the last 12-month rolling figure. Do you have the previous two years of the 12-month rolling figure before this year?

**BERNARD CARLON:** In terms of the three-year average, we're currently 53 for the 12-month rolling figure, so 53 more fatalities. That is taking into account that in 2021 and 2022, they were two of the lowest number of fatalities that we'd experienced in almost 100 years. We have had significantly low numbers of fatalities in the last five years in terms of our rolling average. But last year saw a significant increase in the number. As a result of the forum and other actions in the plan, we're continuing to implement actions to again address that trauma on our roads.

**The CHAIR:** The last 12-months rolling figure, 342. The previous 12 months to that 12 months, and then the previous 12 months, just the figure each time?

**BERNARD CARLON:** It's 342 compared to 324, which is 18 more.

**The CHAIR:** This year? As in the last 12 months?

**BERNARD CARLON:** For that 12-month period, compared to where we were in February, which was 95 more than the previous 12 months. So you can see that increase that we experienced is starting to moderate.

**The CHAIR:** But still not dropping. When you are saying the increase, you are suggesting this average of a peak is starting to average out but is still increasing?

**BERNARD CARLON:** It's not continuing to increase, it's moderating. Yes, certainly in terms of the comparison between this year and the previous 12 months, we are still 18 fatalities more for that rolling 12-month period.

**The CHAIR:** Is New South Wales unique in the country for its warning signs before speed cameras?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes, we are the only jurisdiction that has warning signs prior and post the cameras. ACT do have cameras on the rooftops, as we do have in New South Wales as well.

**The CHAIR:** On the rooftops?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes, there is a sign which is placed 250 metres, on average, prior to the camera enforcement—50 metres prior, one which is on the rooftop of the vehicle and another sign which is 50 metres past.

**The CHAIR:** Hang on, you're saying in Victoria they'll just have one on the car?

**BERNARD CARLON:** No, the ACT is the only other jurisdiction that has signage located at the camera enforcement.

**The CHAIR:** But at the point of the car and not beforehand, in terms of warning?

**BERNARD CARLON:** On the rooftop of the car in the ACT, yes.

**The CHAIR:** So nothing has been done within your policy area, Mr Carlon, in terms of road safety that suggests that potentially New South Wales, as a proportion of deaths on our roads, has more than most of the other States and Territories per capita? Is that fair to say?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Last year there was an increase in three jurisdictions: Victoria, NSW and South Australia.

**The CHAIR:** Do we have the most per capita?

**BERNARD CARLON:** In terms of the rate of population, New South Wales is around the equivalent of Victoria. In terms of the population size, yes, New South Wales has more fatalities and trauma, based on just raw numbers, compared to the other jurisdictions, other than in some years. In 2022 we were the lowest rate of fatalities in the country, even compared to the Northern Territory and ACT. It was the lowest on record and it saw New South Wales ranked 11th in the OECD countries in terms of the rate of fatalities. We achieved a significant reduction in that year.

**The CHAIR:** Doesn't it make sense, then, for your unit to be looking now—not in five years, but now—at what the correlation is between the presence of those warning signs and speeding? I did speak out against this when the legislation was before the Parliament, having grown up in Queensland and learning to drive there. I think it's well known on Reddit forums and everywhere else that New South Wales, and Sydney particularly, tends to have the drivers that speed—that seems to be the standard—10 to 15 kilometres over the limit until they see those signs and then they slow down and then speed up after those signs. Not that anybody should do that, but it does seem obvious that one way of looking at whether we can reduce the road toll is to thoroughly investigate whether those signs are working or whether they're allowing speeding to take place where the cameras are in place.

**BERNARD CARLON:** We are monitoring speeding across the network in relation to that question. Of course, we have a whole series of enforcement cameras, including mobile speed cameras, fixed speed cameras, red-light speed cameras and average speed cameras. I'd note that, in the forum that was conducted in February, there was an action for us to examine the benefits and challenges of using average speed cameras to enforce light vehicles. We've been doing work on that front as well. Certainly we've been working with police around their operations as well—enhanced enforcement program around, in particular, the increase in the speed-related fatalities.

**The CHAIR:** Have you been asked by the Minister to determine whether the speed cameras work in terms of reducing deaths or not? Have you been actually doing that body of work now?

**BERNARD CARLON:** What I would point to—

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, the warning signs, not the cameras.

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes. What I would point to is that there's already information on the public record that was tabled as part of the Parliamentary inquiry associated with the speed camera changes and modelling, which is on our website, that indicates the advocacy of the programs as they operate in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales. I think that information is already readily and publicly available, as is the information around other speed camera systems and the rates at which they prevent trauma.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Mr Murray, through you, I might direct some follow-up questions to Ms Havilah around the Powerhouse Museum. Ms Havilah, earlier I asked about the floor space and you came back with a figure of 7,800.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Am I correct in saying, though, in 1988 the floor space was around 21,000 square metres, and it remained that until you came in as CEO in 2014?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Following the museum opening in 1988, there were significant changes that were made. Following 1988, over the period of 34 years of the museum operating on the site, there have been significant changes that have happened within the museum in terms of orientation. There have been new lifts and there have been new spaces consolidated and changed. None of that change happened in the past five years, during my period there, but that is the assessment of the exhibition space as it currently stands. It doesn't include things like hallways and other spaces. We're only counting the exhibition space.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Are you saying there has been no change in exhibition space since you became CEO, or there has been?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No, there hasn't been any significant change in exhibition space.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Significant?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I think we have restored—in the boiler hall we took the carpet up and restored the concrete floor, but there haven't been any square metre changes.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** At all? Are you able to take on notice—

**LISA HAVILAH:** I will take it on notice, but I don't believe so.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** —from 2014 until now, whether there have been any fluctuations, up and down?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'm very happy to, yes.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** We spoke about the funding, and I think you came back and said that 2023-24 was \$127 million, and you gave a good outline as to what that covers. Have you got what the funding will be for 2024-25, or is that yet to be determined?

**LISA HAVILAH:** No, that is 2024-25.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** That is 2024-25.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes. I'm sorry. I just misspoke at the beginning of that answer.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** That's all good; I just wanted to double-check. I might just jump over to Ms Mares. Have we got any feedback on the Bulli bypass?

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes. In the Regional Roads Fund—that's why we didn't have it at hand—there is \$20 million in the budget papers for investigation of extension of Memorial Drive to provide potential bypass.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I'm just looking at what the early investigations will involve. Have we done any of these early investigation steps? Have we started to identify a feasible location or footprint?

**TRUDI MARES:** I don't have a lot of information on the Regional Roads Fund. I don't know if Ms Drover has any update on that.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Is Wollongong classed as regional now?

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes, it is in that portfolio.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** It keeps changing. It is hard to keep track.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** We will come back, hopefully—

**TRUDI MARES:** Monday.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** —as soon as we can.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** I might pursue that on Monday, if it is more of a regional thing. Mr Carlon, we were talking about the Minister's press release with Minister Aitchison. I just wanted to pick up on a couple of things that they suggested you were going to do. One was around exploring ways with Corrective Services to enhance behaviour change programs for high-risk drink driving and drug offenders. Where are we up to with that? What does that actually look like?

**BERNARD CARLON:** We do have some behavioural programs that have been operating for several years and which have been evaluated, in particular, the Sober Driver Program, which is conducted by our Corrective Services colleagues. This is about investigating the potential expansion of that to high-risk offenders in other categories—drug driving and other high-risk offences. The work on that is afoot. We actually have engaged with Corrective Services, and we are looking at the development of those programs in response to the Law Reform Commission's recommendations around additional educational programs and mandatory programs for high-risk offenders.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** The second part of that talks about implementing stronger drug and alcohol testing after serious crashes. Excuse my ignorance, but one would think that as soon as there was a serious crash, police on the scene would automatically test—obviously, if they could. If the person was seriously injured and taken to hospital, I imagine the test would happen there. This implies that there hasn't been strong post-crash testing for alcohol and drugs.

**BERNARD CARLON:** The legislation currently requires mandatory testing associated with drivers involved in fatal crashes. Currently that doesn't apply to crashes involving grievous bodily harm.

As part of the Road Safety Action Plan, it was one of the programs which is to be investigated. A significant amount of work has been done with Justice, police and Health. We have been working with those organisations in consideration of a potential for mandatory testing associated with grievous bodily harm related crashes.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** At the moment it seems like it's up to the discretion of the police whether they test or not outside of the fatal. You're saying it's going to become more prescribed if it's serious grievous bodily harm, or are we looking at even going further back in terms of scale of the serious incident—if an ambulance is called?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Does that then trigger a test?

**BERNARD CARLON:** This is essentially a change to the legislation which will enable police to have those tests done as part of the mandatory process when there's a grievous bodily harm incident. It's a little complex in that it needs to be assessed clearly in consultation with the admission that the individual has with the hospital as well. The work is progressing and we're progressing that advice for government about how that could be implemented.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Do you have a date as to when we might have a clear answer, or when we might see legislative change in that space?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Again, that's a matter for government but we are preparing the information in collaboration with those other agencies currently.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Mr Banasiak, I do have a little bit more information on Bulli, if it's worthwhile now—ahead of Monday.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Yes.

**JOSH MURRAY:** As my colleagues have mentioned, \$20 million has been set aside. Early planning work on the bypass includes commencing the registration of the project with Infrastructure NSW; collecting traffic survey data, which has been done on numerous occasions, most recently in April 2024; commencing Aboriginal heritage and environmental impact studies in the surrounding area; commencing strategic transport modelling to estimate future travel patterns; and exploring the alignment options and the resulting impacts on the surrounding road network using latest population and employment data. That's where we're at, at the moment, for Memorial Drive.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** It says on your website that you received input from community specifically to this project in February and March this year and that there'd be a consultation summary report published. Can that be found somewhere public? I've looked on the website. It doesn't seem to be there.

**JOSH MURRAY:** I don't believe we have the summary yet, but we will check that and if it's available—again, before Monday—we can provide that.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Rodrigues, the potential for Centennial Park to be used a little bit more for music festivals or music events has been limited due to the restrictions. Have you been doing any work on looking at Centennial Park and other green spaces around Sydney and how we get more festivals, more events, into some of those places that traditionally have had restrictions in place? I think Centennial Park is probably the only one that has that restriction. I know a number of festivals are quite keen to see Centennial Park able to be a venue for more events such as music festivals.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Thanks for the question. I'm aware of discussion around Centennial Park. I don't want to frustrate the Committee. It doesn't fall under our area. I think that's the Greater Sydney Parklands Trust. But in respect of the festivals community generally, or music promoters generally, of course given the discussion around festivals and changes to market dynamics, some of the issues which have been canvassed today and no doubt will come up again, and discussions around uses of other spaces, including things like sports stadia, streets, is something that I guess we are aware of. Where we are able to work in with other agencies and/or try to facilitate discussions—an example of that would be through our local council program where, as you know, through the Vibrancy Reforms there's a greater desire to use streets for entertainment, shut streets et cetera—that is partly where some of the activity that we've been involved in is.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can I ask about the M6 stage one, Mr Murray? What's the new delivery date for the M6 stage one?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We're currently assessing with the contractor the impacts on the program after the incidents of earlier this year.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What does that mean? What's the sort of timing once you've assessed the impacts?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We don't have an updated timing as yet but we are doing—in collaboration with CGU, the project proponent—the assessment of methodologies and current scenarios, and we hope to have an update from that process soon.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will there be delays?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We anticipate there will be delays to that project, but we haven't quantified that at this stage.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's obvious, but we're just trying to ascertain what the thinking and the timing is, perhaps, on that.

**JOSH MURRAY:** We don't even have a ballpark yet. We're working through. There will no doubt be various methodologies that come back from the constructor, and we'll need to look at those.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The constructor's looking at those and coming back to you. Are you working with them, or they're doing that work and they put something to you?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We're working with them, but SafeWork is still involved in that section of the site that was impacted.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I understand that these things happen. That is what it is, but do you anticipate it could be months or years, potentially?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'm afraid I wouldn't even have—Ms Drover, would you have any further advice on that?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Those investigations continue, as does the revised design. We are hoping to restart the tunnelling in that section next year. It's 244 metres which were subject to the subsidence. The rest of the tunnelling continues. In fact, 86 per cent of tunnelling for the whole of the M6 is complete and the other works—tunnel lining, tunnel pavements, mech-elec fit-out—that's well progressed. But around that 244 metres tunnelling is halted. That's in alignment with the SafeWork prohibition on tunnelling in that area. But the rest of the project proceeds.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** There may be a redesign involved?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Yes, definitely a redesign and, depending on what design is confirmed, that will obviously inform the program and, therefore, what the delay might be.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What are the cost implications of those delays and redesign?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** That's the subject of quite complicated legal, commercial and insurance processes at the moment, so I'm not able to comment on that any further.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it the thinking that that will go to an assessment? What are we looking at in terms of time and who's doing that work in that process?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Obviously, the insurance processes are underway, as are discussions, but it will be a function of the investigation and the way forward more generally.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** On that project, who took that construction risk on the contract?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Given the process in place—and some of them are legal and privileged—I'm not able to talk to that in this forum.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Will the taxpayers be on the hook for more money?

**JOSH MURRAY:** Again, we're working through the commercial processes. We couldn't really detail that here.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When is a likely milestone when the public will become aware of the next steps, given the possible delay?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** When we've confirmed the approach and the design to recommence the tunnelling in that area, we will obviously have to engage with community. There will be a whole raft of stakeholders that will be involved in that, and we'll need to get our necessary approvals in place. Of course, we will need the approval of WorkSafe to lift that prohibition and recommence. As I said, we're hoping to do that



next year, but there is quite a complex process to work through. No-one is going to recommence tunnelling in that area until we are satisfied that it is safe.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I understand. So you've got WorkSafe, you've got the insurers, you've got the risk, you've got redesign, you've got planning approval and you've got cost.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** There's community, the local council—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Community consultation, yes.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** There are roads above that precinct et cetera, so there's some complexity to be worked through.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's a billion-dollar project. I'm just after some detail about what the implications are of a large and complex project, appreciating that it is complex, and the timing about when we might know. So it would be safe to say it that it probably isn't going to open in 2026. That's a fair assessment, with all of those steps involved. Would that be accurate?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** We're looking at what aspects of the project could open to the original schedule. For example, the active transport connections are well advanced. We've got the new bridge in place over President Avenue. There's five kilometres of active transport paths, shared paths et cetera. We're just assessing what components could be opened. Obviously, we're not going to open a partial tunnel, given it starts—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, the tunnel obviously won't open, right?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Yes, but there might be some other community benefits that can be delivered to the original program.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That's the surface-level community benefit, which is good.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** The surface level, yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But you can't open part of a tunnel with a sinkhole.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** In fact, the surface roadworks are due to be complete next year.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So President Avenue will be tidied up and back in place next year?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** That's the current program, but we'll obviously assess that when we look at the overall program to recommence tunnelling.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that looking at the first half of next year, potentially, or is it more likely later?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** I think it's later in 2025.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Okay, understandably. There's a budget line item for south-west Sydney roads planning. You expect to spend \$65 million, Mr Murray. Which roads are within the business case for that one?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'm going to ask Ms Mares to talk to south-west Sydney roads as it's been a significant focus over recent times, including with the Federal Government.

**TRUDI MARES:** South-west Sydney roads planning—the \$65 million is for four pieces of planning: Menangle Road, Camden Valley Way, Cowpasture Road and the Hume Highway.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When will the strategic business case be complete for that?

**TRUDI MARES:** I would have to just check the dates for those, but we've just received money in this budget for that, so we've just commenced works.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that likely to be this year?

**TRUDI MARES:** I will have to check; I wouldn't want to give you the incorrect answer.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Understanding that and the complication of that, when is the final case scheduled or anticipated to be complete?

**TRUDI MARES:** Again, we'll check all the milestone dates and be able to provide those to you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Does that funding that you mentioned cover both the strategic business case and the final business case?

**TRUDI MARES:** Can I just check? I should be able to come back to you this afternoon, but I'll just check that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That'd be very helpful. The budget says you intend to spend \$276.3 million for Garfield Road over the next four years. Is that correct?

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The contract is only expected be awarded on that one in Q3 2028. That's right, isn't it?

**TRUDI MARES:** We'll just check that.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Construction procurement is expected to commence in 2027.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that contract award?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** No, that's the commencement of the construction procurement.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When is the contract expected to be awarded, though?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** I'll need to check whether it will still be within 2027 or fall into early 2028.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That's interesting, because Infrastructure NSW says that it will be awarded in Q3 2028, so I'm just wondering which one it is.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Well, it may be 2028 but commencing in 2027. The procurement process is many months.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Perhaps you might reconcile those. They seem quite definite on their website that that's when it will be awarded. If it is 2028, it will then fall into the 2028-29 budget. That's correct, isn't it?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Yes, post-award, there will be moneys in the future years for the delivery.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Why is it in the budget now, then? If it can't be awarded until the 2028-29 budget, why is it in the budget now, if it can't be spent?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** We're still spending money on it. For example, we'll be awarding the detailed design shortly. The EOI for that closed in July this year. We're still developing the project, ready for that construction procurement.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So detailed design this year?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Yes, so the contract should be awarded early next year. Early 2025 that detailed design will therefore be provided. There are the further planning works, property acquisition, preconstruction activities et cetera.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So they will all happen in 2025?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** And 2026.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How are you going to spend the \$276.3 million in the three years prior to the delivery of the project? Because that's not until the final financial year of the forward estimates.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** I'll need to have a look at the forecast that you've got in front of you, unless you can share that with me now.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** It's got Garfield Road on the Infrastructure NSW website, so it has the spend. It's got the Garfield Road upgrade east, and that tender is Q4 2028. I can't reconcile how you can spend the \$276.3 million in the three years prior to delivery of the project.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Happy to take that on notice and just confirm.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Mr Murray, when will the election commitment of this Government to upgrade Fifteenth Avenue start construction?

**TRUDI MARES:** Happy to give an update on that, thank you. So \$50 million was provided in the budget for Fifteenth Avenue. We have got planning for the full alignment being undertaken with that funding, but we are also looking at early safety and improvement works. That funding will also be used for partial delivery.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I get that, but when is it going to start construction? That is planning, and it's great.

**TRUDI MARES:** We expect to be able to start some work on safety works next year

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that construction of the actual road or is that preliminary safety works?

**TRUDI MARES:** Preliminary works. We're just working through the final scope for that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** This is the election commitment to upgrade, not just over safety.

**TRUDI MARES:** The commitment was to plan for the upgrade of the full alignment—that's correct.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Are any upgrade works actually commencing?

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes, we're doing some safety and access works towards the Cowpasture Road end of Fifteenth Avenue. The original return to you, I think, after last estimates was that it was planning work, so we've actually been able to include some delivery works as well.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Okay, but that's not actually an upgrade; that's just preliminary work. That's not going to be actual construction work to deliver on the upgrade of the road, which is what drivers will expect.

**TRUDI MARES:** It will go towards the upgrade works, the works that we're undertaking.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Have you had any advice to suggest that construction won't start until 2030?

**TRUDI MARES:** On what, sorry?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So there's preliminary, there's planning and there's safety. But is it correct that the project won't start construction works for the actual upgrade—the full upgrade—until 2030?

**TRUDI MARES:** We have not timelined that. The planning work for the full alignment is just being undertaken now, so we do not have the time frame for the future investment decision, final business case and upgrade works.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, that's kind of my point, though, isn't it? It's the full upgrade. So you haven't had any advice to suggest that construction work won't start until 2030. Am I understanding you?

**TRUDI MARES:** The commitment was to look at what the plan would be for the upgrade, so we have not got dates for construction for the full works.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Does that safety work include inserting new lanes into Fifteenth Avenue?

**TRUDI MARES:** I will just have to have a look at what we are doing for the safety and access works, exactly, and come back to you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But the safety work doesn't include inserting new lanes.

**TRUDI MARES:** It wouldn't be widening, no.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So you would need more funding to actually upgrade Fifteenth Avenue. To do the widening—to do the upgrade—you would need further funding, according to this current budget.

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes, so the \$50 million was for planning. That's right.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So I come back to—it can't be that it will start construction in this time frame. That's right, isn't it?

**TRUDI MARES:** It would be subject to investment decisions and the assurance processes if that was to occur.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When will the delivery of Mamre Road stage two start construction?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** We're still in the planning phase for that. We are obviously constructing stage one. I'll just get the exact date for you.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm only interested in stage two.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** If you can come back to me.

**TRUDI MARES:** I can give you a little bit more information. There was obviously new funding in this budget for Mamre Road stage two. We are looking at the staging and sequencing of those works and we have not finalised a timeline for contract award or delivery yet.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What does that funding cover, then?

**TRUDI MARES:** It's for full delivery—the funding.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The INSW portal doesn't have the pipeline for the timeline of the project. That's not publicly available. Do you have any forward idea of when that might be?

**TRUDI MARES:** Just still working through that with INSW—the registration and putting it through that process. It's in that design phase.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When do you anticipate that might be available?

**TRUDI MARES:** I wouldn't guesstimate for you, but we have certainly got a lot of attention on it at the moment to progress that work. As soon as we get decisions, we'll be able to release the timelines.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Perhaps while you're getting some of that information, I might try it this way: Can you perhaps take on notice the delivery dates for each of those projects in the budget? I can sit here and we can go through each of them excruciatingly for everybody who is not being asked a question, or—I think we did this last time—

**TRUDI MARES:** We did.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Are you able to take on notice the delivery dates for each of those?

**TRUDI MARES:** Sure.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** They're in the budget. That's great. There's some funding there, but delivery is obviously critical. That would be helpful. Thank you. I might move on, then. The budget talks about the Elizabeth Drive upgrades. That sets out \$661 million over the next four years on Elizabeth Drive. When will the contract be awarded for that project?

**TRUDI MARES:** Elizabeth Drive has got two lots of work being done. First there was the \$200 million for safety and access works again.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, from the Evans Road fund.

**TRUDI MARES:** That work's underway. Then the additional funding that's been provided is being sectioned into upgrade staging.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** For M7 to Badgerys Creek.

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes, correct.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** And then Elizabeth Drive to Northern Road to Badgerys Creek.

**TRUDI MARES:** Correct.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When do we anticipate the contract will be awarded for that project?

**TRUDI MARES:** Have you got a date for that?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** No, because we're still in the planning phase.

**TRUDI MARES:** The same answer as Mamre: working through the staging and sequencing and we would have to come back, when we've been through those assurance processes, with a contract date.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So there's no funding as yet or no anticipated date for award of the project. Would you have to come back for that one as well?

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that funding for that project Elizabeth Drive west or east?

**TRUDI MARES:** The \$661 million?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes—as divided into the two.

**TRUDI MARES:** That's the full section. Yes—both sections.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can I just flag that I will be asking these questions again at February estimates, so it might be helpful if we are able to proactively bring them.

**TRUDI MARES:** Sure.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Each time, we seem to do this. It would just be very helpful if we could.

**TRUDI MARES:** Those answers for Elizabeth Drive and Mamre Road are complete because we don't have a construction date to give you, because it's not ready yet while it's still in planning and being sequenced. That one I think we've answered in full.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** All right. If you're able to bring those for each project listed in the budget—

**TRUDI MARES:** That has got delivery and a contract date?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, that will have delivery and contract award date.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** But it will be subject to planning processes, property acquisition, assurance et cetera.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, thank you. I understand that. That's helpful. In the time I've got left, I might jump to another one. Mr Murray, on the eTendering website there's a contract posted in regard to the heavy vehicle rebate, and a cost associated with that of \$36 million. That's since been taken down. Why was that contract taken down?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'd have to check that for you. It's not something that I've got information on to hand, but we will certainly take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can someone try to check that this afternoon, perhaps?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We will try. I've got a couple to come back on.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** A couple of hours—thank you. I'm just wondering why taxpayers needed to spend \$36 million on that project.

**JOSH MURRAY:** We'll ascertain the rationale around that coming off the website.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** All right, but Transport spent \$36 million on the heavy vehicle rebate scheme. I'm trying to understand what that's for and why that was.

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'll get some more detail for you. I'm sure we can come back on that one.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Does that ring a bell for anyone? Heavy vehicle rebate—\$36 million?

**TRUDI MARES:** No.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** No? No-one? Ms Hoang?

**BRENDA HOANG:** No, it doesn't ring a bell at the moment. We'll take that on notice. It could possibly be sitting in the regional transport space, so we'll look into that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Ms Mares? Ms Drover? No-one?

**TRUDI MARES:** No, I'm sorry. I don't. We'll have a look at that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm also interested in what the total cost to taxpayers is, including implementation costs, for the heavy vehicle rebate. If you could provide that one as well, that would be helpful.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Okay.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Rodrigues, I want to turn to the requirement for you to report every year to the Parliament under section 163A of the Liquor Act. In relation to the night-time economy reforms, there are reports that are provided to the Parliament in terms of how they are going. You're aware of what I'm talking about?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I understand that there's a report under the 24-hour Economy Commissioner Act. I'm not familiar with the report under the Liquor Act—that I'm responsible for—but I'm happy to be guided.

**The CHAIR:** Actually, this may be Liquor and Gaming—just tell me if it is—in terms of how many venues have applied and received the late-night trading.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** That would be a question for Mr Barakat.

**The CHAIR:** The special entertainment precincts, in terms of Enmore—how is it going with others? We still only have Enmore. Is that correct?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** That is correct. We have run an expression of interest process for councils interested in applying for special entertainment precincts. I believe there have been 21 expressions of interest in that model. I understand also that guidelines, which have also been developed in consultation with councils for

the implementation of special entertainment precincts, are now out on exhibition. I think it's fair to say there are also some councils who publicly have resolved to implement special entertainment precincts or consider them, most notably the Inner West, as you're probably aware.

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** That's where the process is currently.

**The CHAIR:** The time frame for it—you're saying guidelines have been released. Is that correct?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** On consultation is my understanding.

**The CHAIR:** Is there an expectation that there may be additional special entertainment precincts in place before summer, or is it going to be longer than that?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I may need to take it on notice, but I don't believe it would happen before summer. It's a new process under the legislation. Our office is concierging it, essentially, but making sure, through consultation, that what we end up with is fit for purpose. As part of that, we will also then assist councils, after the guidelines are approved, to complete the process that they need to, which will involve application to the planning Minister.

**The CHAIR:** In relation to the Vibrancy Reforms in general, I asked the question of the Minister earlier around the problems that some of our night-time venues are still experiencing—Club 77 was that example. What more needs to happen from your point of view? They're not finished—I'm aware of that—but we're still having allegations and anecdotal evidence of the Kings Cross police not being very encouraging to those venues who do want to stay open later and offer late events. What needs to happen, and why isn't the grouping that has the police on it—in terms of all of the departments that have to work together, is there a body where the police are, where you are? Is it a committee? Firstly, help me out with that.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Do you want me to give you a bit of guidance? I can understand the broader set of issues beyond just one venue, if that's helpful to you.

**The CHAIR:** Yes. It's not isolated, according to my discussions with some of the Kings Cross club owners.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** The Vibrancy Reforms agenda has been a multi-agency program. It's a continuing program of government. The first round of it has an imaginatively named steering committee that I co-chair with the Cabinet Office that includes police, Health, Planning—a number of relevant agencies. That is one mechanism around the regulatory review and then the Cabinet process leading to legislation.

**The CHAIR:** Is somebody on that from police?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Correct. Yes, absolutely.

**The CHAIR:** What's that position? Who's on the steering committee?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** The position is currently filled by Mr Paul Dunstan. It was previously Mr Lanyon, prior to his departure.

**The CHAIR:** And his position is—

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I don't want to get his title incorrect. I think he's a superintendent in the NSW Police Force, but maybe we can clarify that.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, thank you.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Think about that as the front-end process, if I can call it that. The legislation has passed. New systems are being implemented around things like later trading and special entertainment precincts. Concurrent with that has been a process of familiarising the working Police Force with the vibrancy agenda. My team and I have gone and briefed all of the licensing commanders across the State and spent some time with them. You'll appreciate that there are over 80 area commands across the State. The decision-making around individual licences—I should also say I'm not New South Wales police, so I'm giving you my best understanding of it. Licensing decisions are often determined at the area command level, for the most part. I am aware of the Club 77 situation.

**The CHAIR:** Have you met with them?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Not in respect of this particular instance but, as part of our ongoing work, we engage with venues broadly. Club 77 is familiar to me and the operator is familiar to me. To try to get to both the specific and the general, while we have made improvements in some regards, for venues there is still a

relatively fragmented approach to trading because you still need a development consent or you still need a licence and then modifications and interpretations aren't concrete. This is why we need to continue to work on this, and I think that the Government has been pretty clear about setting this as a core part of its agenda.

Where issues arise—as is the case with Club 77—and we are notified, we will engage with others in government, in particular Liquor and Gaming or the Hospitality Concierge if there is a licence issue, for example. We don't control that, but we at least ensure information flow. In this instance, we've also reached out to the City of Sydney because there was a City of Sydney issue raised as well. I think that's currently where it's at. You'll be aware, and I am aware, that the commissioner and Mr Thurtell took a question on notice around this, either in the committee that you were in or another committee that was part of this estimates hearing. I would also add that I did get a direction just now from the Minister in his questioning to follow up with the commissioner, which I'll do next week when I see her.

**The CHAIR:** About the licensing issue? Excellent.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Specifically about this issue.

**The CHAIR:** That's very good. It's very good to have a responsive Minister in that way; I will say that now and put that on the record. Thanks for letting me know. Roads and wildlife kills—the Minister mentioned the wildlife symposium, which was very good. What additional measures or new measures is the Government considering or researching in terms of assisting with the terrible wildlife kill rate that we have in this State? Are you actively looking at and considering more underpasses and overpasses across the State at some of those sites that desperately need them?

**SALLY WEBB:** Chair, I will speak about some of the general systems we have, and then Ms Mares can take some of the specifics around some of those projects. As part of the symposium, we looked at a number of, essentially, animal deterrent systems that will warn animals about entering the road corridor. Some of those might be technology. Some of those might be physical barriers or design. We also looked at a range of improved driver awareness systems. They may use AI and vehicle technology to warn drivers to slow down, and those are probably the most promising.

As part of the symposium, we have a review of all of the experts and the reports that were presented at that symposium, and there will also be a literature review. We're expecting that report to come through towards the end of September. The other piece we do is that when we design roads, we know that physical barriers are typically the most effective to restrict animals on the corridor. We have significant success in designing some of those road barriers, for example, on the Pacific Highway, and we put that into the infrastructure design of the road construction. I'll hand to you about Appin Road and some of those areas.

**TRUDI MARES:** Did you want some further information?

**The CHAIR:** Yes. While you're doing that, Heathcote Road is another one that I've been contacted about where I don't think a promise to fence has been realised yet.

**TRUDI MARES:** I'll start with Heathcote, then. In Heathcote we did the bridge widening over Woronora, and there is koala fencing there for those sections.

**The CHAIR:** When was that put in place?

**TRUDI MARES:** I'll get the date for you. I might have it here.

**The CHAIR:** Was it recently?

**TRUDI MARES:** Last year, when it was opened to traffic. We have been tracking koala movements and they are using that traverse, and they use the mini bridge under the bridge to get to the other side, so that has been quite successful. You know about Picton Road. We put the fence in there; that has been successful as well. There is additional fencing being undertaken for Heathcote Road. I will double-check, but I think that will commence next year.

**The CHAIR:** Right. I think that's the one I'm being asked about.

**TRUDI MARES:** Heathcote is next year. On Appin Road, the four kilometres of temporary works are in. We had that unfortunate incident with it coming down. They're working to put concrete blocks and reinstate that by Monday. They're working on that now. We hope to get a date very soon when they will put the permanent fencing work in and start commencing those and do the two underpasses for Appin Road. That'll go from Ambarvale right up to the Mount Gilead development.

**The CHAIR:** That's very useful. What's the timeline? There are two underpasses. They haven't commenced yet, have they?

**TRUDI MARES:** No, they haven't. The approval under the addendum REF was that they had to put the temporary fencing in, which has been completed for the four kilometres. They are getting ready to commence construction on the fencing and the underpasses. I did ask for a timeline. I don't have that with me today, but we'll follow that up.

**The CHAIR:** You pre-empted my next question. Ms Webb, you talked about barriers, and that's right; in quite a big section of the main highways that's what we need to do. But in certain parts that are critical wildlife corridors—and I recognise that underpasses and overpasses and every corridor is probably not realistic. I know there are a couple of great overpasses, as I am sure you're all aware, on the Pacific Highway on the North Coast. Is the Government considering wildlife overpasses like that in other parts of the State where there are significant wildlife fatalities, where it is a significant crossing, as well as the barriers that you mentioned?

**SALLY WEBB:** Certainly when we're designing new stretches of road, as part of the design of those new works we will look at the impact on the environment of that development and look at overpasses, underpasses and other wildlife protection factors, including fencing and potentially putting koala fodder along the alignment, away from the road, to redirect the wildlife. In terms of active interventions on particular pieces of road, I think Ms Mares has spoken to those existing precincts—Picton, Appin Road, Bells Line of Road et cetera. But I am not aware of other particular—

**TRUDI MARES:** Assessments on existing roads, I think is your question, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**TRUDI MARES:** I might take that on notice, if I could, and see if there are any works being undertaken on existing roads. We rely on the data that would come from the department of environment and climate change on where there are koala habitats or wildlife interventions that we would need to look at.

**The CHAIR:** I may have asked something quite similar at the previous estimates as well.

**TRUDI MARES:** You asked me about signage.

**The CHAIR:** Actually, no, it was regional transport where I did ask this. The Warringah Freeway Upgrade and Western Harbour Tunnel—we've been through the Rozelle interchange inquiry and the inquiry has reported, and I think one of the recommendations was to try to ensure that this didn't happen again with this one. Mr Murray, are you confident that we will avoid the mess that the Rozelle interchange opening created and, if so, why are you confident?

**JOSH MURRAY:** Thank you for that question. As we discussed, and are now preparing our report for the parliamentary inquiry, we are taking into account all the learnings of Rozelle and also further traffic modelling and studies for that northern part of the harbour so that we can take into account not only what we saw through traffic movement through the inner west but also the impact of deleting the Beaches Link tunnel, and some of the other changes that we think the network performance might require at that point on the bridge and the Warringah expressway.

**The CHAIR:** With the removal of the Beaches Link, recognising that the environmental impact assessment and all of that was undertaken with the Beaches Link in place, as well as traffic modelling, has anything happened since the Rozelle interchange inquiry? Has any more traffic modelling or revised traffic modelling been undertaken as a result of that Beaches Link no longer being a part of this project?

**JOSH MURRAY:** That's the piece of work we've begun now. It is a network mapping as to where the traffic will move, what we have learnt since, but also with some slight scope and design changes that flow from the Beaches Link change and the progress we have made with construction to date. We want to make sure that we take the freshest possible look at the configuration of all of those lanes there.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** If I can also clarify too, the EIS for the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway did look at both a with and without case for Beaches Link because it was done as a standalone EIS. At that time, the Beaches Link project haven't received investment decision, so it was done separately.

**The CHAIR:** Ms Drover, with the fact that the Beaches Link project isn't going ahead, are the tunnel stubs, if you like, for the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway being built in a way that, if a future government does choose to do a beaches link—whether it's public transport or roads—could enable that connection to be made?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Yes. It was a decision of the Government last year to continue with the contracted works for the Warringah Freeway, which futureproofed for a future Beaches Link. For example, if you drive along the Warringah Freeway today you will see that the Beaches Link on-ramp southbound is largely complete. Having said that, though, we did look at reducing some of that scope. For example, we did slightly



reduce the length of stubs for Beaches Link, given that could come back and be done at a later time. That was a sensible decision.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Ms Havilah, do you have a figure for the standalone budget of the cost of the decanting of all of the objects?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Thank you for that question. We haven't quite finalised the decant, so there are still some items that we are resolving, but we estimate that the budget will be between \$5 million and \$6 million.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do you have a budgeted amount to "re-cant" the objects back?

**LISA HAVILAH:** It will depend on the exhibitions that get developed over the next couple of years, and we'll work within the budgets that we're given by Government.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So they've been decanted into storage and you will bring them out for a specific exhibition and then put them back in again.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Exactly.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** There's no budget for that?

**LISA HAVILAH:** We're working on the parameters of that at the moment.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much did the Catalina cost to decant?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The total cost of the Catalina to HARS was \$285,250.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** To re-cant the Catalina, how much will that cost?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I imagine that will be a similar cost.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I understand that you have both Powerhouse Associates and creative residents as part of your program?

**LISA HAVILAH:** That's correct.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** As a museum of applied arts and sciences, how many of the creative residents are working in an applied science field?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'll just find my notes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You can take that on notice if you like.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Okay.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Also, could you tell me how many of the Powerhouse associates are working in an applied science field?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I can take that on notice. We have six associates; I believe two are applied science.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Two out of the six.

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes, but I'll get you the exact details.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** And the other four are—

**LISA HAVILAH:** Applied arts.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So there are four in applied arts and two in applied sciences?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Does that balance change as the participants in the program change?

**LISA HAVILAH:** The program changes every year in terms of the associates, and we really try to get a balance between applied arts and applied sciences in terms of that program.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So we could expect next year it would be four in the sciences and two in the arts?

**LISA HAVILAH:** That would be our hope, yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do creative residents receive fees or funding for the museum at any point?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I'd have to take that detail on notice, but the overall approach to that program is that we provide a subsidy to a rental fee. In exchange for that rental, the organisation or the individual works with the museum on a range of different programs. They might be education programs; they might be research programs. It might be an exhibition program. But the idea is to support and sustain their practice but also embed their practice into the programs of the museum.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That work that they do for the museum—does that attract funding on top of the subsidy that they receive for the rent?

**LISA HAVILAH:** I don't believe so, but if it does I will detail that information for you.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much rent in total have you received from creative residents in the past financial year?

**LISA HAVILAH:** Let me just check that for you.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Can I just ask a quick follow-up based the questions from Ms Carter, Ms Havilah? You talked about parts of the stuff that was in the Powerhouse will come in and out depending on exhibits. Am I assuming from that that there won't be any permanent exhibits in the new, revitalised Powerhouse? Is that the thing? It will just be a rolling—

**LISA HAVILAH:** Thank you for that question because I think there is a bit of a misperception here. There will be long-term exhibitions that will feature the Powerhouse collection. The commitment to the three permanent objects, which are Locomotive No.1, the Catalina and the Boulton and Watt, will stay there permanently. But the advice that I've received from our collection team is that it's really important not to have collection objects on display for 30, 40 or 50 years. It's really important that those objects get rested. But it's also really important in terms of the amount of collection and the different stories that we can tell. We want to be able to connect more of our collection with more of the community. So it's long-term, but it is changing. But it's not changing every six months; it's changing every three to five years—and it's not every object.

**The Hon. MARK BANASIAK:** Thank you for that clarification.

**The CHAIR:** We will break and be back at 3.45 p.m.

**(Grant Knoetze, Craig Moran, Mark Hare, Lisa Havilah and Mary Darwell withdrew.)**

**(Short adjournment)**

**The CHAIR:** We will resume with questions from the Opposition.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I thank all of the witnesses who are here all day. We may have supplementary questions for you, so stay tuned. I think it's Mr Carlon, but through you, Mr Murray, if you'd like to take a swing first? Forest Way at Belrose and Frenchs Forest—Transport advises, at the intersection of Forest Way, Glen Street, Wearden Road and Bambara Road, that you're seeking funding opportunities through State and Federal road safety programs for the design and delivery of pedestrian fencing along a section of Forest Way. Do you want me to repeat that?

**JOSH MURRAY:** No. That's okay.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** On that intersection and the delivery of pedestrian fencing along the section of Forest Way, do you have an update on where that work and that application is up to?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I think that would be the Wakehurst Public School potential school safety work.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes. Bang on.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Bernard, do you have anything further?

**BERNARD CARLON:** I should say that residents have raised concerns regarding pedestrian safety and are seeking a review of the 40-kilometre school zone. Crash history has been reviewed and carried out for the past five years on Forest Way between Wearden Street and Glen Street. There have been seven reported crashes, including one pedestrian crash. We are aware of the additional pedestrian crash that occurred this year as well, and we're working on the review of that. We've been working with Northern Beaches Council, actively seeking funding throughout State and Federal programs for that program to upgrade the road surface to higher friction asphalt. We're assessing the site for any pedestrian facility and additional pedestrian infrastructure that would separate the vehicle and pedestrian traffic in that area. We're also doing the review of the school zone area as well.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** In terms of where that application is up to for the other funding opportunities, where is that at?

**BERNARD CARLON:** I'd have to take that on notice and double-check. There are a number of programs that are currently being reviewed.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which ones?

**BERNARD CARLON:** I can give you an update of those School Infrastructure programs as well as our Safer Roads Program.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** So, Safer Roads and School Infrastructure. Federal funds?

**BERNARD CARLON:** And Federal funding, yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Do you know which ones?

**BERNARD CARLON:** No. I'd have to take it on notice and give you the details as to where those processes are up to.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I'm trying to help you here, Mr Carlon, to get some funding in. In relation to that pedestrian—and obviously not identifying them—do you have an indication of the age of that pedestrian? I'll put that in the context of the school that is nearby.

**BERNARD CARLON:** No. I don't have those details to hand.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** If you could, perhaps, take that on notice—whether it was a school-age student or not.

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Clearly there are concerns from the community in relation to that, because primary school students from the Wakehurst Public School cross that busy road on a daily basis, and there are cars and trucks travelling there at 70 kilometres per hour. We heard earlier about the ratio of fatality and serious injury depending on the kilometre-per-hour rate of the vehicle travelling. They are travelling at 70 kilometres because it's not in a school zone. Are you aware of that?

**BERNARD CARLON:** I'm not familiar exactly with those local streets and that particular school zone, but a review is being conducted around the potential extension of school zones.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Where is that potential extension?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Again, I'd have to take that on notice and reply.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** There is obviously concern because there are school students crossing there. It's not only a busy road but also a high-speed zone with trucks. Can you give us an indication of what the urgency might be around that review?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes, certainly. I think there is another program, which came out of the forum, where we are actually looking to look at a range of different areas across travel to school. We know that between four to six times more crashes during those school zone periods actually happen not within those school zones but on the route to school. There is a review that is taking place, which we're going to prioritise, in a range of locations in the metropolitan and regional areas. We will take this on notice, of course, but we could consider this area for participating in that review, which is a broader scale review of safe routes to school, essentially.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Could you confirm on notice whether this particular spot is included in that?

**BERNARD CARLON:** We can come back on notice to give you advice, yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you, that would be helpful. Given that primary school students are involved, there is some urgency, I would have thought, to that. We'd be grateful for your consideration of that. Can you provide to this Committee the number of incidents and accidents along Forest Way in the last financial year?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Again, I can take that on notice. We do publish all of the data associated with crashes on local roads. That would be up to date for 2023 on our website, but we can give you an update with this year's data as well.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Does that identify Forest Way?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Yes.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Good. Staying on Forest Way, and the graffiti at the intersection of Warringah Road, is Transport satisfied that the work undertaken by Connect Sydney—the body that does graffiti clean-up—to put up barriers is sufficient to stop graffiti at that location?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'm happy to have a look into that. That is obviously part of that maintenance contract that falls under one of those responsibilities, but if the Committee has concerns that that intersection—which is obviously much larger than it has always been over the years—has some new vulnerabilities, we're happy to have a look at it.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you, Mr Murray. I'm pleased that you've identified that it has expanded. I understand that, despite those barriers, there is still graffiti on that intersection. It has cost, so far, over \$100,000 to remove graffiti at that intersection in the last two years. If you can come back to us on the implications of that one?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We will take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** And what it might take for the graffiti to stop—and to stop that taxpayer funding of the clean-up—and, rather, get those barriers in place. That would be helpful. Can I ask how Transport is monitoring that intersection for graffiti?

**JOSH MURRAY:** Again, I think we'll take that on notice in terms of the graffiti elements. We obviously monitor it from a traffic point of view, but I couldn't speak here to how much we can see into the areas that might be hidden from view.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Maybe the recurrence after the clean-up—and recurrence and clean-up and recurrence—might be of interest to drive initiatives for funding. What's the current shortage—sorry, I don't know the technical term—of lollipop people for school zones?

**JOSH MURRAY:** School crossing supervisors.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Thank you—affectionately known as lollipop monitors.

**JOSH MURRAY:** That's right. Ms Webb or Mr Carlon?

**SALLY WEBB:** I'd have to check the exact number that we have in the program at the moment. It's a very enthusiastic cohort. The age of participants ranges from 18 right up to people in their eighties. At the last calculation, I believe we were about—between 1,350 and 1,400 positions—so, short about 100, 150 positions.

**JOSH MURRAY:** About 1,400 people is how many people are in those roles, and you believe it's short approximately—

**SALLY WEBB:** I believe it's short about 100 positions.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** 100 short.

**SALLY WEBB:** I can confirm that number during the course of today.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That would be helpful. Maybe that could be part of the jobs program. How many 30-kilometre speed zones are enforced in New South Wales?

**BERNARD CARLON:** We do have that information, if I could return to it shortly, so we can just find out how many there are and come back to that one.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Fantastic. The M7-M12 interchange—how are that and the M7 widening project progressing?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'll ask Ms Drover to talk to that project.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** We are in the early stages. There are three projects, actually. There's the M7 widening, there's the M7-M12 interchange, and then there's the Eastern Package of the M12. We are in the early stages of construction on those three different segments of work. There have been some challenges. You will have seen in the press that there have been some impacts given the ETU PIA. But to date we have been mitigating those delays, working very closely with the contractor to reschedule work and work around that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What is the delay so far?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** At this stage we're still planning on meeting the public commitment dates to open those three stages, but obviously we'll need to continue to assess that, depending on what happens in that PIA space.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** In what space?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** With the protected industrial action.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Right, that's the technical term.

**CAMILLA DROVER:** But other than that, the project is progressing well.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Which is good. But the funding hasn't been restored from the Commonwealth for that interchange. That's correct, isn't it?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** We have the full funding for the project.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** And the Federal funding—is that included?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** The Federal Government didn't fund the M7-M12 interchange, but we have State funding to cover that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The Commonwealth isn't kicking in, but the State is stepping up to get that happening. Is the protected industrial action threatening the opening date of those projects?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** Not at this stage. As I say, a lot of work has been done to work around those cutovers that have been cancelled to date. But, as I said earlier, it will depend on how long the PIA activity persists.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** With that new funding from the State to cover the Commonwealth gap—was that new funding for the project?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** The State funding was in place before we awarded a contract. We don't award contracts without having the full funding in place.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But the Commonwealth was kicking in; it's not anymore. The gap that was filled by the Commonwealth—was that new funding from the State? Was it a reallocation of funds from something else, or was it new money?

**CAMILLA DROVER:** I think that's a question for Brenda. For me, it was funding.

**BRENDA HOANG:** It's new funding.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What was the quantum of that?

**BRENDA HOANG:** I believe it was \$110.7 million.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** In new money? Thank you. Can we just come back to the M5 cashback and tolling? I have a few leftover questions. Will that M5 cashback stay under the toll reform, Mr Murray?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I might ask Ms Mares to talk to any detailed questions around the tolling review, except to say that we are, of course, midway through preparation with the Government of the response materials. All of those elements have been spoken to by the Premier, Treasurer and Minister.

**TRUDI MARES:** That is the position. We are assisting with the Government response to the review. I think the Premier has made public statements that the M5 cashback will remain, but they have not finalised the Government response yet.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it your present understanding that it will stay, but that is subject to that final tolling review reform proposal?

**TRUDI MARES:** The Government, as the Minister mentioned, hasn't finalised that response.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I might go to the bridge. What is the current revenue for the Sydney Harbour Bridge toll?

**TRUDI MARES:** I don't think I have that with me, unless Ms Hoang has it. I have had it at every estimates before now, but I don't have it today.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I used to know it off the top of my head, but it might have changed.

**BRENDA HOANG:** I don't have that information at the moment, but I'm happy to get it to you shortly.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Can someone get that? I think it's a line item somewhere in the briefing note. You had it under me when I was the Minister. I have a ballpark, but it might have gone up since you put the—not you, but the Minister put the fee up.

**BRENDA HOANG:** We'll come back shortly.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** If you can come back today, that would be good. What is the current revenue for the Sydney Harbour Tunnel?

**TRUDI MARES:** Same—we'll have to get both.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What is the maintenance cost for the previous financial year for the Sydney Harbour Bridge?

**JOSH MURRAY:** Again, I think we'll take that on notice and, if we can, get that figure back in from the team today.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You used to know it. It used to be in my hot sheet notes. Come on, team! Really? I might come back to that—that's a bit more fun. Back to major projects, on the Rozelle interchange—one of our particular favourites—how is the traffic study for the Drummoyne community going, following the opening of the interchange? We had some discussions about that in the inquiry. When will that be complete—or has it been completed?

**JOSH MURRAY:** I'm happy to talk to that. Ironically, the last question on the Sydney Harbour Bridge and this question were for the two gentlemen that left in the last break. We knew that would happen.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I knew we shouldn't have! Sorry.

**JOSH MURRAY:** You're stuck with me on this one, I'm afraid.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** See, they are needed.

**JOSH MURRAY:** The work with the Drummoyne community is continuing. We are in discussions with both the City of Canada Bay and residents in regards to that. That is progressing well in terms of traffic modelling work. I think it's fair to say that we're still seeing an element of rat running down the Drummoyne peninsula. However, the traffic conditions in general have abated. In fact, at the end of last week the traffic timing from that part of Sydney to the Anzac Bridge was one minute faster than it was before the opening of—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You've been out there driving, Mr Murray, in your car, checking out how fast it is.

**JOSH MURRAY:** No, but certainly we got the updates. At March this year it was the same, which was 25 minutes. It is now faster than it was prior to the opening of the Rozelle interchange. We expect that the community of Drummoyne is now going to receive some significant further benefits with the opening of Gateway. We are currently showing less than 10 minute runs from the airport precinct to Drummoyne using the new links to the motorway.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Great. But on the traffic study—

**TRUDI MARES:** If I could, I can add some information—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Only if it's on the traffic study, if you don't mind. I don't want to talk about Gateway. We're good with that.

**TRUDI MARES:** With the traffic study—the Drummoyne local access issues study that Transport undertook—we just went out to council with that, and the community, with the "have your say". That just closed a couple of days ago on 2 September. We are obviously working through all of that feedback. Canada Bay council is also developing their own traffic study, and we're sharing data between ourselves and the council. That had worked very well. I could give you a long list of all the engagements. There have been lots of meetings.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** That's all right. I just want to know when it will be complete.

**TRUDI MARES:** We have to look at the feedback from the community, and then we'll look at the interventions—some of which were right-hand turn bans onto Lyons Road and things like that. They were all in that report.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But we have an indication of when that traffic study will be complete?

**TRUDI MARES:** We're working through it as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** This year?

**TRUDI MARES:** We don't have an exact date. As soon as possible. The interventions aren't difficult ones, so as soon as we look at the feedback, I think we could move on that quite quickly.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What outcomes are currently available to Transport, then, if we don't know when that will be? What are the current outcomes that could be utilised?

**TRUDI MARES:** Mr Knoetze had the information on the current works that have been undertaken.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Of course! The two that have gone. When will the business case be complete for Victoria Road and Parramatta Road?

**TRUDI MARES:** They're progressing well. We're, obviously, for Victoria Road, working through—one of the main options in there was to have a dedicated bus lane for Victoria Road and look at other options, including active transport links. That's progressing well. Parramatta Road is probably more complex—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But when will it be complete?

**TRUDI MARES:** —and we're working through that. Again, I don't have the date right in front of me, but I can take that on notice or try to get it for you now.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Either/or would be helpful. I learnt from the best!

**BERNARD CARLON:** I do have the numbers on the speed zones that you requested.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** We might have that in Government time, if you don't mind. I've got 49 seconds left. Could you take that on notice or get it back today?

**TRUDI MARES:** Yes, will do.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Do either of those business cases include road widening?

**TRUDI MARES:** We're still working through the options, and there will be a number of options on ways to use the corridor.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is road widening one of the options?

**TRUDI MARES:** We would look at all options.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is increasing capacity one of the options?

**TRUDI MARES:** Capacity—it depends. If we're talking about public transport or private vehicle use—obviously the corridors are both very constrained, so the options would include reducing capacity for private vehicle use and increasing it for public transport. There could be widening options. We will have a range of options available.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I get that there's a range of options, but does the business case include increasing capacity for private vehicles?

**TRUDI MARES:** That would be an option. There would be a number of options there.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Good afternoon to all of you. I've come back to re-ask the two questions I was asking earlier. I might start with you, Commissioner Rodrigues, around what is being done about those reports of systemic gendered abuse in the hospitality industry?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I'll pick up from where the Minister had left off, and say for the record that those allegations are concerning and are being taken seriously. The different agencies have different roles to play, so Liquor and Gaming, SafeWork, police—all from a regulatory standpoint. As commissioner, a lot of our work is industry engagement with the sector, particularly hospitality groups and the peak bodies. In the last week, following these allegations, I've convened all the peak bodies. Restaurants and catering, AHA, ClubsNSW, independent bars, the Night Time Industries Association and Business NSW as well to ask these two questions: Are your systems and processes in place across the sector? And, if so, are they working? It's an open question, given the allegations. Also, I think, some recognition from the sector.

You may have seen the statement from the Night Time Industries Association, which I can pass through the secretariat to the Committee if necessary. It's clear that there are issues here and they need to be addressed. As it currently stands, I understand that those peak bodies between them are convening an industry taskforce. I'll be engaging with them as part of our work. I've also been in touch with the Women's Safety Commissioner, Hannah Tonkin, who you might know. I guess even through just the lens of looking at those peak bodies, they don't necessarily cover the full range of hospitality venues in the State. One has to ask the question about how you can ensure that these alleged incidents don't happen. Are the mechanisms in place for people to feel free to come forward and explain if they are feeling threatened—which is the job that needs to be done, I would suggest.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you working with the United Workers Union as well around this?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I haven't as yet personally reached out to the United Workers Union. We have been engaging with them, as the Minister alluded to earlier, in the context of worker safety. The original

24-Hour Economy Strategy and the history it's come from has been about patron safety. How can you have a safe night-time economy, if it's not safe for workers? That is all night-time workers, I should say, including those working in transport and other aspects of the night-time economy. As part of that, we had done some work in connecting SafeWork as an organisation to other industry bodies already, but I haven't spoken specifically to the United Workers Union about this as yet, but I'm happy to. Also happy to take any advice and guidance from any of the Committee around these issues.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It strikes me that there are two distinct parts of this, which makes it a pretty interesting environment to grapple with these issues. So we have workers being subjected to sexual assault and gendered abuse from colleagues and from bosses in that work context. But then that is embedded within a culture of, perhaps, clients of an establishment thinking that they are entitled to treat staff in a particular way. Particularly in a nightclub with alcohol. Then you've got the people who want to make a profit out of that establishment saying, "The customer is always right." It's become, I think, a little bit of a toxic workplace for both of those reasons. Will you also be looking at that consumer side when it comes to putting in place stricter regulations, or stricter requirements, even on employers to ensure that customers aren't abusing staff as well?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I can't answer specifically around all those policy issues, and I'm not sure I fully understand the set of facts you're putting forward there. But what I would imagine is we've spent quite a bit of time thinking about the behaviours of patrons, and the strategy and the work of our office has been about diversifying the offering, making it normal for people to be doing things other than drinking as part of night-life, and therefore places like Haldon St, Lakemba, and other parts of Sydney have been talked about as night-life experience in a way that is, I think, positive. When it comes to the licensed space, obviously regulators—Liquor and Gaming, and police and others—tend to deal with the legalities of behaviour. From our perspective, I guess it's about making sure that safety is paramount on both sides of the bar and playing a role in coordination as needed.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** I'm just trying to clarify what I'm trying to say here.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Yes, please.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** There have been high-profile allegations about workers in these establishments experiencing harassment or assault from fellow workers and bosses, but then there's also that, which is perhaps an even more complicated space in some ways, where we have people feeling an expectation to allow harassment or abuse to occur from customers because that's good for the business, to put it bluntly. When you've got casual workers, who have precarious employment, there needs to be very strict requirements on employers to keep a safe workplace to overcome that culture of "We get profit at whatever cost". I'm wondering, from your perspective, if you're dealing with both sides of that or if I need to go separately to SafeWork and speak with them to ensure that they're regulating that.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I think, in the circumstances, I would encourage speaking to both sides. We will be speaking to our colleagues at SafeWork, as well as speaking to the industry. As to your observations on, I guess, the culture around commercialisation of night-life, if you want to put it that way—to be clear, I'm not making comment on any allegations in the media at the moment, but I would identify that the Night Time Industries Association has identified that they believe that the culture must be reset. You have a peak body recognising I think what you're articulating there. We will work with them and others to ask the industry, "What is your plan, and how can we help you to achieve that?" at a business operations level, and that should not be the end of it if there are other views around other regulatory interventions.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** It seems like we're at the beginning stage, anyway. I'm sure I'll be back in future estimates to keep checking on progress.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Yes, it's a significantly important issue. I just don't want to undersell that. We'll work increasingly closely with the Women's Safety Commissioner, because at some level it's a workplace issue more broadly than hospitality.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Someone was going to speak about the roads issue and the disability wheelchairs.

**JOSH MURRAY:** Ms Webb?

**SALLY WEBB:** Under the Road Rules, a motorised wheelchair that's speed-restricted—so it can't travel over 10 kilometres an hour—is categorised as a pedestrian. As a pedestrian, there's no weight restriction. There's no registration requirement and there's no licensing requirement, and of course they can travel on footpaths. But where I think the confusion arises is that under the Road Rules, which reflects the model Australian Road Rules, there is a weight restriction on motorised wheelchairs of 110 kilos. That rule only applies to motorised wheelchairs that are not speed limited. If it's over 110 and it's not speed-restricted, then it actually can't travel on roads or paths.



So there is a nuance there, under the Road Rules, in relation to certain wheelchairs—in terms of certain motorised devices—but it's not readily applicable because the general rule is that a motorised wheelchair that is speed-restricted to 10 kilometres an hour has no restrictions on it because it is categorised, essentially, as a pedestrian. So we've recently engaged with the CEO of Assistive Technology Suppliers Australia on this issue and, if you are dealing with another member of the disability community, we are very happy to engage with them to work through this rule and its practical applications.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Yes, because the rule is quite different in other States and Territories. Victoria has a similar rule to us in that it is 110 kilograms, but they don't have a licensing regime. Then we have 170 in some of the other States and Territories. My understanding from the disability advocacy groups here is that most of those motorised wheelchairs are now not fitting within that characterisation of being okay to be on a footpath. Maybe we need to talk more about this. I'll put some questions in on supplementaries maybe.

**SALLY WEBB:** I think the practical impact is, though, if it is speed-limited to 10 kilometres an hour, no restrictions apply regarding weight, registration or licensing.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** Are you aware of how many are actually speed-restricted versus those that are not?

**SALLY WEBB:** I'd have to take that on notice. In the market, there may be others that are available—a range that are available—but certainly there is availability for those that are speed-limited to be treated as a pedestrian and have all the rights afforded to a pedestrian.

**Ms ABIGAIL BOYD:** All right. I will go back and check as well and put some supplementaries in clarifying, after I've spoken with them.

**The CHAIR:** Ms Lamb, how many subject festivals—music festivals—are on the subject festival list at the moment?

**CAROLINE LAMB:** I've got that information for you, Ms Faehrmann. In the 2023-24 financial year, 14 subject festival determinations were made. The answer is 14.

**The CHAIR:** What was it the previous year again?

**CAROLINE LAMB:** In 2023-24 it was 14. For the previous year, I don't have those statistics, I don't believe.

**The CHAIR:** The last financial year sounds less than the previous, doesn't it?

**CAROLINE LAMB:** That's quite possibly the case, yes. As we know, the number of music festivals being mounted is significantly less this year.

**The CHAIR:** That's what you think that reason is.

**CAROLINE LAMB:** I'm speculating.

**The CHAIR:** I thought it was—maybe I'm just saying 28 because it is double the number. Festivals that are applying to be deemed subject now—recognising that the Minister's evidence this morning about the imminent release of the review and potential seemed to be signalling a slightly different approach—would they still be going through the process now? Would they be being advised to hold off for a month or so? Is there any kind of discussion about that? Because when I go to the Liquor and Gaming website, the fact sheet has been removed. The subject festival fact sheet has been taken down, and it actually says:

The subject festivals factsheet will be republished when the current Review of the Music Festivals Act 2019 is finalised.

So there is some kind of message being sent, isn't there, to music festivals that this is in a bit of a state of flux right now and things might be changing? What's your view on that?

**CAROLINE LAMB:** I don't have a view on it. It is a matter for Government policy, what it chooses to do in relation to the music festivals legislation. Neither can I speak for Liquor and Gaming because we are not part of Liquor and Gaming. What I can say is that the industry generally eagerly awaits the release of the Government's decisions in relation to the music festivals legislation, as do we, of course, at ILGA.

**The CHAIR:** I just wanted to go back to the question that I was asking the Minister this morning about the Mode Festival, which I think has been deemed by the police as high risk because it's on an island. Are you aware of that?

**CAROLINE LAMB:** In very general terms, I understand that the Mode Festival was classified as a subject festival in 2022.

**The CHAIR:** That's right.

**CAROLINE LAMB:** I was not on the authority at the time.

**The CHAIR:** It's been operating since 2022, to be clear, so since its inception.

**CAROLINE LAMB:** I understand that it has been declared—or it has been classified as subject in the subsequent two years by Liquor and Gaming, pursuant to the delegation they have from ILGA.

**The CHAIR:** Would you be aware of other events on Cockatoo Island, from a licensing perspective? There are quite a few events—concerts, family days and other things—that happen. The communication that I've seen from the police suggests that the festival is high risk because of the potential for a crowd surge or needing to require a mass evacuation, but from a licensing and safety perspective, that would happen with quite a few of the events with more than a few thousand people on there, wouldn't it?

**CAROLINE LAMB:** I can't really comment on that because we don't look at the specific factors of events other than those that we regulate. The only ones we regulate are in fact music festivals. Of course, we issue licences for events, and Liquor and Gaming issue licences from time to time for various events, but I'm not in a position to compare the circumstance applicable to the Mode Festival by comparison with other events that may take place on Cockatoo Island.

**The CHAIR:** Hopefully the next time you appear at budget estimates, Ms Lamb, I won't have to ask you about subject festivals and your role on it. Ms Collins, I have some questions around the board of Sound NSW. What is the board make-up? You have how many on there?

**EMILY COLLINS:** There are 12 members of the Sound NSW Advisory Board.

**The CHAIR:** How are they selected?

**EMILY COLLINS:** The first nine were appointed by the Minister and the following three were appointed through an expression of interest process that was then also selected by the Minister.

**The CHAIR:** With the first nine, in terms of the selection by the Minister, were there recommendations by a panel or anything before that?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Sound NSW, observing the charter that supports the advisory board—it's got several criteria, including regional representation, First Nations, representation from various parts of the industry. Sound NSW developed a long list of potential candidates for the inaugural board and provided that to the Minister.

**The CHAIR:** When you say Sound NSW developed a list, was that transparent where a number of people on a panel produced that list? How did that happen?

**EMILY COLLINS:** There were three internal members from Create NSW and Sound NSW who developed the list based on advice and industry expertise—leading experts from associations, key organisations across New South Wales, key artists, people who have been active and vocal in the contemporary music industry.

**The CHAIR:** So applications weren't sought, just to be clear? It was a list. People were thought of and they were put on that list, really, in terms of meeting this criteria?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** What is the tenure of the people on the board and how are they replaced?

**EMILY COLLINS:** There are a maximum of three terms with a maximum of three years per term. So a member could conceivably serve nine years. However, all board members for the first term, for the inaugural board, have been appointed for 12 months.

**The CHAIR:** Was this in legislation, remind me, in terms of the make-up of how the board is formulated?

**EMILY COLLINS:** No, it's not legislated but there is a charter.

**The CHAIR:** The next round, for example, there's no requirement for the members of this board to put in applications and be selected in a transparent way?

**EMILY COLLINS:** According to the processes of board appointments, there is an allowance for recommendations to be made to the Minister, and that's what was taken before the inaugural board, to make sure that we could get started and get Sound NSW up and running, and then we opened an expression of interest process to make sure that we were canvassing a broader selection of people.

**The CHAIR:** Just to clarify, that's for the next round, when you say "open an expression of interest process"?

**EMILY COLLINS:** That was part of the three. Nine were appointed and then an additional three were appointed for the first board.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I understand there's an issue with the metro, Mr Murray. I have no issue if you need to go and deal with that.

**JOSH MURRAY:** My latest advice is it has been resolved. It may relate to a fire alarm at North Sydney, but thank you for the notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Ms Collins, talking about the Sound NSW advisory board, how many members are practising musicians?

**EMILY COLLINS:** I believe there are two currently.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What genres do they represent?

**EMILY COLLINS:** One is from a hip-hop background and one is from an electronic music background—a DJ.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I believe there was a commitment made last year to ensure that a country music representative would be appointed. Has that happened?

**EMILY COLLINS:** That commitment was made, I believe, at the time there was the previous Arts and Cultural Funding Program and arts advisory boards for the contemporary music board. Since then, the Sound NSW board has developed. There is currently no country music.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** There is no intention to honour the spirit of that commitment?

**EMILY COLLINS:** That's not my call; it's ministerially appointed. We provide a long list of options and there are many genres not represented on the board.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Could you tell me how much money was allocated to Sound NSW in the 2023-24 budget?

**EMILY COLLINS:** The allocation was \$31.227 million.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How much did you spend?

**EMILY COLLINS:** We spent approximately \$18 million.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That's a big shortfall. Why the underspend?

**EMILY COLLINS:** We're a brand-new organisation and we were setting up a lot of programs, many of which were the first time they had ever been developed—for example, Venues Unlocked, which is a brand-new program looking at a more hands-on process supporting venues to apply for money to get acoustic assessments and then to come into the program. It just took a lot longer to make sure that we had a robust series of programs.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** It was \$31 million last year. What's the allocation in this year's budget?

**EMILY COLLINS:** It's 18.5.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You've been allocated less this year than you were last year?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What percentage of funding delivered in 2023-24 was for organisations, events or programs outside of Wollongong, Sydney and Newcastle?

**EMILY COLLINS:** I've got a breakdown that includes Wollongong and Newcastle in the split, but we've got 25 per cent of all the funding that was delivered went to regional areas, which does include Wollongong and Newcastle for this.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That means 25 per cent went to outside Sydney and 75 per cent went to Sydney. Is that correct?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Also Western Sydney had 7 per cent.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So 25 per cent to everything outside of Sydney, and the Sydney breakdown is?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Approximately 70 per cent, which is 7 per cent for Western Sydney and 63 for metro.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That's 95 per cent. Where's the other 5 per cent?

**EMILY COLLINS:** There were some applications that were for organisations based outside of New South Wales who were delivering outcomes for New South Wales. For example, we funded MusicNT as a State-based music organisation in the Northern Territory who ran the Regional and Remote Music Summit in Darwin to provide bursaries to New South Wales regional and First Nations representatives to attend their conference.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So 25 per cent, 75 per cent; one-quarter, three-quarters. Is that the population breakdown between Sydney and everything that's not Sydney?

**EMILY COLLINS:** My understanding is that it's closer to 33 per cent, so there's obviously some more work for the Sound NSW team to do. We're really committed to supporting regional development. Of a lot of the programs we run, some of them had closer to 50 per cent representations. For example, the Venues Unlocked program had over 50 per cent regionally based venues.

Our touring and travel program had 42 per cent representation from regional areas. Some programs have done a bit better than others. We're working on making sure that is carried through in our future programs.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** There is a commitment to doubling live music venues in this term of government. I understand that there are currently 795 live music venues. What is the strategy to ensure that number is doubled?

**EMILY COLLINS:** My understanding of that commitment was that it was based on the Liquor and Gaming registration of venues. That was the only available statistic at the time. I think at the time of the commitment, 133 venues were registered through the Liquor and Gaming process, which allowed venues to access later trading.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That's a curious footnote on an election promise.

**EMILY COLLINS:** That was the only statistic available at the time. Since the election, one of the first projects that Sound NSW did was do a proper count of venues across the State. We ran a State of the Scene report. You're quoting the updated figures from that, which is that there are 795 across the State that offer some form of live music. There's actually 55 dedicated spaces.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Therefore, the strategy is to get another 113, not another 795?

**EMILY COLLINS:** The strategy is to build as many venues offering live music as possible. There are different types of venues.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** But you're not working to a particular target?

**EMILY COLLINS:** I'm not going to speak on behalf of the Minister about that commitment, but we are working towards trying to double the number of dedicated spaces.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Double the 795?

**EMILY COLLINS:** No, the dedicated spaces. There are 55 of those.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** If you looked at the Liquor and Gaming figures, we were looking at an extra 113. If you're looking at actual music venues, you're looking at 795. But the strategy is to just provide another 55 over the life of the Government?

**EMILY COLLINS:** We're trying to build as many music venues as possible. As I'm sure you're aware, there are real challenges in the live music ecosystem at the moment. We're trying to make sure that the venues we do have are supported and viable. Our 10-year contemporary music strategy will address ways to support venues to look at ways to make business easier for venues and also have strategies around audience development, developing regional touring circuits and making sure that there are ways—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Thank you very much. Mr Cox, how many grants were given out by Destination NSW in 2023-24?

**STEVE COX:** I'll give you the exact numbers. In 2023-24, for regional events, a total of \$917,434 was committed under that, which comprised 27 flagship event streams of \$580,000, one event development stream of \$37,500, 10 events with training or agreements—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Perhaps you could provide that detail on notice. That'd be very helpful. I note that *Budget Paper No. 02*, at 8-14, shows that Destination NSW spent substantially less than was budgeted in 2023-24. What was the reason for that underspend?

**STEVE COX:** I'd need to go through the exact detail, but we often have fairly significant carry-forward amounts between events that are multi-year events, such as major events, State-significant events and the Aviation Attraction Fund. Generally those types of variances are an outcome of a movement between years. That's what results in that. I'm happy to take on notice the exact differential for you.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** That'd be great. Dr Brand, are you in a position to rule out further job cuts at the gallery?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** That would be speculation to say there wouldn't be. We don't have any planned at all.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You're confident, with the budget numbers, that you won't need to look at reducing staff further?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** Correct. After this year, we have a budget for FY25. We don't foresee that requiring any job losses.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So this year, but you can't say with confidence about next year?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** Like a number of institutions, we have a budget for this year, but not for the forward estimate years yet.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Do you expect to get a budget for the forward estimate years?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** I think it will come eventually.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What does "eventually" look like? Christmas? Next Easter?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** That would be a question for the secretary.

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** In the budget process, as Dr Brand said, for a lot of our institutions we got an uplift that, although sufficient for this year—they have something in the forward estimates, but we will put in budget bids for more funding in the next process.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** When would institutions like the Art Gallery expect to have that information for their forward planning?

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** For the usual process, they will know what is being supported on the way into a budget process. Like all of us, we won't have absolute certainty until we come out the other end and the budget is public, but we will understand how it's travelling through the budget process.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What cuts have been implemented at the gallery to make up for the \$9 million shortfall in revenue forecasts?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** Before I answer the question directly, I should say again we are a complex institution with quite a complex budget.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I understand that, yes.

**MICHAEL BRAND:** It's a little bit hard to compare each year, year by year, particularly since last year was our first full financial year since we completed the Sydney Modern Project on time and on budget.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What are the cuts you are having to implement, Dr Brand?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** At the moment this year, as I said, no further job losses, but we have cut some of our operating expenses, like many other institutions.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** In what way? What type of operating expenses?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** Across the board, but trying to do it across the board in a way where it doesn't have a significant impact.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can you give me two examples?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** It could be reductions anywhere—in programming, leaving a few positions vacant when someone has left. But I'm pleased to say we have maintained free entry in.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many positions have you left vacant when somebody has left?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** I couldn't give you the exact number. It'd be very small.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Could you take that on notice, please?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** Yes, certainly. It's just trying to keep a vacancy percentage going as a way of helping.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Is a vacancy percentage not a job loss?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** No, because the jobs would be filled, but we might not fill jobs immediately.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What's the impact on other workers if their co-workers' positions aren't being filled?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** That's what we have to take into account when we make those sorts of decisions. If it were to make an unfair or unreasonable impact on other colleagues, we wouldn't do it.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What is the vacancy percentage the Art Gallery is currently operating at?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** I'm afraid I'd have to take that percentage on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How do you determine whether it's unfair or unreasonable? If your staffing levels are appropriate, surely the absence of any staff member puts an increased burden on every other staff member.

**MICHAEL BRAND:** There'll almost always be some delay as you go through a search process. Sometimes someone you hire isn't ready to come in. It's not a big difference, but it can help.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What is the increase in the average ticket price at the Art Gallery from last year to this year?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** Last year to this year, if I'm not mistaken, is the same. For our major ticketed exhibitions like the summer International Art Series, the full ticket price is \$35. That's for the shows coming up at the end of this year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry, that's an increase of how much on previous years?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** I believe that's the same as the past year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So you have a revenue shortfall and you're running with vacancy, but you're not looking at increasing ticket prices for your major exhibitions?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** No, because we're trying to keep those exhibitions affordable for as broad an audience as possible.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** There's a forecast in the budget that you will be increasing the revenue from sales of goods and services by \$16 million. Is that on track?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** I'm just working out which number you're looking at.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Sorry, I don't have the reference in front of me.

**MICHAEL BRAND:** I think I can see where you are. So in FY24, sales of goods and services is listed at \$21.6 million, and then for this year, \$36.6 million. That's mainly as a result of changing where we register certain costs. If you look at the next line, "Grants and Contributions", it goes up and it goes down again. Things like, for example, Destination NSW funding is sort of flipped from goods and services to grants and contributions. It gets complicated.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** You're saying the amount is an accounting issue.

**MICHAEL BRAND:** The main difference, correct.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Are you on track to achieve the budgeted figure?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** We believe so.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Mr Rodrigues, how many special entertainment precincts have been established in New South Wales?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** There is one, on Enmore Road, as it currently stands.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** What information resources are there for councils to assist in establishing these precincts?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** We recently published an exhibition—or it may be via one of our partner agencies—the guidelines for special entertainment precincts, which we have been in consultation with councils in developing since the laws were passed.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Could you provide a copy of those on notice please?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Yes, sure.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** How many small music and arts venues have been established in New South Wales this calendar year? On notice would be great.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Sure. I'll do my best to answer that one on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Can I ask you about Purple Flag precincts. I believe the Baxter Inn, a Swillhouse venue, is in a Purple Flag precinct. That is a government seal of approval for a safe environment. How many venues are approved to be part of that scheme?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** The Purple Flag relates to a geographical area. You're correct in stating that the Baxter Inn is contained within the geographical area for YCK, which is an accredited Purple Flag precinct. The Purple Flag accreditation is about the precinct's appeal overall.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So it's the precinct and not the institutions within in?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Yes, it's not an accreditation on any individual venue; it is on the overall—

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** As a consumer, how confident can I be going to any of the venues in a Purple Flag precinct?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** The purpose of the Purple Flag program is about the overall appeal, wellbeing, mobility and lighting around a precinct.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** So the street outside is safe; be careful when you cross the threshold?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Yes. It's not there to replace the current regulatory regime under the Liquor Act or any of the employment obligations.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** I apologise, Mr Rodrigues, but we have limited time. I want to give my colleague some time.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The visitor economy—is that you, Mr Cox?

**STEVE COX:** Yes, it is me.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When will the revised Visitor Economy Strategy be released?

**STEVE COX:** The recommendations have been completed by the steer co and they are with the Government for consideration at this moment in time. Then we'll have direction when that consideration is complete.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What's your thinking—six months or this year?

**STEVE COX:** That's really a matter for the Minister.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How long has the Minister had it?

**STEVE COX:** He got it very recently—within the last few weeks.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The last month?

**STEVE COX:** Yes, the last couple of weeks or thereabouts.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Not since May like the bus report?

**STEVE COX:** No, certainly not. It was very, very recently.

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** It's a few weeks. I was one of the steer co. It's a few weeks.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What measures and initiatives emerged as priorities for stakeholders throughout the consultation period to ensure New South Wales's position as the premier visitor economy of the Asia-Pacific by 2023?

**STEVE COX:** I think that's probably best shared at the time when the recommendations are released. There was an enormous amount of feedback in the process of the visitor economy review. There were many, many

hundreds of interactions at round tables. We meet with all different groups right across the State, as well as written submissions. I don't think—

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Were there any themes or any particular commonality?

**STEVE COX:** As you would expect, Ms Ward, it's very broad. The visitor economy, we're very pleased to say, up until March is now at over \$50 billion. It's been growing at plus 6.8 per cent or thereabouts for the last decade. It's a very broad industry. There was lots of great feedback received, and incredibly positive engagement across the board.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** In respect of funding, will Destination NSW have its funding restored to the levels under the previous Government?

**STEVE COX:** Our budget this year is absolutely in line with that. We will wait for the budget process to determine the future.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is it the same amount as the last financial year of the last Government?

**STEVE COX:** I can give you the exact numbers if you give me a moment. The budget for 2024-25 is \$324.5 million.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You say that is the same as under the previous Government?

**STEVE COX:** It's very close. Last year was \$339 million. If you go back in history it was \$192 million, \$172 million, \$141 million and \$200 million. It is in line with more recent years. There were some higher numbers. But it is a sufficient budget.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How does the Destination NSW budget compare to its counterparts in competing States such as Victoria?

**STEVE COX:** I don't have up-to-date information in relation to that and it's difficult to ascertain. It's only what's available on public record.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I know. That's why I'm asking you.

**STEVE COX:** Each of the individual States have very different structures.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** But you're the head of it. What's your feel? Are we ahead, are we on par or are we slightly behind?

**STEVE COX:** I haven't had a look at that in recent times.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that something you could take on notice?

**STEVE COX:** We could do our best to try to determine it, but it would be an estimation based upon public information.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Sure, but that would be helpful, just comparatively, to see where we sit. The Victorian Government continues to announce its ongoing incentivisation of key international airlines and routes to lure high-value flights to Melbourne including Turkish Airlines, Air India and Juneyao Airlines. Has the New South Wales Government been at all competitive in its negotiations with international airlines such as these?

**STEVE COX:** Very much so. We have had the Aviation Attraction Fund, which was \$60 million in total—matched funding. The partners' airports matched that amount of funding so, in effect, it was close to \$120 million across. We were the first off the blocks within this area and we've been exceedingly competitive across the board in securing routes into Sydney.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** You said that's \$62 million?

**STEVE COX:** \$60 million in total.

**The CHAIR:** Ms Collins, I want to come back to the statements by the Government recently around doubling live music venues. There was a media release that was issued on 27 March this year. The Premier, the music Minister, the Minister for Gaming and Racing, as well as yourself, put quotes in. The Premier said:

We made a promise to the people of NSW to double the number of live music venues across the state within 4 years, and that is what we are delivering.

If you recall back to then, the doubling of the live music venues—what was that based on?



**EMILY COLLINS:** My understanding is it was based on the Liquor and Gaming self-identification list. Venues could apply to Liquor and Gaming for increased trading hours if they're a live music venue. I think that was the number that was based on.

**The CHAIR:** This says that, since the March 2023 election, 112 pubs, clubs and other live venues have joined the list of establishments that qualify for two hours extended trading in return for staging live music and backing local musicians. With these 245 licensed venues, they can claim the live music incentives, but is there really a guarantee that they are hosting live music?

**EMILY COLLINS:** I would have to defer to my colleagues at Liquor and Gaming about the specifics of the criteria, but it is my understanding that presenting live music is a key part of that incentive.

**The CHAIR:** Some of the venues on the list—at the time, and still—that were used to justify the doubling of live music venues by the Government are closed; they're just not in existence anymore. Are you aware of that?

**EMILY COLLINS:** I'm aware that some venues have closed in recent months, yes.

**The CHAIR:** I think they were closed at the time: Cambridge Hotel and the Narrabeen RSL are closed. The Red Steer Hotel—they're still here. Before this claim was made, was a check done to make sure that all of the venues listed on Liquor and Gaming were actually live music venues as claimed?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Again, I have to refer to colleagues at Hospitality and Racing, and Liquor and Gaming, because they're the ones who managed that list and the accreditation.

**The CHAIR:** I'm not wanting to throw you in the deep end, Ms Collins—we've worked very well together on many things—but you were here as the head of Sound NSW backing in these claims, so I'm just wondering about the justification for them. Also for that claim, some of venues were things like the Belvoir St Theatre, the Stables Theatre, NIDA and the Ensemble Theatre. It does almost seem like there has been an attempt to inflate the figures to justify Labor's election promise.

**EMILY COLLINS:** I can't speak to the specifics of that, but what I can say is that my understanding of the criteria of what gets you onto that list is slightly different to the work that Sound NSW has done in terms of defining live music venues. Through the State of the Scene report, we have three different categories of live music venue, one being a dedicated space which is there as the primary reason for existence. We have live music venues where live music is a core part of their offering. Then there are venues who offer live music. There are other venues who occasionally, maybe monthly or less, do offer live music but maybe aren't as regular or frequent as others.

**The CHAIR:** You've said the 55 dedicated live music venues, and I suppose what we are trying to get to the bottom of is that there have been some changes, obviously, to allow extended trading but not everybody is taking that up, of course, for quite a few reasons. We are trying to work out the actual impact in terms of what is staying open; are there more performances all across the State, importantly; and how many more musicians are getting good, well-paid work. Are you undertaking that type of analysis of the industry?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Yes. Through the State of the Scene report, which we published at the start of June, which had those figures about the 795 total venues from across the State and the breakdown of different types—for me, that's a benchmark that Sound NSW is working to track our progress over the coming years. Up until that point, we didn't have a robust methodology to really track and count venues. There is no one mechanism within government. It's not a licence type and it is not any other type of categorisation. We went through that process to really get a sense of the baseline that we are working from, and that's really what we are using as a benchmark for future work.

**The CHAIR:** The Government, when in opposition, did make a lot of promises to the industry and they did say that they would double live music venues. They claim in this media release that under the former Government New South Wales lost more than half its music venues, with just 133 registered across the State in March 2023—so 133 registered, they are saying, and that they lost more than half. The claim in this media release is that, lo and behold, we can say it has doubled to 245 licensed venues on this list that includes a bunch of theatres that actually were in operation, I think, pretty much the same way. I'm pretty sure Belvoir was operating, for example, the same way under the Coalition as it is under Labor, plus a bunch of those other theatres as well. There are some venues that, in fact, weren't in existence.

Is it really the correct thing to claim that the New South Wales Labor Government has established or that New South Wales has gained double the number of live music venues since the Government came to office? Because that's what this says. It does imply, I think, when reading it that there has been this huge surge, but I think it's almost a kind of double-counting, if you like—or not double-counting but just simply because venues have

sought a reduction in fees and they can be eligible for extended trading, then somehow they are in here and they are being classified as a live music venue. It is almost not quite accurate. Do you understand what I'm trying to get at?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Yes, I understand. What I can say is that we didn't have information previously to really understand the full depth and breadth of the live music industry. Through the State of the Scene report we realised that there are 14,000 workers, it has an economic output of \$5.5 billion and that we got that total count of the live music venues. I think there is an ultimate system being used from a regulatory perspective to allow incentives for venues or to offer incentives to venues. In some senses, they are serving different purposes. I think, with the work of Sound NSW, we are really committed to delivering on what is an ambitious goal of doubling venues and continuing to build up the live music sector.

**The CHAIR:** In terms of the funding, then, that Sound NSW is spending—just the evaluation of it was \$18.9 or something million. How is that evaluated in terms of what the outcome is—almost the KPIs, if you like—in terms of the actual impact that it's having on the industry? There's still a lot of disquiet in the music industry. They're still feeling incredibly unsupported. To be honest, I have heard from some people within the industry that releases by the Government that claim stuff that they're not actually thinking is going on out there aren't helping. There's a general call as well for some more transparency around what is happening with the money that's being spent so that they feel it's making a big impact on their livelihoods.

**EMILY COLLINS:** In the first year of Sound NSW, we delivered soundproofing grants to 21 music venues across the State, over half of which were based in regional areas. As part of our 10-year Contemporary Music Strategy, which we're working on at the moment, we're looking to find really definitive ways to support the sector. It's not going to happen overnight. It is actually a long-term process. Our strategy will be for 10 years, so it isn't something that we will reach immediately. I think we've got some great ideas about how we can support the sector to grow in a sustainable and viable way.

**The CHAIR:** To the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner, I want to ask about the grants as well. I think you've have taken on notice the question by Ms Carter. I'm particularly interested in—again, recognising the newness both of Sound NSW and the 24-hour economy office—how the grants are allocated, the process, in terms of who is on the committee or whatever it is to look at those grants and assess them, how the final decision is made and then how they're monitored and evaluated, in terms of the impact of those grants. Can I get as much information—obviously, you can take some on notice. Could I start with you, Mr Rodrigues?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** It does vary from program to program. There are department-wide or government-wide guidelines that are followed around these things. For the funding programs that we run, typically it's a competitive process. They're independently assessed by a panel of senior government representatives. Recommendations are made, and then there will be a governance mechanism in place for a final approval of the funding. They're then monitored over a period. There are potentially milestone payments and/or reporting requirements and then an acquittal process.

**The CHAIR:** What are the main grant programs? Sorry, I was trying to find it on your site.

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** We probably have—currently live, anyway—two grant funding programs, the Uptown Grant Program and the Live Performance Venue Program. They're the two. They go through the process. One of the challenges of being young organisations is the overall assessment of the effectiveness of the program can then be done at the conclusion of the program. Generally, it will take some time.

**The CHAIR:** With Sound NSW, some of the programs, in terms of support, Ms Collins, aren't made public in terms of the recipients. Is that correct?

**EMILY COLLINS:** No, they should all be published on grant finder. We've got four main programs that we've run in the last 12 months—Venues Unlocked soundproofing grants, the Recording and Promotion Grants, our Touring and Travel grant and our Strategic Funding round. There were different processes for each of those grants but, as a new organisation, we're really keen to make sure that the way we spend and the way we invest as a sector-development body is meaningful. So we're having our programs evaluated and we have a clear process for tracking whether these programs are having the impact they're intended to have.

**The CHAIR:** How are they all allocated or selected? How are those decisions made?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Venues Unlocked was—the soundproofing grants were assessed via an internal senior New South Wales Government panel. The strategic funding was assessed by an internal government—for the recording and promotion grant, for which we had over nearly 600 applications, we had 18 independent industry experts to come and help us select the recipients of that grant.

**The CHAIR:** Do you know offhand how many recipients out of that 600 were successful?

**EMILY COLLINS:** I believe it was 59.

**The CHAIR:** Gosh.

**EMILY COLLINS:** High competitive.

**The CHAIR:** It really does show the need out there, doesn't it?

**EMILY COLLINS:** Absolutely—and great demand for programs that really target these areas. Through both the touring and travel grant and the recording and promotion grant, we were able to support over 800 artists and industry professionals to tour, travel and record music. So it is really exciting for New South Wales—the work we're doing.

**The CHAIR:** Going back to the Purple Flag program, is that also evaluated? Has evaluation started in terms of the money that is spent on that? What are the outcomes in terms of the community and what are the KPIs, if you like, that you are basing the Purple Flag program against? I'll probably provide some supplementary questions on this in more detail, but if you just had anything to—

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** Sure, just around the flavour of it. Purple Flag, as distinct from some of the other programs, was a pilot program in the first instance run across four precincts. It has been evaluated by external consultants. To be clear there was no funding provided to recipients. We, through our office, ran the process. We can give you some more detail on notice but essentially the evaluation of that was positive based on the objectives, but has also identified areas for improvement, mainly around processes to make things easier for participants, because it is complicated. There are council, police, local businesses—

**The CHAIR:** With the evaluation program—because there is also, I assume, the money that it would have cost the Government to run the program for licensing, accreditation. I assume the evaluation report will include the cost and benefits, if you like. Is that fair to say?

**MICHAEL RODRIGUES:** I might just need to take that particular aspect on notice. But, in respect to Purple Flag anyway, on the basis of the evaluation it is the case that it needed to scale up the program, which is what the intention currently is.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Mr Cox, back on the Visitor Economy Strategy, the \$60 million fund—is that an incentivisation fund? What is that intended to be?

**STEVE COX:** Sorry, could you repeat that question, Ms Ward?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** The \$60 million fund we were just talking about—

**STEVE COX:** The Aviation Attraction Fund?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes. So that is an incentivisation fund? How does that work?

**STEVE COX:** We work with the airport. There are applications made by the airlines against a set of criteria and there is a strict evaluation done, which is then reviewed to determine the economic benefit of the additional capacity coming into Sydney. Then milestone payments are contracted against the capacity and the route establishment et cetera.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Who has that been successful with? Which airlines?

**STEVE COX:** I'll just check if I've got a list here. It is an extensive list. Aviation Attraction Fund—if you just give me one moment. I will need to take it on notice. It is an extensive list, including international and domestic airlines.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Of new airlines?

**STEVE COX:** New airline routes generally, but in some occasions, I believe, there were some new airlines as well. The Juneyao one that you mentioned before—they were also announced the other day here. There is a variety. Certainly new routes—one of the key ones that comes to my mind is the Bengaluru route from India. The very first time there has been a direct flight into Sydney from India, which is essential to the growth of the visitor economy and the broader economy.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Is that an Air India route?

**STEVE COX:** No, that one was a Qantas flight.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Any Air India success?

**STEVE COX:** Again, I'd need to go back and check the notes. From my recollection, no, but that's not so much—that was really about where India is at. As you can appreciate, post-pandemic the entire aviation

industry has had to reset. Also Air India has placed the largest—I think it was at the time—order of planes ever in the history of Boeing, which need to come through, so there is a number of things that need to flow through.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I got in trouble during the pandemic because they asked me if I'd created an Indian travel bubble, and I think I might have agreed with that advice. Nonetheless, what's your view on New South Wales being one of the only Australian States and Territories to not have—unless you say this is an incentivisation fund. The allegation from other States is that there is no incentivisation fund in New South Wales. Are you saying that that is what this fund is?

**STEVE COX:** The Aviation Attraction Fund went for two years, so it is now finished. There is money that is still flowing through that process, because obviously this relates to flights into the future.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** This fund is finished, so there's not presently an airline incentivisation fund in New South Wales?

**STEVE COX:** There is not an open, new fund at this moment in time. There is still money being expended.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How much money is left?

**STEVE COX:** We made an announcement just the other day in relation to Newcastle Airport, as an example. There's some money that's been carried over from the previous fund, but there is not a new fund.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** How much is that?

**STEVE COX:** I'll need to check the exact details of what's been carried forward. I've got the value of the routes that we are expecting. I don't have the dollar value to hand on that, but I'm happy to take that on notice.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** If you could take that on notice and let us know what's left. Once that runs out, there is presently no incentivisation fund in New South Wales.

**STEVE COX:** There is not a fund available right now for new applications.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** What's your view of that?

**STEVE COX:** I think it would be wonderful to get back to a position in time—the aviation industry is a really important industry. I think, really, this is a matter for the visitor economy review process and the recommendations that come out from that on the other side. Clearly, I want to grow the visitor economy. The opportunity, particularly with international flights into Australia, is significant. I think we'll wait for the outcomes of the visitor economy review and the execution of that.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** When will that be?

**STEVE COX:** I've answered that earlier, Ms Ward.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Mr Cox, what's the size of the efficiency dividend that's been applied to your 2024-25 budget?

**STEVE COX:** We don't have an efficiency dividend that has been applied in the 2024-25 budget, to my knowledge.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Could you take that on notice and check that for me please?

**STEVE COX:** I'm pretty certain that we don't have one, but I'll certainly take it on notice to be 100 per cent sure.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Dr Brand—same question to you. What's the size of the efficiency dividend that's been applied to the Art Gallery budget 2024-25?

**MICHAEL BRAND:** The efficiency dividends really come through the department, so maybe Ms Mildwater is best placed.

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** I can give you one answer for everyone, if you like, because there were no new efficiency dividends applied this year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Thank you. Sorry, no new ones?

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** No new ones. If you're asking a question about this year's budget, there were no new efficiency dividends applied.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Does that mean that existing dividends remain?

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** There could be, yes.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Are you able to take it on notice and tell me if existing efficiency dividends are applied to anybody? Destination NSW, the Art Gallery—

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** Certainly. I may not be able to give you all the details, but I'll take it on notice.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Also the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, the State Library of New South Wales, the Museums of History, the Sydney Opera House and also the Australian Museum. Thank you very much. That's me done.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I could go line by line through the budget, but I'll call it with you.

**The CHAIR:** Go crazy! You've got two minutes.

**JOSH MURRAY:** We could offer some questions in response if that would be helpful?

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I've got plenty I didn't ask. I was trying to be gentle.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** One quick question, Ms Mildwater—perhaps you can help. How much money was available in each of the last three rounds of the arts funding grant program?

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** As in the ACFP—the Arts and Cultural Funding Program?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Yes.

**ELIZABETH MILDWATER:** The last three rounds?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Yes. You can take it on notice if you'd like.

**ANNETTE PITMAN:** The last three years—is that the question?

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Three rounds. If they were annual, then yes—three years.

**ANNETTE PITMAN:** There are multiple rounds in each year.

**The Hon. SUSAN CARTER:** Then the last three from today and working back.

**ANNETTE PITMAN:** I'd have to take that on notice. I don't have that specific information in front of me.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** I have a quick one, if I may. Mr Murray, where is the reduction in senior executive headcount up to?

**JOSH MURRAY:** We are continuing that program, as we discussed on Tuesday. We gave some numbers around that. That is progressing well, in line with the whole-of-government commitment.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Where is it up to, though? Is it a percentage or do you have a number?

**JOSH MURRAY:** The number achieved so far is 6.5 per cent against the target of 15 per cent.

**The CHAIR:** That's the end, unless the Government wants 15 minutes?

**The Hon. CAMERON MURPHY:** No questions from us, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Murray, it sounds like you want to say something?

**JOSH MURRAY:** Mr Carlon was just going to put something on record in regards to 30-kilometre speed zones. We can take the other elements on notice from today. Did you want to cover that one, Mr Carlon?

**BERNARD CARLON:** Consistent with our place-making framework that we have in New South Wales—30-kilometre zones, we have 40; 20-kilometre zones, we have 80 zones; and 10-kilometre zones, 294. I note that the adjacent road to this place has been a 30-kilometre zone for a couple of decades—Hospital Road.

**The Hon. NATALIE WARD:** Yes, indeed. Thank you very much.

**The CHAIR:** That concludes our hearing today. I thank you all very much for attending. The secretariat will, of course, be in touch regarding any questions you've taken on notice as well as supplementary questions. Thank you again and have a good evening.

**(The witnesses withdrew.)**

**The Committee proceeded to deliberate.**