



TRAVELSAFE COMMITTEE

MEMBERS: Mrs NITA CUNNINGHAM (Chairman)
Mr G. J. HEALY
Mr H. W. T. HOBBS (Deputy Chairman)
Ms NELSON-CARR
Mr L. W. STEPHAN
Mr T. B. SULLIVAN

STAFF PRESENT: Mr R. HANSEN (Research Director)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

(Copyright in this transcript is vested in the Crown. Copies thereof must not be made or sold without the written authority of the Chief Reporter, Parliamentary Reporting Staff.)

**MONDAY, 19 JUNE 2000
BRISBANE**

WITNESSES

DONALD WILLIAM BLETCHLY 124

BARRY EDWARD BROE 124

JOHN ALAN CHAMBERS 124

MICHAEL JOSEPH McSHEA 124

JOHN GRALTON 124

ALLAN ROY PARSONS 124

BRUCE GILMORE WILSON 124

The Committee commenced at 12.06 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I call this public hearing of the Travelsafe Committee to order. I welcome everyone to the hearing. I am Nita Cunningham, the member for Bundaberg and Chairman of the Committee. The hearing today for our inquiry into public transport in south-east Queensland is being conducted pursuant to the resolution of the Legislative Assembly of 30 July 1998 which appointed this Committee. The members of the Committee are Howard Hobbs, Deputy Chairman and member for Warrego; Graham Healy, member for Toowoomba North; Len Stephan, member for Gympie; Lindy Nelson-Carr, the member for Mundingburra; and Terry Sullivan, the member for Chermerside.

This is the Committee's third public hearing for this inquiry. For those who are interested, copies of the transcripts of the first hearing on 14 April and the second hearing on 19 May are at the back of the room. The Committee has resolved to allow vision only recording by the media of the opening statements during this hearing. I wish to remind members of the public that, in accordance with the Legislative Assembly's Standing Rules and Orders, they may be admitted or excluded at the pleasure of the Committee. The Committee is holding this hearing in an open forum for the public's benefit.

DONALD WILLIAM BLETCHLY, examined:

BARRY EDWARD BROE, examined:

JOHN ALAN CHAMBERS, examined:

MICHAEL JOSEPH McSHEA, examined:

JOHN GRALTON, examined:

ALLAN ROY PARSONS, examined:

BRUCE GILMORE WILSON, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: Those giving evidence are advised that the proceedings here today are lawful proceedings of the Parliament and should be respected as such. Persons giving evidence will not be required to do so on oath or affirmation. However, I am confident that they will respect the nature of these proceedings and the importance of the hearing. It is our intention that the hearing should conclude at 2 p.m..

The witnesses to appear this afternoon are the Director-General of Queensland Transport, Mr Bruce Wilson; the Deputy Director of Queensland Transport, John Gralton; and other members of Queensland Transport. I think the appearance here today of so many top officers of Queensland Transport is an indication of your interest in our inquiry—an interest that we very much appreciate. Would you like to begin with an opening statement?

Mr Wilson: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. I am very pleased to be here. I know that my colleagues are as well. We thank you for the opportunity to present evidence to the Committee's inquiry into public transport in south-east Queensland.

There are very important issues that relate to public transport in south-east Queensland because a safe, strong, effective public transport system is vital to the liveability, the environmental health and the economic vitality of this region. Certainly Queensland Transport takes its responsibilities in that regard very seriously. As you said, I guess that is reflected in the strong team that we have here today.

As you would have seen and heard from other submissions and from evidence given to date, there are a number of complex issues involved with this topic. There are clearly many different points of view. That is as it should be, in my view, because public transport in south-east Queensland involves everybody—all members of the community—if not directly then certainly indirectly. There are many challenges to be addressed in promoting and developing public transport in south-east Queensland.

We believe that good progress is being made with public transport in the region and indeed has been made under successive Governments in recent years. Firstly, there is a good and robust planning framework in place. That is under the umbrella of the overall Integrated Regional Transport Plan for south-east Queensland, the IRTP, which was developed after very extensive community consultation. It is important to remember that something like 50,000

questionnaires were returned by households throughout south-east Queensland and that those community views formed the basis for the IRTP.

The IRTP seeks to develop a balanced transport system across the region—one in which each mode is used to its best effect. Central to the IRTP is the promotion of alternatives to private car travel, particularly for regular home/work commuting travel and especially in the urban areas. Those alternatives to private car travel can include ride sharing—getting more people into cars than just one—public transport, walking and cycling.

Significantly, the IRTP has enjoyed, I think, pretty good bipartisan political support. It is notable that it was worked up initially during the Goss Government, it was finalised and approved during the term of the coalition and it has been reaffirmed by the present Beattie Government.

The IRTP is meant to be flexible. We have called it a living document, because if it is to succeed over the long haul it must be able to be adapted over time to pick up changing trends. Indeed, right now we are in the process of developing the 2007 vision within the IRTP to provide some clearer direction over the mid-term, to about the year 2007. In doing that we are already picking up changing trends since the original work behind the IRTP—especially trends that have been created or impacted upon by the development of technology, e-commerce and so on.

In all our work with the original IRTP, and the vision, as I have said, we seek to pick up community views. Consultation with the community, with various interest groups and with industry, is central to just about everything that we do these days. But an obvious challenge is needing to be careful about expectations that might be created. Transport—public transport perhaps in particular—is a bit like health or the other social programs of Government: it is almost a bottomless pit and no matter how much work and resource you put into it, you can never meet everybody's aspirations.

Plans are one thing, actually delivering on them is another. In that regard, a lot of progress is occurring right now right across the spectrum in terms of major projects that are actually being implemented as I speak. Of course, we have the Pacific Motorway project, we have the South East Transit Project and we have already started some work on the inner northern busway. There are a range of other bus priority and bus improvement initiatives under way: a lot of work on the heavy rail network, most notably the Airtrain project—airport rail—which, of course, we see rapidly progressing towards conclusion early next year; the expansion of the Citytrain network in terms of track upgrades, the third track to Petrie and a major expansion of rolling stock for Citytrain. There are a lot projects on the go now—some big ones in the planning phase. The port road is one. Of course, the evaluation of light rail is another.

Corridor studies is another area where we have been very active in protecting corridors for future transport needs, both road and public transport, and that is to ensure that we do not make the same mistakes that have been made in the past where to provide new facilities is very expensive and disruptive in terms of securing a corridor.

But it is not just about facilities by any means; improving services and service coordination is a very important part of the overall public transport agenda. In that regard, again there is a lot of activity occurring right now. One thing that is pleasing to report on—that was in the pipeline when we lodged our submission but we were not able to pre-empt it then—is the CityTrans initiative launched by my Minister and the Lord Mayor earlier this year, which is a joint venture between Queensland Rail and the Brisbane City Council to develop truly coordinated services between Brisbane Transport buses and Citytrain trains. It is pleasing to report that there is a genuine strong level of commitment by both of those providers to make coordination work, and we see that being extended out across the region over time.

Integrated ticketing is another area where major progress is taking place. We have rolled out, as you know, I think, paper-based products. We have recently closed tenders for the contactless smart card ticketing system. That really will be a world-class approach right here in south-east Queensland. Integrated information, I guess, is another thing under the TransInfo banner and under a range of other initiatives occurring to provide online information services.

Other areas of increased activity include public education and behaviour change—actually marketing public transport and encouraging people out of cars. That is linked with travel demand management, which is about working on the demand side of the equation, not just the supply

side in terms of facilities and services. We are seeing more work go into a travel demand management strategy for south-east Queensland.

Another area that does get a fair bit of attention in our submission is community transport, or inclusive transport. The facts are that for a lot of people, it is not a question of car versus public transport; a lot of people actually cannot access either, because they are disabled or whatever. A major area of focus in the department is that community or inclusive transport arena. One theme that seems to come through in many of the submissions and much of the evidence to date is that many people who have come forward have not been particularly concerned about what is actually happening; they just want more—they want more of one thing or another. That relates to a challenge of finding balances between competing needs. No more so is that evident in the balance between meeting peak travel needs and off-peak travel needs. There are significant differences between the two. In peak needs, the issues are more about overcoming congestion and maintaining the environment. In off-peak needs, the issues are more about social justice and accessibility. We are seeking to address all needs.

I mentioned that the IRTP focuses on a balanced transport system. Of course, to meet all needs to a reasonable extent raises the hoary old issue of funding, and we have addressed that in our submission, too. It is notable that since the launch of the IRTP, successive Governments have actually increased funding to public transport in south-east Queensland. But funding is not just an issue for the State Government; all levels of Government need to play a role, particularly the Commonwealth, also local government and there is a role for more private sector investment in public transport infrastructure as well.

Finally, in approaching this hearing today, it seemed to me that our position is a little different from perhaps many of the others from whom you have heard. Many of the others have come forward with particular ideas, or particular desires. We certainly have ideas, but what is different about us is that we are also charged with actually delivering on all of these issues that we are talking about. Certainly, we need to pick up on trends and ideas, but we do need to maintain a coherent framework to deliver the balanced system that I was talking about within available resources. Sometimes we have a particular challenge in getting our message across, because I think, inevitably, the media tend to go with whatever is the latest bright idea or sometimes whatever negative spin is around at the time rather than being so focused on the week in and week out maintenance of good plans or the good progress that has been made on those various projects that I talked about, many of which, of course, have long time frames attached to them. We are making good progress. There are still a lot of challenges ahead of us. So we need all the help that we can get to continue to build on what is quite a strong base and to engage effectively with the community as we do that. Madam Chair, those are my introductory comments.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much. Since the Government adopted the IRTP, has the proportion of total trips taken by public transport in south-east Queensland increased? What is the trend that is showing up in the surveys?

Mr Wilson: Yes. To date, the proportion of travel by public transport has been pretty steady—at about 7%. What is significant is that the volume of trips, the number of trips, has increased from roughly about 160 million a year to about 180 million or a bit more, in fact. We have seen patronage growth in all sectors—Brisbane Transport, private buses and QR, although QR's latest figures have been impacted a bit by the recent strikes that they had. So overall, absolute numbers are increasing. The actual proportion is steady.

Mr SULLIVAN: Madam Chairman and gentlemen, sorry for the late arrival. I will spare you the details. Bruce, you would be aware that there have been some criticisms about the underlying basis of the IRTP, where people like the Property Council and some university researchers have indicated that the basic research does not seem to have been done to provide the data which says, "What are the starting points and destinations of travellers?", that there has been an assumption that people are coming from the suburbs to the CBD, that it does not take into account cross-regional, or cross-suburban trips as much as it should and that, therefore, some of the recommendations coming out of the IRTP are not founded as well on research and data as they should be. Are you conscious of the lack of statistics available on the behavioural needs of commuters? What value do you see in those criticisms, or do you think that they are not warranted?

Mr Wilson: I think there are a couple of points behind that. Certainly, a lot of rigorous research went into the development of the IRTP, based on good data. I do not think it is true to say that the IRTP was founded on poor information. One of the challenges is—

Mr SULLIVAN: Can we get an indication from you after this meeting—I do not expect you to have it here—of what sort of research was done?

Mr Wilson: Sure.

Mr SULLIVAN: If people doing work through the universities and the Property Council are saying, "Look, we don't think it was", we have to make some sort of judgment and we need some more evidence of what was provided.

Mr Wilson: We can certainly follow it up. The point I was leading to is that the big challenge is to keep data current. Some of the criticisms I have heard have been more about the currency of data in more recent times. In that regard, there are two issues. Firstly, we rely on census information, and that is sampled only every few years. We are due for another census next year. Everybody's census-based data is getting out of date. Our second source is household travel information. We are conscious that we need to run another household travel survey. In fact, we are providing funds in our internal budget allocations to run another one in the next financial year. We are also going to set up a data unit within the department to analyse that data and other data that we can get hold of. In that regard, we have agreement from other agencies—Main Roads, Queensland Rail and the BCC—to jointly fund those activities with us. The issue is probably more about the currency of data, and that is something we are very conscious of. Of course, it costs money, but we realise that we need to maintain the current data in terms of applying that to those updates of the IRTP and other plans that I talked about before.

Mr Broe: There are really two types of data that people are referring to. One is the basic data on traveller behaviour. We get that information from the household travel surveys. That is the information we used in developing the original IRTP. That is information such as how many times a day people travel and their origins and destinations. The basic traveller behaviour information was there in developing the IRTP, but it needs to be updated. The second type of information was information on movements and travel in peak and off peak. We used a lot of modelling and analysis in developing the IRTP to look at whether trips were coming into town or going around town. More recently, in developing the 2007 Vision, there was extensive work in looking at the extent of movements around town and radial trips. Perhaps the issue is more one of the responses to those issues and to what extent there should be responses to catering for cross-town versus radial as opposed to the actual data itself.

Mr SULLIVAN: I guess that is the broad pitch. My colleagues Mr Stephan and Mr Healy would be aware of this. When the new bus services were initiated in the past 12 or 18 months—and Mick McShea would know what I am referring to—it was excellent to see great consultation with the community to determine and meet people's needs. That was done in relation to the regional centres, but that does not seem to have occurred to anywhere near that degree with respect to the vast metropolitan area from Caboolture to Logan.

Mr Gralton: I believe Brisbane City, in particular BT, does significant surveys when looking at restructuring its route network. So does QR. QR does significant surveys. But there is always a gap in that information. It is never as complete as we would like. Integrated ticketing will play an important role, because it is through integrated ticketing that we can get an exact idea of the origins and destinations of trips. We cannot get that from the current ticketing systems used by the existing operators. There is a need to build not just a picture of the total trip-making pattern but also to see how we can best optimise the public transport services we have.

Mr Broe: We have some good examples of local transport plans, for example, in Logan, where as part of the development of integrated transport plans there is consultation with the community. That gives us a better picture of what the local needs are. The IRTP itself is not the only plan. Underneath it we have to have local plans with their own consultation.

Mr Wilson: Perhaps I can summarise that by saying—and I think both Barry and I have said this—that I think the IRTP was based on good-quality data. The challenge across the region, as you say, is to maintain that data. That is what we are working on. You mentioned consultation in terms of bus contract reviews. I think that consultation is occurring in all cases. But I think that is

a different sort of initiative—quite a specific initiative—compared with the overall IRTP, for which the main work was done several years ago and which we are now updating.

Mr SULLIVAN: In terms of public transport, Gympie and Toowoomba are not relying on rail, they are relying on buses and links to taxis. Part of the problem with looking only at bus or rail ticketing at the moment is that you are measuring only those who are using the system, you are not measuring those who are not using the system. In Toowoomba they included a huge number of people from the nursing homes and elsewhere. For example, they found out where they wanted to go, what times they wanted to go there, the frequency of services and the starting and finishing times. It appears that a very successful service is being provided. But they did not base their decision on the existing passengers; they went to the community to see what they needed and then provided it. My concern is that what you have referred to is a survey of those who are already using the system, and we are not picking up those who are not using the system.

Mr Gralton: I do not think that is the case in terms of BT or QR. These surveys are of existing patrons and also of the corridor itself.

Mr Broe: For example, with the Petrie-Kippa Ring public transport corridor study and the Robina to Coolangatta corridor study we surveyed a random sample of everybody to look at their specific travel needs and what they wanted from public transport. In individual major studies community attitude surveys are done, but we need to expand them across the south-east.

Mr SULLIVAN: We are trying to look at how the transport funding cake is divided, that is, the division between Main Roads and Queensland Transport and within that the division between the roads network and the public transport network. Historically, road funding in Australia and Queensland has far outweighed the funding provided for public transport. Can you give some of the history of that imbalance between those two segments? Is there some mechanism to reallocate funding so that the public transport sector gets a greater share of it?

Mr Wilson: I might say a few things and then invite my colleagues to comment. You are quite right; there have been well established road funding programs involving both State and Federal money over a long time. There have been less well established programs for funding public transport infrastructure over time, although there have been various initiatives. The Federal Government was involved for a while, particularly through the Building Better Cities Program, but that has now ceased. However, it does contribute a little on and off through the Centenary of Federation Program, for instance, to light rail. The State Government, though, has had funding programs in place for some years—I forget offhand how many—for subsidising public transport operations.

I might leave public transport operations alone and just focus on the capital side of it. We have seen in recent years—and particularly from the time of the IRTP on—a major increase in State Government funding for public transport projects. To date that has tended to be for particular projects. There has not been an ongoing program in a similar way to the ongoing Roads Improvement Program. But in a way funding for the bigger road projects has tended to become a bit one-off as well, such as the motorway. I mentioned the port road before. That is another case where the State, Federal and local governments are all kicking in. We are probably seeing a trend to the biggest projects, whether they are road or public transport, being more one-off decisions. If we then look at the balance between how we choose between road projects and public transport projects, which I suspect is what is on your mind—

Mr SULLIVAN: With limited resources, one has to make choices. It appears from what you have said that the subsidies have been through rail, bus, particularly QT, and the school bus systems. We are trying to get some idea of how the pie is cut in that regard and what mechanisms there are to make a change.

Mr Wilson: I might focus on the capital side for a while. Under the IRTP we have a rolling three-year implementation program and we have an IRTP implementation group, which comprises relevant agencies, including ourselves, Main Roads, rail and local government as well. That is a forum for trying to coordinate the investment across the network.

Significantly, under the 2007 Vision, for the first time we have set criteria for investment in transport projects right across the spectrum as well. I guess the answer is: a significant program of public transport projects has only come about in relatively recent times. So far it has tended to be one-off, but we are now putting, I think, fairly good mechanisms in place to look concurrently at all

modes of transport, and that is partly through the IRTP rolling three-year program, and then increasingly—because it is something we are picking up right now; it is provided for in the draft 2007 Vision—there is investment criteria to get a more rigorous approach to looking at road versus public transport—all modes. I do not know if John wants to add to that.

Mr Gralton: I think we have come a long way in recent times, particularly with Main Roads and local government, in making sure that public transport projects are adequately assessed within their programs, and Main Roads specifically. We have agreements with Main Roads that in the production of their own investment program they do consider public transport projects and look at the benefits of those vis-a-vis the normal road upgrade. That is of particular relevance in south-east Queensland more so than the rest of the State.

I think it is a fair point to say we do suffer from a disability of not having a base funding for projects and services—for services we do, but for infrastructure we do not, unlike roads, who do have a base and are able to prioritise projects within that base. It gives them a lot more flexibility. They can move from project to project and address priorities as they arise. Our funding is project specific funding. We have no base level of funding, which would allow us to be more flexible in the way our infrastructure is delivered and respond to needs in a far more meaningful way.

Mr SULLIVAN: What is a ballpark figure of the base roads funding from which you are working at the moment?

Mr Gralton: Roads work to their base, which is—

Mr Wilson: Roughly \$1 billion.

Mr Gralton:—roughly \$1 billion. We have no base at all apart from a small component of intermodal expenditure.

Mr SULLIVAN: It has to be project specific. If the project is not there, then there is no sort of base.

Mr Gralton: Then there is no funding source. The other thing that will impact on us as time goes on is that we are putting a lot of effort into infrastructure now. We need to maintain that infrastructure. By not having any base, it does not give us a source of funds to maintain the infrastructure, either. That is an issue that we are taking up with Government as important. That has only come to light because of the investment that the Government has approved in major projects to date.

Mr Broe: Those factors emphasise the importance of both the IRTP itself and this investment evaluation approach, because we want to see public transport, roads and cycling all looked at in a more integrated way. Then we get a better feel for what their outcomes are so we can make better choices. This was the first attempt to have that multicriteria approach which other States use to make better decisions.

Mr SULLIVAN: I have just a quick comment there because it impacts on this. There are almost two Queenslands. Some of my colleagues here would be looking for as much bitumen as they can get because they have poor roads covering vast distances.

Mr Gralton: Exactly.

Mr SULLIVAN: In the south-east corner, they say, "I don't want that bitumen past my house, thank you". Yet people who are saying that are hopping in the car and driving past other people's houses. It is almost as if we have two networks that we have to look at. One is the widening, the strengthening and the improvement of the roads in the regional and rural areas. The other one is public transport infrastructure here to cater for what we have.

Mr Wilson: Could I just endorse what you have said? I am very mindful—obviously your terms of reference are looking at south-east Queensland so we are only talking about south-east Queensland, but I would hate for anybody to think our interest was only in south-east Queensland. It is very much Statewide. You are quite right; there are massive issues right across Queensland for roads but also for public transport in a range of different ways. That is another dimension which, I guess, is outside your immediate terms of reference.

The CHAIRMAN: That is true.

Mr Wilson: But I would not like anybody to think it is forgotten because it is not.

The CHAIRMAN: But you do not actually have a base for public transport funding?

Mr Wilson: No. As we have just said, for the big projects that is the case. John did mention—and I will just say again—that there has been a small ongoing program for particularly intermodal facilities for minor local bus interchanges and things. Also on the maritime side, there is a small ongoing program there. But in terms of the big projects, there is not. Can I also just reinforce, I suppose, what I think I said, and that is that it is worth noting right now we are spending at a record rate in terms of public transport infrastructure. One thing we have not noted is the potential for an increased role for the private sector as well. I do not know whether you want to follow that up later on. I just note that that is another area of funding we have seen a bit of—the Airtrain project being the outstanding example. But we would like to see more of that as well.

Mr McShea: In relation to the base for our subsidies, we are talking projects, but we do have a subsidy base for school transport and urban bus services and western air services and so forth.

Mr Gralton: The base that is missing is the infrastructure base. Apart from the \$10m that we have for intermodal, it is very small dollars for the whole State.

Mr Wilson: And school transport, of course, is roughly \$117m. Those bases for operation—I said a while ago that I was mainly focusing on projects, but there is a big operational base.

Mr HOBBS: On page 4 of the submission you state that the busway network has been designed as complementary to existing rail services and will be constructed in non-rail corridors. A number of submissions to the inquiry are critical of the Government's investment in busways that follow existing rail corridors and presumably attract passengers away from Citytrain. These were Mees, QCC, Newman and Yeates. There are three questions in this: how do you envisage that busways will complement the existing rail services; will busways attract existing CityRail passengers away from rail services that are already there; and will busways deliver to taxpayers the best value for money for public transport improvements in the area that they will serve?

Mr Wilson: I am conscious of some of those criticisms. I would have to say that I am surprised by the criticisms because I think the facts do not line up with the criticisms that have been made. The aim is to construct busways in corridors that are basically not served by rail. If you look at the south-east busway, it essentially serves territory that is not served by rail. To get people from the area that the busway services across to the Beenleigh or Gold Coast rail line—it is a long, sideways movement before you then connect up with the train. So we do see the south-east busway—to be more specific for the moment—as serving a very separate sector of the city. There is crossover at a couple of points. One is at Buranda and the other one is in the South Bank area. We are very consciously providing high quality interchange facilities at those two points, but we really do not see the south-east busway as competing with rail or drawing patronage away.

There is a small sort of grey area somewhere between the two routes and depending on how local bus services are configured—it is a very small grey area where a feeder bus could go one way or the other. We are presently developing a busway operational plan that addresses that. I just say that they should ask people who are in suburbs that are close to the busway. Most of those areas are nowhere near the railway line in question.

Mr HEALY: Could I just butt in for a moment? You have seen the Paul Mees submission to our Committee. He says in his submission that the planned western busway is actually in the rail right of way for some of its length and that rail track will actually be removed to accommodate that. Is that correct?

Mr Wilson: No, it is not correct, but it is a very good question. The original busway plan for Brisbane actually had its genesis in the Brisbane City Council and then was picked up in the IRTP. The original concept plan showed a number of busway routes, including a dotted line into the western suburbs. That was shown as a possible western busway. It has never really had much currency since, and we do not see a western busway ever being built for the simple reason that it is a corridor that is already very well serviced by a high capacity rail line. He would be right if a western busway ever was attempted to be built, but I cannot see that ever happening.

The CHAIRMAN: Also in your submission it states that the Brisbane light rail project has been deliberately planned as narrow gauge to allow for possible future expansion on to the heavy rail system. Is that technically feasible?

Mr Wilson: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Has Queensland Rail confirmed the feasibility of this from a safety and technical perspective? Has that all been done?

Mr Wilson: Yes and no, probably. The choice of narrow gauge for the light rail network was really twofold. One was because it needs to be stabled, cleaned and maintained somewhere, and utilising space within the main rail stabling/maintenance complex was seen as a likely approach. Having narrow gauge means that it can be moved into some of the rail area for maintenance, stabling and so on.

The other one was to provide for the future possibility of running light rail and heavy rail. It certainly is technically possible. It happens in Europe in a number of places already. In fact, an outstanding example is located in a German city called Karlsruhe, which has an extensive light rail network and sees those light rail vehicles move on to heavy rail tracks. It changes voltage. It goes from AC to DC. It is entirely automatic. The driver does not even have to flick a switch. Significantly, they run light rail vehicles into suburbs on dual track heavy rail that is running the European high speed ICE trains at 250 km/h. Those trains run on the same tracks as local trams. It is truly amazing. So it is technically possible. However, there are a number of practical issues that need to be addressed.

We have spoken with QR. It is true to say that they have some reservations about how it would work and be funded, but that really is a long way down the path. Our main challenge at the moment is the initial light rail network for Brisbane, but we are deliberately keeping all options open for the future. In relation to the possibility of running on heavy rail, one sector where that might make sense is actually that western corridor, that is, to run light rail out along the heavy rail and then exit and go on the street system, perhaps out from Toowong or from Indooroopilly. But they are just possibilities a long way down the track. There would need to be careful attention by us and QR. We have not really spent much time on it because we have other more pressing challenges.

In a similar way, the busways are being constructed to be able to be converted to light rail in the future as well. Again, that is to maintain flexibility. Light rail could be extended in other corridors that do not have rail or busways such as the inner north-western suburbs to the Lang Park redevelopment. That is another obvious possibility that is being considered as part of the Lang Park project.

Mr Broe: In relation to the integrated planning statement, we need to focus our investment on where the greatest needs and priorities are. Where there is good public transport now and good line hold systems, obviously that may not be as high a priority as areas that do not have a busway or heavy rail. So the intent in the planning is not to duplicate or subsume a different mode; it is really to put our investments where they can be of best effect, whether it be busway, heavy rail or light rail.

Mr SULLIVAN: I want to pick up the last alternative Mr Wilson mentioned, that is, the possible future conversion of the busways to light rail. You say it is technically feasible. Paul Mees in his submission indicated that, on the South-East Transit Project, which is the first of the proposed busways, there are points at which this will not be feasible. Does that mean there will have to be some transition points added later? Is that assessment correct?

Mr Gralton: It is not correct as far as I am aware. We have certainly set the geometric standards for the busways so that they are fully compatible with light rail. In fact, in the tunnel sections between South Bank and Woolloongabba we have actually made provision within the base slabs for the rails to be inserted. There should be no physical characteristic of the busway which would inhibit light rail running there either by itself or in conjunction with buses.

Mr SULLIVAN: And the route taken is conducive to that flexible changeover?

Mr Gralton: As we build up public transport patronage in the future, there will be a limit to the number of buses you can run into the city. We will need a higher capacity vehicle to take those greater passenger numbers. Light rail will fit the bill for that need. As the demand

increases, so will the need for this high capacity vehicle and hence light rail would come into existence.

Mr SULLIVAN: Could anyone give the Committee an example of where in Australia or overseas this conversion from a busway to a light rail has occurred and something about the cost-effective approach of providing long-term public transport if that conversion occurs?

Mr Wilson: A place where it is happening right now is Pittsburgh in the United States. In terms of the cost effectiveness of that transition, I do not think there has been a lot of work done. Again, a bit like running light rail and heavy rail, this has been built in for future flexibility. Our immediate challenge is, firstly, finishing the SET project and, secondly, ensuring it operates well as a busway and also building in flexibility so that, as John said, if, as we would hope, patronage builds up to the point where it is getting beyond buses to handle, then we can convert it. Obviously before we do that we would need to look at the feasibility.

Mr SULLIVAN: And you will be able to use it as a dual purpose carriageway for both bus and light rail?

Mr Wilson: Yes. As an example, several years ago I saw first-hand just such a thing operating in Pittsburgh. I am sure there are other examples, too.

Mr SULLIVAN: Have they reached some good goals, because we are falling short of our public transport goals, even the ones set in the IRTP?

Mr Broe: In the inner city part of Pittsburgh, they are certainly moving a lot of people in public transport on both light rail and buses. As we mentioned earlier, in terms of the IRTP, we are holding our own in terms of more chair.

Mr Gralton: There have been a couple of good examples overseas where busways have produced very significant increases in patronage. Leeds is one. They have a similar sort of run type from Garden City to the city. The busway there cut 10 minutes off a half hour run time. They have seen a nearly 40% increase in patronage. Miami has a similar sort of arrangement, and they have seen very significant increases, too. So the busways can produce the goods when it is necessary to cut travel time, give certainty of travel and ensure that you have an attractive public transport system. The light rail also has been very successful in attracting increased custom. There are good examples, particularly in Europe where they have replaced bus services with light rail one for one—same frequency, same fare structure—and got very significant increases in patronage. I think the potential is there with that investment to achieve a significant higher public transport utilisation than we have at the moment.

Mr HEALY: Integrated ticketing seems to be a favourite topic of this Committee. How come European countries can organise a system like Eurail which covers privately and publicly owned rail, bus and ferry services in 27 countries and yet here in Brisbane we still cannot get two Government owned operators to use the same system? I know you have been working on it and I know that we have seen lots of innovative things at the TravelSmart Centre. Where are we up to with it?

Mr Wilson: I am glad you asked the question, because it is another one where perceptions seem to be quite different to what is actually happening. When you said that two operators could not use the same equipment, you might be talking about a decision some years ago now about different vending machines.

Mr HEALY: Well, QR and Brisbane Transport.

Mr Wilson: That is history. That was way before our integrated ticketing initiative started, so I cannot speak for why that came about.

Mr HEALY: Queensland Transport should have had a say in that in the beginning, though.

Mr Wilson: To be honest, I do not know. I am not trying to cop out. I was not there and I do not actually think we were involved at the time.

Mr Gralton: We were, but it had a chequered history.

Mr Wilson: Anyway, the point is that that does pre-date the present integrated ticketing initiative. Where is it at? There was a two-stage strategy. One was to roll out integrated products using existing technology such as paper-based technology, and we have done that with the

south-east explorer ticket and the 1,2,3 ticket. The big one, of course, is getting smart card technology. We are operating to a timetable. We are pretty much on target with that timetable. We have been out for tenders. Tenders have closed and we are now in the evaluation stage of consortia who have bid to deliver a contactless smart card based integrated ticket across south-east Queensland. You are right in terms of Japanese railways or trains in Europe, but there are very few examples in existence right now anywhere in the world of contactless smart card ticketing. When I said earlier that it would be a world-class system, I truly meant it.

It is very complex on two fronts. One is that the technology is cutting-edge technology which does not exist in many places. There are quite a number of cities chasing it, as we are. In relation to those who have already implemented it, it has not been without its problems. We are very mindful of that. There have been some real problems in some other centres, and we want to avoid that here. The technology is one challenge. While we may not be as big as Europe or Tokyo, we do still have a number of different operators and a number of different fare structures. Standardising fares, business rules, concessions and all of those arrangements is one of the other complexities. But the good news is that I think there is genuine commitment all round. This has been attempted before—more than once, I think. Lack of commitment from all the players was what caused difficulty in the past. I truly think that we have got commitment all round. We are operating to a timetable and we are pretty much on target.

Mr HEALY: Can you nail it down? Are we looking at the end of 2000 or are we looking at early 2001 by that timetable?

Mr Wilson: No. We are looking at least at the end of 2001, maybe even early 2002, for actual trials on the ground. That is the time frame with this sort of technology. One of the challenges is communicating about some of these things. That is the time frame. The experience from other cities suggests that that is the realistic time frame. If we are going to do it properly, I do not think anybody else is doing it in less than those time frames.

Mr HEALY: Do you think it will be in place before the implementation of light rail?

Mr Wilson: It will go close.

Mr Gralton: It is coming in about the same time.

Mr SULLIVAN: Of the overseas examples, what are the successful ones?

Mr Gralton: Hong Kong was particularly successful. New York is successful. London is in the bidding process now. Sydney is also bidding for a similar product to what we have as well.

Mr SULLIVAN: Let us take the Octopus. I refer to the fact that there has to be an individual card per person. In terms of families, there is a problem. If mum is taking the two kids to see the dentist, then they have to have three cards. They have to be personalised. Are you looking at some way of, even in the fare structure, having a family fare so you can get the family using it rather than piling into the car?

Mr Gralton: The card we envisage for transport is non-personalised, so it is transferable. It also will have rewards for the number of trips. In electronic ticketing you do not have weeklies or monthlies; you reward for multiple trip usage.

Mr SULLIVAN: While it might not be personal, if mum and the two kids are going through that turnstile it cannot be swiped three times, can it?

Mr Gralton: No.

Mr SULLIVAN: It can only be swiped once, so the family still has to have three cards or a bundle of cards.

Mr Gralton: That is true, but they are not tied to an individual. There is an exception to that. If our integrated ticketing card is also combined with a Brisbane card, for example, that Brisbane City Council is keen to develop, it may well be personalised for their use in terms of library usage or other council usages. But there will be a non-personalised transport card that is generally available.

Mr SULLIVAN: And it will have the ability to add things on, such as parking, the library or whatever?

Mr Gralton: Exactly. Well, certainly the council is looking for its card to cover parking charges in the city. We may be looking at working in with Queensland Motorways for tolls. There

may be other transport or transit applications which are an integral part of that card. It will have other non-transit applications as well. They are the things that are new, in combining electronic ticketing with e-commerce. That is where some big advantages are to be had in the use of a card.

Mr HOBBS: If it is so new and hard to go with a smart card ticketing system, why do you not have some system based on existing technology?

Mr Wilson: I guess we have. As I said, we have rolled out some paper-based products using the existing technology. If you mean that we should have had some intermediate step using more technology but not as elaborate as the contactless smart card, we did consider that but the cost and effort in introducing something new that was only then going to be replaced by a further step just did not make sense.

Mr HOBBS: Recent statements in the Courier-Mail attributed to Brisbane City Councillor Maureen Hayes indicated that the addition of the GST to bus and ferry fares would reduce the number of commuters using the Brisbane public transport system and at the same time increase the Brisbane City Council revenue. Is it not true that the GST goes directly back to the State Governments anyway? So why should Queensland Transport not be increasing its subsidies to operators in order to offset the negative effect of the tax on the public transport patronage by maintaining or even lowering the current fare costs? I am not even sure that fares going up will have a big impact, but experts are saying that it will. But the money comes back around, anyway.

Mr McShea: The figures for metropolitan bus operations are that the net effect of GST will mean that fares will go up by about 7.7%. That is in the metropolitan areas. In other areas of the State we anticipate an increase of about 4.8%. In normal times, if that increase occurred without the increase in income people will get through tax cuts in their pocket, we would expect that there would be a significant drop-off in patronage.

With an increase of this sort, 7% or 8%, we would normally expect maybe a 3% drop-off in patronage. Having said that, though, we are not sure in this instance because, as I said, people will be recompensed to a certain degree for the effects of GST. The requirements that are put on us as an organisation are that our contract payments have to be reduced to all those operators by the amount of the savings and we have had to revert that back to Treasury. So our subsidy budget has been cut to accommodate that difference.

Mr HOBBS: I guess at the end of the day it is a decision of whatever Government is in power. If they wish to run that money back around again, they can.

Mr McShea: They would have had to make that money available, and no-one has made that available to Queensland Transport.

Mr Wilson: I am not an expert in overall GST-based money flows to and from the States, but my understanding is that there is actually a lag between the outgoings in the GST and the supposedly offsetting revenue increases back to the State. I think the lag is one to two years. I am not an expert in that arena.

Mr STEPHAN: In a nutshell, why does Queensland Transport subsidise passengers using intercity rail services but not those using a bus?

Mr Wilson: I guess that has been a long-term policy position of successive Governments.

Mr McShea: In very simple terms, the definition in the legislation is for long distance operators, which is basically anyone who travels more than 40 kilometres. They do not come into our contracting arrangements and as such have not attracted subsidy. The amount of subsidy we get is only for urban operators, which currently excludes the sorts of people you talk about—those that run from the Sunshine Coast to Brisbane or from the Gold Coast to Brisbane and some up in north Queensland as well. As Bruce has said, it is the policy of successive Governments not to fund those.

Mr HEALY: I think it might have been Boonah Shire Council that raised it with us. There was once a rail line between Ipswich and Boonah. That was dismantled and replaced by a private bus service that does not provide subsidised travel. There is an equity issue here, isn't there?

Mr Wilson: I suppose, although I guess by the time the rail service was ceased and the line was dismantled nobody was actually travelling by it anyway.

Mr STEPHAN: They could be in the next 10 years, though.

Mr HEALY: Planning would surely indicate that there would be a demand for some sort of service, whatever it is.

Mr Wilson: Yes. I see your point. I think all we can really say is that that has been a longstanding policy position of Governments. To change it would obviously require funding that would have to come from somewhere else, I guess.

Mr SULLIVAN: The links between planning and transport have been pointed out to the Committee on a number of occasions. Bad planning can lead to bad decisions with regard to transport and therefore have an effect on particularly public transport. The Integrated Planning Act has some effect on public transport matters. In your submission on D4, which is page 551, you say that local governments will advise your department of developments and proposed decisions that will have an impact on public transport matters consistent with the Act. What does this mean in practice? I would have thought that any development is going to have an impact on public transport. Then on page G7 you again discuss the IPA and its use to encourage transit oriented developments. Can you tell us what happens now under the Act with new developments and how it works in practice?

Mr Broe: In terms of the legislative provisions, there are still some legislative requirements for Queensland Transport to be recognised as a concurrent agency. Under those guidelines when they are enforced we would automatically see development applications above a particular size. In practice it is actually working that way, anyway. The Integrated Planning Act allows much better provision for public transport up front. It is much more specific. We have specific guidelines and codes, such as the shaping up guidelines in the IRTP which are now explicitly recognised in planning schemes. We can also get transport corridors designated much easier than in the past.

Overall, the Integrated Planning Act makes it better for public transport. However, the only challenge is in terms of charging infrastructure, charging for public transport. We are not on as firm ground as perhaps the road system. So we are in a better position. We do work closely with local governments on all aspects of land use and transport planning. In terms of transit oriented development, I guess in simple terms what that means is that where we have rail stations, either existing or planned, we try to get local governments in their planning schemes to plan a development around there that better suits public transport. So instead of having, say, large acreage lots of residential housing we get some higher density and a better mix of uses around a rail station or a busway station so we actually encourage more public transport in that corridor, rather than spread it right across the region.

Mr SULLIVAN: I am sure that when all of us voted for certain changes to the IPA we had certain things in mind. I guess what it comes down to is whether there are adequate mechanisms in place to ensure that. You said, "We try to get the local authorities to do it." The development applications do lie with local authorities, so is your short answer that the degree of emphasis given by a local authority depends really on how transit oriented the developments are? Does it really rely on the local authority or can you wave even a middle-sized stick?

Mr Gralton: It does depend on the local authority, but we have good cooperation with local government. In each of our regions we have established an officer who actually deals with local government on development applications. Because we are not really interested in small applications, because they do not have big impacts on the transport system that we are accountable for, we have set thresholds. Above those thresholds we do want to see all the applications, and below we don't. We rely on the shaping up guidelines that Barry has referred to. Those arrangements are working well across the State.

What happens in south-east Queensland is more complicated and more intense. There we rely heavily on local government but also we rely on Main Roads, because most of them are referred to Main Roads and Main Roads then comes back to us if there is a development application that is likely to have a significant impact on public transport. So the system is there. In rural areas it seems to be working. In urban areas it is tougher. Nevertheless, I think the interaction we are getting with local government and with the development industry is adequate for the time being.

Mr SULLIVAN: You talk about the threshold and about whether it impacts. My contention would be that every development impacts. You could have a series of small, isolated developments, none of which meets your standard of size and yet which, aggregately, are having an impact which then can lead to problems down the track.

Mr Gralton: That is true. The small, individual ones are treated with the Shaping Up guidelines, but we do have an active role in looking at council's planning documents as they stand anyhow. So we are involved with Main Roads in looking at those documents to make sure that their overall planning schemes are such that they address public transport issues. Something might slip through there, but in the main I think the relationship we have with local government and Main Roads puts us in a good position to ensure in the main that the large public transport impacts are addressed.

Mr SULLIVAN: Barry hinted at something with the charging regime. Would your department see any suggested changes to the IPA that you believe would be beneficial in trying to develop better public transport oriented developments and better coordination of developments?

Mr Gralton: I think we would always like to have something that would encourage the early development of public transport in new developments and that discourage the multiple ownership of motor vehicles—that we could have a public transport system in an immature development that would help that. But that is an ideal world, which is very difficult to come by.

Mr SULLIVAN: The specific question is: do you think that the Act needs amending in any way? Does your department have some suggestions on how the IPA could be amended to better achieve this goal?

Mr Broe: I think that it is more in its implementation. The Act provides the necessary provisions at the policy level; it is in the detailed implementation. We would like to have more detail and be more specific about performance measures and about exactly what is required in terms of public transport. So it is not a general statement about access and mobility, but we work with local government to try to make it as specific as possible.

Mr SULLIVAN: So you have the legislative authority to actually check on, say, urban sprawl that does not accord with IRTP principles, or you can only make suggestions?

Mr Broe: Again, we can make suggestions. When we are a concurrence agency, we will have more power. But the local governments are also bound by their planning schemes. So they have to adhere to the policies and guidelines in their own planning schemes. So up front, they have to accord with the IRTP and our cycling strategy. So they are under obligations as well.

Mr Wilson: That is something that I would be happy to come back to you on, if you like. You have asked a specific question about amendments to the Act. Maybe that is something that we could come back to you on.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like some feedback on that if I could, because I know that until recently local governments were looking at roadworks, traffic control—that sort of thing—but they really were not looking at public transport when they were approving town planning applications. So unless they have started to do that in the last two years, there probably needs to be more emphasis put on that.

Mr Wilson: Yes. We have responded in terms of operating with what there is, but in terms of the broader question on possible amendments, we will pick that up.

The CHAIRMAN: If we could have some feedback on that, that would probably be an important issue.

Mr STEPHAN: In relation to future transport corridors, has the Government acquired sufficient land to create future transport corridors? Are there mechanisms in place to prevent developments that could encroach upon these corridor areas and cause conflict between the Government and private enterprise?

Mr Wilson: I think I mentioned in my opening comments that one of the areas that we have been particularly active on relates to a number of corridor studies to identify and progressively reserve corridors for future use for all types of transport, but if we are talking about public transport in particular, I might get Barry once again to outline some of the ones that have been current.

Mr Broe: Main Roads are doing their own planning studies, such as the western Ipswich bypass, which covers future road network corridors. In terms of public transport, we have a number of public transport corridor studies—on the Sunshine Coast, the Caboolture-Maroochydore public transport study; the Petrie-Kippa Ring study, the Robina-Coolangatta study,

and there are a couple of others. What happens is that when we finish the public transport study, we then make a recommendation and then we look for funding to acquire the corridor and protect it.

Linked to the earlier question, under the Integrated Planning Act we are in a stronger position now to designate corridors, but it does mean that within a certain time frame—within six years—we have to purchase that corridor if the pressure is brought on us by, say, adjacent developers. So we do have the conditions and the policies to acquire the corridor, but funding is obviously a key issue. It would be nice to have more corridors, but I guess we have to live with what we have got and make better use of the existing system.

So one of the key focuses of the IRTP is to make better use of existing corridors and allocate road space better. But in terms of public transport requirements and corridor planning, I think that we are in a pretty good position across the region.

Mr Gralton: We have a fund available from the Government—it is \$12.5m, I think—which allows us to acquire property, particularly on hardship grounds, to protect these corridors. But it is a very limited fund and it does not give us enormous capacity to go out and acquire the full corridor; we can only acquire those which are under pressure from hardship.

Mr HEALY: I would like to ask a few questions about the rail service agreement that you have with Queensland Rail. I understand that the agreement took quite a few years to finalise. This is a question on notice. Could you supply the Committee with any figures that the department has on the total expenditure on the preparation of that agreement? I guess a project like that, which took quite some time, obviously had a cost to it.

Mr Gralton: You are talking about the four RSAs? There are four of them.

Mr HEALY: Yes.

Mr Wilson: Although of all of them, Citytrain is obviously the one most relevant to this.

Mr HEALY: Yes. Just in relation to the agreement: as a result, what have been the benefits that this agreement has been able to bring to commuters in south-east Queensland who use and pay for Citytrain—the passengers and taxpayers? Does the agreement require Queensland Rail to provide more or better services or to provide the same service at a lower cost, or does it really just enshrine the current level of services that guarantee community service obligation payments to Queensland Rail?

Mr Wilson: There were really two rationales behind having these agreements. The first one was that, under National Competition Policy, we needed to have a clear relationship between the Government, represented by Queensland Transport, and Queensland Rail. So I guess the first reason was driven by National Competition Policy. The second reason was that over the years the Government had subsidised QR in various ways—more recently since corporatisation via what became known as community service obligation payments—but it was not always clear what the Government was getting back in return. So these agreements make explicit what the Government is getting in return for its community service obligation payments into rail. We are buying transport services. It is also acknowledged that QR, by nature of its public ownership, has some cost impositions on it as a result of maintaining employment in the bush and things like that that are not necessarily transport objectives and they will be funded separately through an input contract, or a shareholders agreement—it has various descriptors to it.

The aim, though, is to use the contract to encourage QR to be as efficient as possible, to provide the best possible value for money and to grow the business. There is a specific provision in section 26 that provides for integration or coordination with other forms of public transport. That is something that is worth correcting. That, I think, might have been a misinterpretation that came out in earlier evidence. The contracts do provide for coordination with other forms of public transport in south-east Queensland.

Mr HEALY: Will that include integrated ticketing?

Mr Wilson: Yes.

Mr HEALY: That does? So the arrangements will not have to be revised? That is already included in the contract?

Mr Wilson: Yes.

Mr Gralton: In principle, some detail will need to be done. The actual revenue sharing mechanism, I think that is a separate agreement which will be made pursuant to the main contract.

Mr HEALY: Right. On page 566, or F6 of your submission, it discusses the revised service contract arrangements with QR and it states—

"QR also has to meet an annual growth in patronage target of 3.1%. This is below the level needed to meet the targets in the IRTP. However, in negotiations QR argued that external factors beyond its control would reduce the need for rail services. These factors included increased construction of roads and busways and the lack of travel demand management measures. Nevertheless, QR's patronage in 1998-99 increased by 3% over the previous patronage."

Can you explain to the Committee why Queensland Transport has negotiated patronage targets lower than the objectives set in the IRTP? Does that mean that the targets set are superfluous?

Mr Wilson: No. I think that there are really two objectives working here. The IRTP is something that we are committed to achieving, but we always knew those targets were challenging targets in the IRTP. In setting up the rail service agreement with Queensland Rail, it was effectively a commercial contract that we were signing with them. Inevitably, they, as the provider of the service, were concerned about being held to performance targets that involved issues over which they did not have complete control. So I do not think that the two are incompatible. This is one where we were looking to set some targets that would be challenging for them but which they were prepared to sign up for. On the other hand, we then, in terms of the IRTP, are dealing with a bigger picture. We do have more policy levers available to us than QR have and we are aiming to manage those levers to achieve even better outcomes when you look across the whole scene.

Mr HEALY: Have there been any other negotiations done with any other public transport providers in relation to patronage growth targets, and which operators are they?

Mr McShea: Brisbane City Council, for example. We have growth targets plus—

Mr HEALY: Below the IRTP objectives?

Mr McShea: Yes, that would be. It is about a 3% a year growth. Last year, they did better than that. Part of that, too, is also to look at reducing their cost of operation as well, and there are targets in there as well. So there are others.

Mr Gralton: Some of the policy issues the operators themselves do not have control over are things such as integrated ticketing, coordination, feeder services, and capital investments in track and rolling stock. Those decisions are made by others. They do not have control over them and they are essential for the higher IRTP target growths to be achieved. It is because of that that the targets for the individual operators are lower.

Mr Broe: There is also a staging issue. The targets in the IRTP are to the year 2011. The initial years of the IRTP are deliberately focused on improving options, public transport services and infrastructure. It is on the land use planning and demand management side now that we need to start making public transport a better choice and making sure that the service side of things is complemented by changes in land use and demand management.

Mr SULLIVAN: On page G6 of your submission you refer to private parking spaces in Brisbane and state—

"There is, for example, significant development pressure to expand the supply of private car parking spaces. New developments by both the State Government and private sector include large increases in car parking provisions, which are contrary to the long-term goals of the IRTP. South Bank, the Cultural Centre and the Treasury Casino have significantly increased inner city car parking availability, with approximately 30,000 car parking spaces now available in the CBD area."

Can you tell the Committee how this occurred? There is a stated goal and yet Government agencies, such as the South Bank Corporation and the Cultural Centre, seem to be going against that policy. Should those developments be made to conform with the IRTP? Why is there an apparently disjointed outcome?

Mr Wilson: I think there are several issues here. One is that some of them are developments that had their genesis well before the IRTP. The Treasury Casino was certainly in that category. I am not sure about all of the ones over at South Bank. I think some probably were and some probably were not. Certainly they were coming on stream early on in the IRTP process. We would like to think our hit rate can be better in future. But it is also not just about the number of spaces; it is about charging policies as well. That is something that we are working on with developers, whether they are private, with the State or with the council. We are working on charging regimes that discourage all-day commuter parking. For example, it would just about break the bank to park all day at the Treasury Casino too many times.

You are right; there are issues there. Most of those particular cases either predated the IRTP or started early on. It is a challenge to get all players, whether they are private, Government, Government related or council, in the net. The other comment I would make about the ones at South Bank is that some of those car parks perhaps could be used. We would ideally like to see that sort of commuter parking—to the extent that they are being used for that—further out. Given that they already exist, we need to look at fee structures and perhaps commuting arrangements using light rail or the busways that service those sites quite well.

Mr HOBBS: Page G5 of the department's submission addresses travel demand measures using car pooling. I understand that you ran a car pooling trial last year. Can you briefly outline the trial project run by the department. What were the costs? How many people were helped to get into car pooling? Does the department have any further plans for car pooling in south-east Queensland?

Mr Broe: I will have to check on the exact figures, but my recollection is that it cost us about half a million dollars to run the program. It was focused on the Brisbane to Gold Coast corridor. It was focused there largely to try to manage the traffic impacts of the construction of the South East Transit and Pacific Motorway projects and also because we were building high-occupancy vehicle lanes in that corridor, which would provide incentives for car pooling. Again, I would have to check on the number, but I believe we got about 40 to 50 people car pooling. That might not sound like a lot, but that meant instantaneously that 40 to 50 cars were off the road. We did achieve shifts, although not as high as we would have liked.

We addressed safety and security issues, which are a big concern when car pooling. People were worried about sharing cars with strangers. It was quite resource intensive. A lot of these travel demand management measures are resource intensive. We needed people working on the ground with local communities and workplaces to try to encourage people to shift. We developed some very high tech and best practice software to match people up. People filled in a form indicating where they wanted to travel to and we matched up similar people. That was very successful. We have had a lot of requests for further use of that software. We are working currently with the Royal Brisbane Hospital, which is a major employer. It wants to get car pooling working very seriously, because it has major parking constraints.

We also learned that the incentives need to be in place. Incentives can be in the form of cost and time savings or preferential parking. We are looking at a number of other locations where we can get it to work. But more importantly, we realised that car pooling needs to be part of a wider program of demand management and traveller behaviour. If you go all out with car pooling, it may not be successful. It does have some specific areas where it can work, but it is better if it is part of a coordinated program of telecommuting, public transport and cycling all matched together, ideally at a workplace.

Mr Wilson: There is a very good example of what Barry was starting to talk about in South Australia in Adelaide. Using the term "travel blending" they have promoted on an area basis the full suite of travel demand management measures, including car pooling.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you tell the Committee what would be required to facilitate greater participation by the private sector in the provision of public transport infrastructure and services in south-east Queensland. Are there any impediments that should be addressed to allow that?

Mr Wilson: I guess we have not seen as much of that in Queensland as has been the experience in the southern States of New South Wales and Victoria. I think that has been partly because they have been driven more by financial necessity earlier on. In our case the Airtrain project is the standout example, as I referred to earlier, where we have the private sector building the entire facility at a total cost to it and effectively zero cost to Government. The first challenge in

getting projects like that up and running is picking the right project. In that case, it was a proposition that came from the private sector. Inevitably, there is the question as to whether the projects will be self-funding. Where does the revenue stream come from that pays a return on their equity or debt? In the case of Airtrain, they judged that they could get sufficient return from the fare box, and that was partly because it was servicing a range of markets at the airport, including the travelling public, for whom a fare structure could be struck that was sufficient to make it a goer. It is about picking the right project and ensuring a revenue stream is available to create a return on private capital.

Increasingly, we are realising that there may be cases where it is jointly funded somehow. That has been the approach to light rail. The intention has been for all three levels of Government to kick in a certain amount of money, with the private sector kicking in the rest to make it operate. There are inevitably challenges in terms of intellectual property. When can an exclusive mandate be granted and when can it not? Particularly if Government funds are being contributed, there is a reasonable public expectation of some sort of competitive process, but the private sector is not keen, understandably, to go through that sort of competitive process.

The Department of State Development has been developing overall guidelines for private investment in public infrastructure. We are working closely with it. We maintain an open door policy with respect to private consortia that want to come in and talk either generally or about particular projects. We have had a number of approaches just recently about possible future projects. I do not know whether they will get off the ground or not. Perhaps for commercial-in-confidence reasons I should not go into those.

Mr HEALY: I might have to ask you to do that. I noticed in last Friday's Financial Review that the Bracks Government in Victoria announced a joint venture plan called Partnerships Victoria through which the Government engages private enterprise to build rail, toll-free roads and other infrastructure with the use of shadow payments or shadow tolls, which I know the Federal Transport Minister has raised in various forums. The article also states that the Queensland Department of Transport is aware of these joint venture proposals and may even be interested in them. Is that the case? Are you looking at that down that road? Pardon the pun.

Mr Wilson: The short answer is: yes, we are interested. The question of shadow tolls raises some policy issues that have been a bit problematic in Queensland since the Sunshine Motorway exercise.

Mr Gralton: We have had on the agenda with Main Roads for a significant time the option of shadow tolling. We have been looking at what has been happening in the UK with lane rental and shadow tolling. At the end of the day you still have to pay for its use. Shadow tolling creates a patronage risk that we as an agency do not normally carry. So there is a new risk that you are paying for in shadow tolling that is not normally carried by the agency. In fact, the shadow tolling option was looked at very significantly for the inner-city bypass by the Brisbane City Council. In that instance, it found the alternative funding arrangements that it put in place more advantageous than shadow tolling. But it is always an issue to consider.

Mr HEALY: That article gave me the impression that the private sector was very, very heavily involved with negotiations with the Victorian Government. Is it the same case here in Queensland and are you pursuing those avenues? You do not have to get into the commercial in confidence issues.

Mr Wilson: Don has shown me a copy of the article, which I must confess I have not read. I note that it says that the Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australian Governments are also considering joint venture partnership arrangements for infrastructure and capital works spending, which I take to be a fairly broad reference to the Queensland context. Yes, we are certainly interested in it. Without saying what projects consortia have come in to talk with us about, the sort of things that we have envisaged may be possible for the future could include rail expansions, for instance, to operate in a similar way to Airtrain. Light rail on the Gold Coast is something the Gold Coast City Council are very keen about. That may well be another opportunity. We have always entertained the possibility of private dollars into busways, but so far nothing has actually materialised. That is another area where we still do talk from time to time.

I guess there are both transport issues and there are high level policy issues in terms of some of the sorts of questions I raise, such as how do we deal with intellectual property and a

competitive process. It is at that high level, I guess, that it is being dealt with on a whole-of-Government approach through State Development.

Mr Gralton: One of the challenges for private sector investment is to ensure that they are putting up proposals which are consistent with your long-term transport plan. There is no point of proposals going on different tangents.

Mr SULLIVAN: Yes, that is understood.

Mr Gralton: One of the frustrations that we have from time to time is having a sufficient resource base to actually do the planning that will then enable these proposals to be put forward, and that is a problem we have in prioritising our own base.

Mr Broe: Just to emphasise, the State Development Department is looking at exactly the same model that has been used in Victoria—looking at public/private partnerships, at the European model. The critical success factor is that Governments have more flexibility to look at financing options. If you are prepared to be flexible in looking at financing options and sharing risk and reward, I think that is where you can break through a lot of the previous barriers. That is a challenge for us as well.

Mr SULLIVAN: Many of the submissions that we had indicated there should be changes to various structures of things within public transport. You will not be surprised to know that some recommended changes within the structure of your department. The concept of an overall supervisory transit authority to coordinate all the different forms of transport has been raised. I guess in some ways people might say, "You have a Health Rights Commission which stands outside the Health Department. You have a Children's Commissioner that stands outside Family Services. While it is linked to those departments, it has a supervisory role." In the previous examples it was largely on the personnel, but in this case the notion of a transit authority which takes a specific overarching, coordinating role seems to make a lot of sense. It strikes me that State transit authorities are established in most, if not all, the other States.

Mr Wilson: No, I do not think so.

Mr SULLIVAN: New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia—the STAs?

Mr Wilson: No, I do not think so.

Mr Bletchly: There have been reform changes to a lot of those transit authorities.

Mr Wilson: Victoria has an entirely different structure of Government where there are only eight departments in all and multiple Ministers for each department. There is a Department of Infrastructure there which covers Transport and a range of other infrastructure sectors.

Mr SULLIVAN: So it takes that overarching coordination outside of the specific Transport/Main Roads type area, does it not?

Mr Bletchly: It is the Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Mr Gralton: Within that agency.

Mr Wilson: Within that is essentially the Department of Transport and also—what is it called down there? There is a road authority.

Mr Gralton: VicRoads.

Mr Wilson: VicRoads.

Mr SULLIVAN: Let us say, for example, within your department the bus contractors division, the rail contractors division and there is a division for future transport planning that are separate areas. I am sure there is some contact between them, but the fact that they are in different divisions or different sections within the department surely cannot lead to the closest coordination. Has your department looked at the notion of an overarching transit authority? What advantages or disadvantages do you see?

Mr Wilson: We have certainly thought about it, I guess. There was briefly the South East Queensland Transit Authority—SEQTA. I guess when the coalition Government came in, their policy was to roll that function into Queensland Transport, but conversely separate the roads function out into a separate Department of Main Roads. The Beattie Government decided to retain those same arrangements.

I would have to say that I do not see much purpose being served in setting up a transit authority. I think that that is actually our key role right now. Many of the things we do, many of these things you described are actually roles that a separate transit authority, I think, might undertake. I guess I have always described the roles of Queensland Transport as being in two groups: one comprising those central roles to the transport sector in Queensland, which may be what some people would think of as a transit authority, and then some other mode specific roles that happen to attach to us, such as maritime, operating public transport contracts and managing the use of roads—they are the mode specific roles. But I think the sort of things that SEQTA was gearing up to do—it never really got fully established—have been folded back into QT and we have actually developed those functions within QT. That does include the transport planning, a range of policy coordination activities, the rail service contracts and so on that you described.

Mr SULLIVAN: Is that what you call the Network Planning Group?

Mr Wilson: Yes, I think that would be part of it. Various people talk about a transit authority and, to be frank, different people have different views about what it might cover. Some would see it as being like SEQTA, but some others would view it more as being simply a coordinator of the operations of the public transport providers, and that is probably more like an STA might be in some other States, but I do not think there are too many left.

Mr SULLIVAN: My failing memory might need to be refreshed by the research director, but I thought that out of the examples of excellent public transport systems in Europe one example was given to us where the overarching authority had as few as 26 people. They acted as an overarching, philosophical and directional approach to say, "This is what needs to happen", and then each of the agencies carried out what had to be carried out. But it stopped departmental jealousies and empire building and said, "That is what has been decided. We have to do that", and then you could go about and do your work.

Mr Gralton: We are very conscious of the close relationship we have to build between our planning process and our policy and operational process. In fact, you would notice that Mick is now Executive Director, Public Transport and Integrated Transport Planning. We have been able to bring those two together, at least in an interim way, to make sure that we get better interaction between our planning and our public transport policy and operation. But the same challenges that we face today in terms of regional network planning, revenue sharing, integration issues, contracts and fare structures are the same issues that a transit authority would face.

Mr Wilson: Don has mentioned that he thinks the particular example you are talking about from Europe was ZVV in Zurich.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the one.

Mr Wilson: I know Don has checked up on it and I think it may be fairly specific in a cultural sense to the community and the set-up either in Switzerland or in Zurich. I do not know if he has more on that.

Mr Bletchly: I think the example is ZVV from Zurich. It was formed via a referendum in that country, as have a number of other issues. It is a contracting authority, a revenue collection agency and a timetabling agency. But each individual provider performs in accordance with their performance arrangements with that authority. They have approximately 35% cost recovery for delivery of all their services. There is information within our last letter, at page 7, to the Committee and also information within our main submission in terms of the performance of ZVV.

Mr Wilson: Can I quickly say in summary that, in terms of a transit authority, if we are talking about the broad type transit authority, then my point of view is that we are doing those roles right now, and I think we are actually making quite good progress with them. To set up another agency inevitably adds complication and I think could generate quite a bit of confusion about loss of momentum in the transition. I do not see a lot to be gained from creating another agency in the sector.

You also mentioned internal arrangements within QT. I think John touched on that. You can never ever get a perfect internal structure because, no matter how you cut the cake, you might cut it to group a whole lot of things together in one way but inevitably you will have them separate in some other way. The way I see it is that we are all QT and our big challenge is to provide seamless service from QT no matter how we are structured. Having said that, we have

actually made changes earlier this year, as I think John alluded to, to get the planning branches and the public transport branches together, and they are now together under Mick.

Mr SULLIVAN: I guess some would say that an overarching authority would not just be QT but would make sure that QR, BT, the taxi industry—the whole lot—was actually coordinated. I know that the Chair is keen to move on.

The CHAIRMAN: We have not got much time left.

Mr HOBBS: Talking about the internal services, in evidence Mr Rex Davis told the Committee that staff numbers have increased substantially within the Department of Main Roads since deamalgamation and that the bulk of these new positions are in the integrated planning area. Is that correct and, if so, why does the number of positions continue to increase in that area?

Mr Wilson: I do not know where he got the numbers he quoted. Certainly, at the same time as the separation with Main Roads, SEQTA was folded back into Queensland Transport. At that time, SEQTA was not fully developed. In fact, there were no actual staff permanently appointed to positions in SEQTA. It was very much in its embryonic stage. Since that time, we have developed those functions. That has involved some additional staffing in those sorts of areas.

Mr HOBBS: In transport?

Mr Wilson: In transport and QT. I think he also suggested that maybe some of them related to major projects we had on the go. That would certainly be true as well. I am not sure where he got the particular numbers from, but I think those positions would relate to us delivering a transit authority type role, if you like, and delivering the big projects.

Mr HEALY: The Property Council of Australia's submission was fairly scathing. They raised a whole lot of issues such as the lack of clarification regarding proposed road pricing policies, the City/Valley bypass, the lack of coordination regarding schemes such as ticketing through the timetable management and a whole range of things. You have seen their submission. They claim that over the past eight years they have appeared at most of the Government initiated inquiries into public transport and that none of their concerns was ever addressed. What is your reaction to those criticisms, particularly by the Property Council?

Mr Wilson: I guess it is no secret that we have had some disagreements with the Property Council. Criticisms like that always concern me. Comments along those lines are the very opposite of how I believe I operate and how I believe and want my agency to operate. I have not had a chance to really work through each of those comments, but I do know of some of them and I know of others that have been made. I do know that some of the criticisms made that I have been directly involved with have been quite at odds with the facts. Claims have been made about lack of consultation. In fact, we have put more effort into consultation with the Property Council than many other players. We have had feedback from individual members of the Property Council that is quite different to the feedback we get from the council itself. I always take criticism seriously. All I can say is that, in some of those cases, I believe they are unfounded.

The CHAIRMAN: At our hearings we have had representatives from local authorities in the south-east Queensland region, and they, of course, are continuously involved with the various integrating authorities. They provided examples of and complained about the lack of communication between State Government departments and the lack of aligned policy objectives. As an example, the Mayor of Redland spoke about the building and opening of the Victoria Point jetty on a Friday and its closure on the following Monday because of workplace health and safety issues. How can coordination and communication within the Government be improved to enhance public transport? Are there any easy answers to that?

Mr Wilson: Mr Galton knows particularly about the Victoria Point jetty.

The CHAIRMAN: That was just an example.

Mr Wilson: Yes. How about he responds to that and perhaps I can pick up on it generally.

Mr Galton: You refer to the Victoria Point jetty as a specific example. We have a good relationship with Councillor Santagiuliana. We have been talking to him for a long time about ferry operations in Moreton Bay and the facilities that service them. In fact, we have a very active

program now of upgrading facilities on most of the islands of Moreton Bay that I think he is very happy with and we are very happy with. Yes, we had our troubles with Victoria Point jetty. It was built to the standards of the time. Unfortunately, the ferry operator from Victoria Point to Coochiemudlo used a vessel which was incompatible with the nature of the jetty and caused a loading problem. As a consequence of that, we are now looking at a contract for that ferry service which will require a safety plan from the operator to ensure that the compatibility between the vessel and the jetties is adequate to ensure that safety standards are met.

We get varying responses from local government. There are some local governments that are very interested in public transport and very supportive of public transport. There are other local governments that are not. That causes great frustrations with us in terms of making sure the bus services from private operators can access the areas that they need to access, that the road system supports those bus services and that the infrastructure such as bus stops and so on is there to support them. Brisbane is the only place to provide direct funding for public transport. No other local government does. In fact, many of the local governments have not as yet moved into implementing and preparing their own local integrated transport plans. Some of the bigger ones have—and full marks to them—but a number of them have not. A very important step forward for local government in addressing public transport issues is to get their own plans in place to make sure that their planning is consistent with the IRTP. We have mixed responses. We have very good relations with all of them, but we think their responses to public transport needs in some areas needs—

The CHAIRMAN: We really need whole-of-Government support of these initiatives to make them work.

Mr Gralton: We do. The land use side of it is probably the most critical side of it. They control that component of it. That is the main driver for the transport demand that is created out there. We need to work together to get the planning right. That not only involves us as a State Government agency; a lot of other Government agencies are involved in that same process. That needs to be effective if we are going to get a long-term solution for land use and transport.

Mr Wilson: In terms of a mechanism for doing that, one key mechanism that exists is the Regional Coordinating Committee for south-east Queensland which was set up under the SEQ 2001 umbrella. It has continued on for a number of years. It, amongst other things, is the formal steering committee for the IRTP. It is a good clearing house. It has relevant Ministers. It has mayors who are the chairs of the various regional organisations of councils in south-east Queensland, someone from the Commonwealth and a non-Government representative. That forum works well in some areas and not so well in others. I think more can be made of that to be the clearing house for many of the sorts of issues that we have been talking about.

Quickly in terms of the whole-of-Government approach the Chair asked about, a case like the Victoria Point jetty obviously is a specific issue. Issues like that come and go along the way. I would have thought in the overall scheme of things whole-of-Government tends to work reasonably well with regard to public transport. I can think of sectors where it does not work as well. So I do not think there is a fundamental problem at the whole-of-Government level on public transport. We can always do better. Odd issues do come along, but I think perhaps the best mechanism is that RCC that more can be made of.

The CHAIRMAN: We had complaints from some different sections of the community about disability access. Can you clarify for the Committee who is ultimately responsible for providing equitable access for passengers on Citytrain? It is Queensland Rail or Queensland Transport? There seems to be a problem with the level of the platform.

Mr Bletchly: Queensland Transport is providing funding to Queensland Rail to carry out what is called an Easy Access Program. Easy Access Program implementation and construction issues are matters for Queensland Rail as the service provider. We are in fact funding the program. Funding has been allocated for the first seven years of the 20-year program. There are also draft accessible transport standards which have been resting with the Commonwealth Government since 1996. It is envisaged that they will be introduced in 2001 as part of centenary legislation. They will give better direction and guidance for accessible transport issues. Who is ultimately responsible? In this instance for those matters, it is QR.

Mr SULLIVAN: QR?

Mr Bletchly: Yes.

Mr Wilson: Ultimately, under the legislation each operator carries responsibility.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very close to closing time. I think all members had more questions they would liked to have asked. Is it possible for us to send those questions to you and get some written answers for them?

Mr Wilson: Yes, most certainly.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be great. Is there anything further you would like to add before we close the hearing?

Mr Wilson: I would quickly go back to those introductory comments. As I see it, thinking of an Olympic analogy, our task involves running a marathon rather than a 100 metre sprint. We have a lot of challenges, most of which are for the long haul. We have talked about much of our business. The particular challenges we identified in our submission and the newer areas we are trying to do more in relate to public education behaviour change and system marketing. Travel demand management is clearly another. Inclusive transport/community transport is another one and there is the perennial funding issue we have touched on as well. There is also selling the story. I talked about the challenge of engaging with the public about that.

It is an ongoing marathon issue whereas 100 metre sprints tend to be the events that grab the headlines along the way. I think we are making good progress. There are still some big challenges. There is no doubt about that. I guess the biggest challenge of all, really, and perhaps it is a challenge for all of us around the table, is to ensure that all the available energy is focused on the main game of building on what I think is a pretty solid foundation that we have made in recent times and lifting that further into the future.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr SULLIVAN: You had a whole list of things there that you were taking into consideration as criteria to address. One that I would like given greater emphasis is that of personal safety. One of the great barriers to public transport usage, particularly by females and particularly after that nine to five time, is the perception, which unfortunately is higher than the reality, of crime or of unease on public transport. Things happening at the moment are mitigating against friendly use. Until those are addressed, you can have the best infrastructure but if people do not believe that they can use it safely they simply will not.

Mr Wilson: Yes. That is a fair comment and certainly not forgotten. I take your point.

The CHAIRMAN: That brings to a close the public hearings for this inquiry. This is the third hearing we have held and the final one. The report will go to Parliament hopefully around August of this year. To the members of the public who have taken an interest in this inquiry, thank you very much for coming along. To the panel from Queensland Transport, we appreciate your input today. It has been very good. We will get some further questions to you in writing. Thank you very much. It has been great to have you all here. I declare the hearing closed.

The Committee adjourned at 2 p.m.