



TRAVELSAFE COMMITTEE

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Mr H. W. T. HOBBS (Deputy Chairman)
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STAFF PRESENT: Mr R. HANSEN (Research Director)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN SOUTH-EAST QUEENSLAND

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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**FRIDAY, 19 MAY 2000
BRISBANE**

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The Committee commenced at 8.35 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I call this public hearing of the Travelsafe Committee to order. Good morning and welcome. 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 other members of the committee are Howard Hobbs, the Deputy Chairman of the Committee and member for Warrego; Graham Healy on the far left, the member for Toowoomba North; Lindy Nelson-Carr, on my right, is the member for Mundingburra. We have two other members of the committee: Len Stephan, the member for Gympie, and Terry Sullivan, the member for Chermside. Neither of those men was available today for the hearings.

This is the Committee's second public hearing for this inquiry. For those who are interested, copies of the final transcripts of the first hearing on 14 April are at the back of the room. The Committee has resolved to allow vision-only recording by the media of the opening statements during the hearing.

The Committee is holding this hearing in an open forum for the public's benefit, and 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.

Those giving evidence are advised that the proceedings 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.

PETER MOORE, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: Our first witness is Mr Peter Moore from the International Association of Public Transport. Welcome, Mr Moore. For the record, would you please state your full name and your position with the International Association of Public Transport?

Mr Moore: My name is Peter Moore. I am the Executive Director of the International Association of Public Transport Australia/New Zealand.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to begin with an opening statement?

Mr Moore: Perhaps I could tell you a little bit about our organisation. We are an affiliate of a group called the International Association of Public Transport in Brussels. UITP is the acronym for the international association. UITP has been in existence for some 115 years and has some 2,000 members in 80 countries. In Europe particularly it is regarded as the leading urban transport association in the world. It now has established a regional office in Australia, in Canberra, representing the Australia/New Zealand region, which I am currently involved with. That was established a little over a year ago. The organisation also has an office in Hong Kong and is about to set up an office in China.

As to the work that I am primarily involved in in Australia—our overall agenda is to expand the market for urban public transport in Australia and the region. Much of our work in the past 12 months has been centred around policy advice to Government, advocacy advice to Government in this area, particularly in regard to taxation, particularly in regard to the GST debate. We have advocated for some time now, since the beginning of the GST debate particularly, for things such as the zero rating of urban public transport. Other measures we are looking at are the exemption of employer-provided public transport from fringe benefits tax. We suggest to Government, both Federal and State, that there is an opportunity to change the modal shift, if you like, of urban transport in this country through mechanisms other than new infrastructure or new vehicles or new trains, but through policy decisions in other areas, particularly taxation, that will impact upon transport and the way we move people within the communities, and Brisbane is no different from that.

Our organisation was heavily involved in the GST debate from a very early stage, where we gave some advice to Government about the effects of putting GST on urban public transport fares. Our initial indications from Federal Treasury are that the effects on our business would be around about 2.5%. In effect, public transport fares would rise by about that much. The work that our members have done around Australia—and our members include groups such as State Transit New South Wales, State Rail in Sydney, Brisbane Transport, Queensland Rail; we

represent all the large urban public transport providers around Australia, some 54—suggests that the public transport fares will have to increase somewhere around about 9%.

We argue that, on 1 July this year, the Federal Government is giving a message to the travelling public of Australia that the price of travelling by private motor car will decrease; the price of travelling by public transport will increase. It is an interesting decision. It is a policy decision that we suggest goes against things such as the Kyoto protocols. We have one area of Federal Government arguing that we are trying to discourage people from using public transport, while in the other environmental area we are trying to encourage people into public transport. To some extent we regard it as a little bit of a nonsense at the present time.

Our work in the last 12 months has confirmed that, around Australia, particularly in areas such as Sydney, public transport fares will need to increase by around about 9.5%. Sydney in recent months has gone to its independent pricing tribunal seeking price increases of over 10% to take account of GST and normal cost increases, and we believe at this stage that they are going to be constrained to something less than what they are seeking. It puts them in a situation in some very short time where they will be very much behind where they are today in trying to supply a public transport service, trying to expand a public transport service in an environment where the Federal Government is setting an atmosphere that the car is getting cheaper, public transport is getting dearer. It is a message, if you like, that is totally incorrect in the current environment.

We have argued that there is an opportunity to introduce other measures, such as the exemption of employer-provided public transport from fringe benefits tax, that may be available to the Government to offset those GST increases. An example. In America at the moment, under the Surface Transportation Act—and that was enacted a little over 12 months ago—an employer can give his employee US\$65 a month tax free to commute to work. That is written into law. In a little over a year's time, that increases to around about US\$100 per month. That is a direct incentive to people, and it gives people an extra choice about what sort of method they can use to travel to work.

In places like Sydney and Brisbane, we are experiencing increasing problems with congestions, particularly in the peak, and there is perhaps an opportunity to move people out of the private motor car into other forms of transport, without building new railway lines, without putting additional buses on, but just giving people an extra choice through changing taxation policy.

We have approached the Federal Government and State Governments on this issue now, as I said, for over 12 months. We are having some success. The Australian Transport Council, which is meeting this week, is examining our policy, particularly in the FBT area, at the new National Transport Secretariat that has recently been established. We understand one of the first items on their agenda is to do a costing exercise on what this would cost in terms of tax dollars for the Australian public.

On the Opposition side, in the past few months we have met on a number of occasions with the Opposition Transport Minister, and as recently as two months ago, I was at a national conference, Australian bus and coach conference, where he stated that the two issues they are interested in at the moment are zero rating of urban public transport for GST and exemption of FBT from employer-provided public transport.

So we believe the policy is in there, particularly at a Federal level, and it is being examined quite seriously, but the opportunity for that is only enhanced by groups such as yourself becoming aware of it, recommending through your State mechanisms that those opportunities exist, and Federal tax policy perhaps can be examined a little more closely in that sort of environment.

I want to say one thing about the GST debate. We were very disappointed in the whole outcome of that. There are many examples overseas, as you can see in the paper we put up, where urban public transport is zero rated. In places such as the UK it is 0%. We believe the opportunity still exists for that to occur here. We do not believe that debate is finalised. Federal Treasury says that it is all over. We believe there is still an opportunity to revise that issue, to give people an opportunity to have additional choice about how they travel within the community. It is not so much that we argue totally against the GST. We believe it has a lot of merit, but this particular aspect sends out the wrong message at the wrong time.

On 1 July we are going to see some effect in Brisbane. The price effect in Brisbane will be felt. Price elasticities these days in Sydney are having less effect because people have no choice other than to travel on public transport at times, particularly in peak hour. In Brisbane in 10 years' time the same situation might exist if we do not make the right decisions about those policies right now. As I said, the opportunity exists for this Committee to, first of all, become aware of what those opportunities are in the taxation area and, secondly, to become involved in a dialogue with the Federal Government, the ATC and others.

Mr HOBBS: From the perspective of the International Association of Public Transport, what are the main problems with the south-east Queensland public transport system? Can you put those into some sort of priority order for us?

Mr Moore: Yes. I believe what you have here in Queensland is almost a model for how the rest of Australia should do it. The policy that you have in place, particularly in south-east Queensland, has been used by many other States to change people's behaviour about urban public transport.

That is a key aspect. We have focused for so long on infrastructure, and we have forgotten that perhaps the greatest opportunity is to use what we have in a better way. Programs such as personalised public transport and demand responsive transport, and the introduction of intelligent transport systems is where we believe the greatest opportunity exists.

A good example is the Western Australian Travel Smart program. The Western Australian Government decided to introduce a program which, in summary, personalised public transport. It demonstrates to people on an individual basis how they can use existing public transport in a more efficient way. What you are trying to do here can be enhanced by introducing programs such as that. I am aware that groups such as Queensland Transport have been involved in the Travel Smart program and have looked at the merits of it and otherwise. But I believe there is an opportunity to use what you have in place and to enhance what you have to introduce programs such as that.

As I said, a lot of what you are doing in south-east Queensland is a model for how to do it, and you are to be congratulated on that. However, there are opportunities to bring in other programs, to bring in personalised transport, to apply intelligent transport systems to that policy to make it work better.

The CHAIRMAN: Given the problems that you have identified, what do you recommend to address them?

Mr Moore: If you are looking for the most effect at the present time, I think you need to look at Federal taxation policy. I have said it more than once today: the greatest opportunity for you at the moment to move people out of private motor cars and encourage them into public transport in Brisbane is to give them other choices—real choices; pricing choices.

In America, for example, an employer can give X number of tax free dollars per month to employees if they travel to work using public transport. We believe that mechanism alone would result in a 3% to 5% modal shift into public transport. Again, that is a Federal tax decision, but those decisions only occur if State Governments and others get involved in the debate and start to interfere in Federal Government taxation policy. As I am based in Canberra, I am aware of how these mechanisms work. It is only through groups such as yours that we can attempt these things.

Mr HOBBS: Has any ever evaluated how zero rating overseas has worked? Has it really worked, or has the population just increased and therefore the numbers have gone up?

Mr Moore: It has been done. It is an interesting debate. We asked the same question around the world some 12 months ago. Canada is probably the best example. Quite a detailed study was done in Canada on what the effect would be. The Canadians are attempting the same thing in the Lower House in Canada. They have been successful in getting this measure through. Their studies suggest a 3% to 5% modal shift from private motor cars into public transport. Some areas could not cope with that. In places like Sydney, for example, if that happened overnight, State Rail could not cope with that increase. There would have to be other changes. In a place like Brisbane I suspect you could cope with it. We are suggesting that study needs to be done in Australia. We believe the National Transport Secretariat, attached to the ATC, should carry out that study. We are advocating to that new group that that occur.

Ms NELSON-CARR: In your submission you state, "Around 40% of the cars on the road in peak time are corporately owned vehicles receiving some form of fringe benefit tax deduction." Is that 40% figure a study of Sydney traffic?

Mr Moore: Yes. We suspect a similar situation exists in Brisbane. It is probably a little lower, but not that much lower. It is quite a surprising statistic. It surprised us. That study was done through State Rail in New South Wales, and the anecdotal evidence tends to support that. It is usually a single driver driving a company-owned vehicle. We suspect a similar situation exists in Brisbane.

Again, that is an opportunity for things like novated leasing. The Ralph review in recent times looked at that. We have the ridiculous situation at the moment under novated leasing arrangements where, the more kilometres you drive, the less you have to pay. The Ralph review examined that closely. The Australian Automobile Association lobbied very hard against that in Canberra and we believe to some extent won that debate.

Again, that is where groups such as yourself, creating an awareness amongst the community about novated leasing arrangements, can modify those arrangements. I believe the Ralph review recognised the ludicrous nature of that particular action and was prepared to look at modifying it. As I have personally experienced, the automobile lobby in Canberra, in particular, is very strong. That measure has been forgotten, I am afraid.

Mr HEALY: Following on from the previous question, in your submission you have said that one way to reduce peak hour traffic in south-east Queensland might be to cut down on the number of company cars on the road, which is what happens in the States. What you are virtually saying is that, unless there is a major change in taxation policy, that cannot work.

Mr Moore: Again, it is a matter of choice. The debate about urban public transport in Australia at the moment is about changing our culture. The way we view travelling on urban public transport has much to do with it. For example, to travel around the Brisbane CBD, the first thing most businessmen think about is a taxi rather than catching a bus. It is a cultural thing. It is about giving people that extra choice.

Taxation will give you that slight extra choice. We are not talking about changes overnight in this area. We do not pretend to say that taxation policy change is going to change things overnight, but it is that 1% at a time that makes a difference. If you look at other campaigns around Australia, for example, the recycling campaign, whilst that is not a good contrast, that campaign was developed in Australia some 25 years ago. It has taken many years to get to the point where people have an awareness about what recycling is, about the effects on the community and the environment. We argue that urban public transport needs to go through a similar process. The way we view travelling on buses, trains or trams—that culture—needs to be modified.

Mr HEALY: Let me take you up on that point in relation to the alternatives—businessmen taking a cab rather than a bus. You mentioned Perth. There is a system in Perth that you must be aware of in relation to CAT buses where one can virtually travel anywhere around the CBD. Those buses are always full—and they are free. Is it a matter of providing that service because people will take that form of transport if they do not have to pay for it?

Mr Moore: It is a matter of: what do you put first? Do you wait for people to come or do you put in the buses first? We would argue that you would put the service first, and people will come. The service in Perth is a huge success. Of course, it is free. People have become accustomed to it. They have seen it travelling past their office doors. They know it comes past every three minutes, and they use it. If it was a reasonable price they would probably even pay for it. It is a question of what one does first. I believe you put the service in first and you encourage people to use the service. You make it attractive. The buses in Perth are very expensive buses, but they are very good. People like to use them. They feel comfortable in them.

I believe you have to give people a little bit extra than they are ordinarily used to. I talk to a lot of people and they say, "I haven't travelled on a bus for 20 years." I say, "It has changed. Perhaps you should go and have a look. Things have changed a little from when you travelled on a bus as a child." That is what it is really all about. It is about the way we view public transport in the community.

A lot of public transport groups in Australia do not promote themselves enough. We focus on engineering and infrastructure and all those sorts of things, but we do not promote ourselves. We do not sell ourselves well enough. At the present time, that is where the greatest opportunity is. I agree that you cannot sell yourself unless you have something to sell. Perhaps that is what is missing.

The CHAIRMAN: Regarding the impact that the GST will or will not have on public transport, I understand that your association has lobbied the Federal Government to zero rate public transport under the new scheme from 1 July. I also note in the scale that we have been given that Italy and the United Kingdom have totally taken GST off public transport. Other countries have reduced it significantly. Can you tell us what the Federal Government's response was to your request? Can you also tell us the rationale that the Federal Government used for not at least reducing GST on public transport?

Mr Moore: The Democrats, and to a lesser extent the Labor Party, were very supportive of our proposal. We believe that we came within a hair's breadth of achieving it. I will not go into detail about that. We advocated to the Democrats particularly—through a number of their senators involved in the debate—and they supported our arguments very strongly to the point where we believed on the Thursday evening before the final debate occurred that we were going to be successful. I think that, to some extent, there is still an opportunity to reignite that debate. The support is there from the Opposition—particularly from the Opposition's shadow Transport Minister. We believe there is also support from the Democrats in relation to change.

I guess there is a philosophy surrounding the GST that we really do not want to give exemptions to urban public transport. If we open it up to urban public transport, what else do we have to offer? So there is a philosophy arguing against it. I believe the opportunity still exists to zero rate urban public transport, or at least to modify it to some extent. However, that will only occur once people's awareness of the effect it will have on the travelling public becomes evident from 1 July.

It is the message that is the problem. If the message that we are giving to the travelling public is that if urban transport fares go up, the price of private motoring goes down, it is the wrong message. It is to do with the culture of urban public transport. It is going against what we are trying to create in this nation with regard to the way we travel within a community. It is totally the wrong message.

We will continue to advocate change in that area. Our Secretary General from Europe is coming out here in early June and he will be going to Brisbane and Sydney and debating this point very strongly. We believe that, through those sorts of mechanisms, we can continue to create an awareness of what is possible. We have done some costing studies on this and we estimate that it would cost \$300m a year nationwide to zero rate urban public transport. In the context of the debate, we do not believe that that is a huge amount of money.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other questions? Would you like to add anything further, Mr Moore?

Mr Moore: I would just like to summarise the matter. The greatest opportunity that you have as a group is to, perhaps, achieve that 1% or 2% change. The culture of the way we view urban transport is really what this is all about—creating an environment where people have a choice. We are not going to change people's views overnight about how they travel within a community. You are going to have to achieve a 1% or 2% change through these particular committees and through suggesting changes in taxation and promotion. Programs such as Travelsmart is where your opportunities lie. As I said, I see this as very much a long term thing.

Brisbane is in quite an advantageous position at the moment where, if you make the right decisions about transport now, you are not going to be in Sydney's situation in 20 years' time. Travel around the Sydney CBD at the moment is becoming almost impossible at times. We do not want to see that situation arising in Brisbane. You have the opportunity right now to change that. In 10 years' time you will see the effects. If we make the wrong decisions now, I suspect we will be in Sydney's situation in 10 years' time.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your contribution.

ROSS ELLIOTT, examined:

STUART ANTHONY LUMMIS, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: The next witnesses are Mr Ross Elliott and Mr Stewart Lummis from the Property Council of Australia. Good morning and welcome, gentlemen. For the record, would you please state your full names and your positions with the Property Council of Australia?

Mr Elliott: Ross Elliott, executive director.

Mr Lummis: Stewart Lummis, policy and planning committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to start with an opening statement?

Mr Elliott: Just a quick one, I suppose, so that you understand what the Property Council of Australia is. It was formerly known as BOMA. I think a lot of parliamentarians still think of us as BOMA. There are 2,000 companies involved in the organisation nationally, representing everyone from large institutions such as Lend Lease—where Stewart works—through to small development companies, consultancies, engineers and so on. It is a national organisation. There are about 700 volunteers involved with various committees. We have 70 full-time staff. Our turnover is about \$12m. Most of that is sourced from a variety of commercial events and activities. We receive no Government support. We are primarily concerned with lobbying for a better environment for the property industry. That means that we are a lobby group.

In the context of this inquiry, from our perspective it is important to understand the nature of the economy we are dealing with. We hear a lot in Queensland about this being a decentralised State. The Brisbane/Moreton region, which represents two-thirds of the State's population and 80% of the State's growth, accounts for only 1.3% of the land area. So we submit that we are a fairly centralised State.

I think a lot of the focus of this Committee is directed to the CBD. Imagine a radius of about 3 kilometres from the GPO. We know that total employment in the area is about 160,000 people in the CBD area and the fringe suburbs surrounding it. Four out of 10 of those jobs are in the property and business services sector and retail trade. The wages bill, which is about \$5.5 billion, exceeds the combined wages bill for all of the people working in the State's mining, agriculture, forestry, electricity and transport industries.

In terms of economic output, the city centre generates about 15% of the State's economic wealth—about \$9 billion a year. We have had the built environment valued as best we can, and it is valued at roughly \$17 billion. The economy and the economic activity that takes place raises about \$2 billion a year in taxes. The actual figure is \$1.96 billion. Nearly all of that goes to the Commonwealth. That is the vertical fiscal imbalance at work. Per square kilometre, it generates about \$62m in tax revenue for Federal, State and city Governments compared with about \$500,000 per square kilometre for the balance of the State. We think it is a very important asset. It is paying a lot by way of taxes. We would like to see that tax money reinvested in the right sort of way.

With regard to transport, I guess our organisation has some particular concerns that perceptions of congestion are, in many cases, being blamed on the CBD generating a lot of private car trips. That seems to be the way to sum it up. Our view, however, is that possibly something like one-third of the trips coming through in terms of a.m. and p.m. congestion are actually bound for other places. We think Governments may have contributed to this problem through policies of decentralisation. If we think about the tax office, it used to be headquartered in the city. It now has operations at Mount Gravatt and Chermside. The people who work in those offices will find it much more inconvenient to catch a bus or train to work if they happen to live at Taringa, or if they are commuting from Salisbury to Chermside. Logistically, it is very difficult. Centralisation in terms of public transport policy is something that may improve the situation because we do operate in a hub and spoke sort of environment.

We are concerned about the poor standards of research in terms of some of the proposals that have been put forward in respect of transport. It took a great deal of effort to find the figures that I mentioned earlier. There are no sources of information about the economic activity of the CBD and the city centre. Requests for information from City Transport and from Queensland Rail have been made. We asked questions such as what percentage of cars in the a.m. peak are destined for this CBD and what percentage are destined elsewhere—in other words, coming through the city and going to other points. We asked how many of the people

driving those vehicles are using early bird versus company supplied versus short-stay parking. We asked how many people on the buses are bound for the CBD and how many are making a change in the city to go elsewhere. City Transport does not know that. They told us quite clearly that they can tell us the number of trips that are being made every day because everyone has a ticket like this. I caught the bus today. However, they cannot tell us where you left from and where you are going to.

One point we would like to make is that we are dealing, in many cases, with a poor quality set of data about what is the State's biggest economy. That is a matter of concern. We are sufficiently concerned that transport policy nurtures the city centre economy and that we get the transport policy right and the economy right. We are now in the process of awaiting a draft report from a firm of Sydney consultants, Kilsby Australia. We have given them a \$35,000 brief to look independently, and without political perspectives, at the range of transport measures that have been proposed and to give us a report in June or July. It may be of interest to the Committee to know that we had to go to a Sydney firm because the Queensland-based and Brisbane-based firms we approached expressed a great deal of interest in a private organisation commissioning policy work on transport. They were all very keen to do it themselves, but they felt that the conclusions they reached would be so unpalatable to Queensland Transport that they would effectively be blacklisted. So we had to go to a Sydney firm. I might ask Stewart to talk about some of the specific things that we have been involved with.

Mr Lummis: Over the last eight years the policy and planning committee has looked at a number of proposed Government-initiated policies and documents—everything from SEQ 2001 through to the Integrated Regional Transport Plan, the City Valley by-pass and the Brisbane light rail.

I just want to make a few general observations in terms of the size of the Brisbane CBD. In terms of the net lettable area, it really has not grown in the last eight to 10 years. It is about 1.4 million square metres of net lettable area. The areas that have grown have been what we term the frame areas, which are the Coronation Drive and Spring Hill type areas. Those areas have grown for a number of reasons, not the least being access to car parking given that the car parking ratios there are much more accommodating than they are in the CBD. A counter to that is most of these frame areas are not well serviced by public transport. If you do not have access to a motor vehicle, they are difficult to commute to. We went back through the archives and found that the original Wilbur Smith plan for Brisbane, which was prepared in about 1970, suggested that Brisbane should be investigating an underground rail system for the CBD. It is interesting that that was done such a long time ago. We really have not progressed far since then.

One of the issues that has been of concern to the Property Council of Australia has been that we have addressed a number of these reports before and our comments have been tabled but nothing further seems to happen or they never seem to be addressed. A specific example would be in relation to the Integrated Regional Transport Plan. That has somewhere between a \$10 billion to \$12 billion gap over 25 years. If we in the commercial sector put up something that had such a huge commercial gap, we would be laughed out of the room, but the Government can go forward with these without ever really addressing and working out what is going to be on the shopping list, which I guess is going to have to occur. There was also mention of road pricing policies. Once again, these have not been clarified as to exactly what is proposed. The City/Valley bypass is another one. We thought that was a terrific initiative, but once again suggested that maybe it should be connected to the Story Bridge to get through that Ann and Wickham Street bottleneck.

In terms of the current system, there is a lack of coordination with everything from ticketing through to timetable management. There is also a perception by the commuting public that the system cannot cater for flexible working hours in terms of the issue of security. We find that a lot of CBD office workers will not get a train at 9 o'clock at night. Also, timetable management is an issue, too, for those flexible hours. We now have in the CBD a number of call centres which are operating at least two shifts a day. As demand grows, it could well be running for three shifts a day. I also do not think the current system copes very well with short-term visitation to the CBD. If you want to come in at 11 o'clock on a Friday for a meeting you will struggle to find a car park and you will struggle to get public transport into the CBD. It caters well for the peak hours between 7.30 to 8.30, but then it is very infrequent after that.

Mr Elliott: The light rail has been a little bit in the news of late. I think the director-general can take a lot of credit for doing some of our work for us. That project seems to be a good focus for some of our views. While on the one hand the Property Council is saying it would like to see more investment in city transit systems, we are criticising a project like the light rail. The reason is very clear. We do not believe it will work. In fact, I know that the stakeholders have not been consulted. Property owners and businesses directly affected think they will have to close because they have not been consulted by the Department of Transport. It is a toy project. It seems to have more to do with ribbon cutting opportunities for the person who is there to unveil it when it is running than any serious attempt to address transport issues.

The key point about all of this is if there was \$250m to spend and invest in transit systems, would it not make far more sense—this is our view—to invest it in the existing systems? The standard of the bus fleet is old. It is antiquated. It is not accommodating to businesspeople in suits with a briefcase. It seems to be designed for students and pensioners. The standard of the rail network is basically the same distribution network we had in the war period. The number of stations in the city are literally pre-war in terms of where they are, if we think about how the city has changed in its focus since then. In terms of our position, that sums it up. It is unfortunate that we are advocating a project like light rail be scrapped. We do not want to see the investment scrapped but we want to see it put into the right systems for the right reasons. We think that investment could go a lot further.

Ms NELSON-CARR: You have covered very adequately all the problems that you perceive. You have talked about congestion and research. I was very interested in the lack of data collection. You have talked about lack of coordination, collaboration and so on. Would you be able to put those into an order of priority as you see them in relation to major problems for transport in SEQ?

Mr Elliott: They are difficult to put into priority because, to put it into priority, you also have to address the issue of who is responsible for it. There is still an ongoing tension between the city authority and the State Government as to who has a greater carriage. I mentioned earlier that the Federal Government has all the money, so there are actually three levels of government and none of them are integrating particularly well in terms of funding and managing transport infrastructure.

If we think about it, there are two types of infrastructure: hard and soft. The hard things are really decisions for Governments to make in terms of our preference—reinvesting in existing systems and getting them to world-class standards before we embark on new ones. Soft infrastructure is much promised but we do not see much delivery. All these various policy reports, 2007 vision statements and so on seem to spend a lot of money talking about the soft infrastructure and managing schedules and integrated ticketing, but the public transport user is yet to see that in their hand as a ticket which will take them from a train connecting to a bus without having to wait for 15 minutes at the interchange and so on.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Would you say that the data collection methods that have been used would be probably the most important thing we need to look at, or do you think that consultation and working together at the three levels of government would be more important in order to overcome some of these issues?

Mr Elliott: I think you have to do both, haven't you? The three levels of government ought to work together because they are supposed to be representing the same people instead of having tribal warfare between various transport departments. The research ought to have been done. It is crazy to think that the biggest economic unit in the State is also one of the least researched. We go lunging back to a sense of population and housing—which are not economic research projects; they have to do with the ABS census and population—to tell us everything we need to know about the CBD. It is quite ironic.

Mr Lummis: I think coordination is a major issue, whether it be from the transport point of view or even just in terms of the number of reports we have been asked to analyse over time. There is no coordination even within that process. A lot of the reports step over each other's ground and talk about the same issues time and time again—parking policy, pricing policy, river crossing and that sort of thing. They all come back to the same points. You address them and give your thoughts and then 12 months later you are asked to address the same thing again.

Mr Elliott: On the point about consultation, it is interesting that a lot of what is offered to the community by way of transport projects has come from what I call the Mao Tse-tung school of community consultation where the Mandarins deliver you the project and then the consultation really amounts to nothing more than propaganda about selling the merits of it. That is a serious critique at the way the light rail project was arrived at. It was not even identified, as far as we know, in the IRTTP. It was offered to the community in the lead-up to an election. Now the community has been told, "You're getting this whether you like it or not. Trust us. It's good for you. By the way, it will be a compensation Bill so that if it does go wrong you can't sue us." That is the sort of level of consultation we are dealing with at the moment. It is a shame. It should be addressed. We are hoping that the study we have commissioned will look at some of those issues for us.

Mr HOBBS: You mentioned the light rail system. In other hearings we have had, it has been expressed to us that the best people movers for big populations probably is rail. You mention that consultation was not done well, or that there has not been various levels of consultation, and the compensation factor. But what about the people factor in relation to congestion and so forth? How do you see light rail operating in Brisbane? What other problems do you see with it?

Mr Elliott: One of its fundamental problems is that it is nothing more than an inner city reticulation system. To save us walking from our offices to Parliament House, maybe we will catch the light rail. It does not address the issue of what those congested cars are doing on the road in the first place. If you are commuting from Salisbury, Shailer Park, Deception Bay or anywhere on the outskirts of the city—which are the fast growing areas; they are also the low income, low cost housing areas—those people have poor public transport choices or little other choice than to use their cars. Because of that, they are now being told that there might be a parking tax down the track.

Your question was about light rail. It only has a city circulation. It goes nowhere. The proposition is that bus and rail commuters will actually want to get off at an interchange station for the benefit of getting on the light rail to get to their place of work, but why the modal change? It is very inconvenient. It has another couple more problems in that so much of the track—think about George Street—is closed permanently to all other vehicles. In George Street there are two lanes for the light rail. Those two lanes are permanently closed to all other vehicles, which means all the other existing traffic is left with two lanes. That is not perhaps so much a problem, except for all of the businesses that rely on courier vehicles, Australia Post and the truck that brings the bread and orange juice for the deli that likes to stop at the kerb side and deliver those goods, or the fire engine that has to stop to service a faulty alarm. They all need somewhere to stop. If there are only two lanes left—one each way, or whichever way it is to be—you close one of those lanes and you stop traffic in the city.

Mr Lummis: The other hot spots are probably along that Eagle Street frontage and also Wickham Street in the Valley. It is going to be very interesting, especially for people who are commuting from the CBD out to the airport. I know we are going to have a city-airport rail link. I am not sure how many heads of industry who visit from interstate are going to clamber on board a public rail system to go back to travel down south. I think the congestion that that is going to cause in the Valley area is going to be very interesting from a traffic management point of view. I have another comment in terms of the submissions that have been made by the consortia who have participated in the tendering process so far. We understand that they have not been requested to address any traffic management issues within their submissions.

Mr HOBBS: That is very interesting, isn't it? What is the next step? You said a while ago that you would prefer to see the funds put into the existing transport infrastructure we have. What would you suggest in relation to the overall management of transport in the south-eastern corner? It seems as if we are going here, there and everywhere and there does not seem to be a lot of coordination with this. What do you see in relation to the management structure?

Mr Elliott: Public transport policy has a lot of politics in it because it impacts with the way people live, and so it comes back through the political system. One of the things that has been talked about a lot is a regional transport authority. There may be a lot of merit in that. It would certainly take the politics out of the City Hall versus George Street tension, which goes on all the time. If you are to be perfectly logical, a State Government may actually fund a better bus system

for Brisbane if it wanted to really solve some of these transport issues. But handing a lot of money over to Jim Soorley is not particularly attractive to any State Government, whether it is Jim or Sallyanne, because it is not their transport system. Maybe a regional authority which has responsibility for all those things is a way out of that problem.

Mr Lummis: That is right. I guess in a perfect world, one body controlling it all and coordinating it all would be ideal.

Ms NELSON-CARR: I know that you would appreciate that land use practices have a profound impact on transport and that new urban developments in areas remote from existing public transport facilities place huge demands on councils and the State Government to deliver public transport to those areas. Should developers contribute directly to the cost of providing public transport services to new developments? How do practices in Queensland compare to what is happening in other States?

Mr Elliott: Most of them would instinctively say that they are already paying many times over. If the city is generating \$2 billion a year in tax revenue from the economic activity, it is not getting anywhere near that back. It has been cross-subsidised into various other projects. Developers are asked to pay up front for infrastructure works now under the Integrated Planning Act, but they must be specific infrastructure works to provide parklands to basically start assuming a lot of the responsibilities that local councils used to assume.

Mr Lummis: I think most developers would feel that they are probably already paying for it with all of the headworks charges and everything else they are paying and the fact that they as consumers are also paying in terms of petrol taxes and what have you that seem to disappear down south.

Ms NELSON-CARR: How does it compare with our southern counterparts?

Mr Elliott: We cannot answer that question at the moment, I am afraid. We do not know. The one thing that does characterise Brisbane is that it is a sprawling metropolis and it is growing at its fringes. It is not infilling to the extent that, say, Melbourne or Sydney are infilling. It is cheaper to develop a small block of land and house at a Deception Bay or a Rothwell or on the outskirts of Brisbane's south side than it is to provide infill and housing where better public transport systems are already in place and being underutilised.

Just as an anecdote, one of the staff from our office did precisely this. He bought an existing house down at Eight Mile Plains or somewhere, but because that is in Logan City no city council buses actually service that part of the world. There is a private company which has only two services in the morning and two in the afternoon. It is hugely inconvenient. I do not know how a developer can solve that problem, even if they were to pay for a better bus stop, because the buses simply would not be there.

Mr Lummis: I think maybe some of the fathers down south had a greater focus with their planning in years gone by in terms of running their heavy rail system out a lot further into areas that 20 years ago were considered somewhat remote. Probably a good example is in Melbourne. The train system runs all the way past Hurstbridge which, when I was growing up in Melbourne, was the boondocks. Now it really has become part of the urban sprawl and people will commute from there. They will catch the train and spend an hour travelling in. I think that is probably part of the challenge, too. The structure there was already in place, so it was quite easy to run feeders into it or spurs from it. Unfortunately, in Queensland and Brisbane we have not really invested the money in expanding the rail system up front. We have tried to infill it with buses and with various other techniques.

The CHAIRMAN: The Ipswich City Council has proposed that Queensland Transport should develop a rolling five-year works program for public transport. Do your members have problems because that is not in place? Do you think you as a Property Council would support such an idea?

Mr Elliott: I am not aware of what Ipswich proposed, I am sorry.

The CHAIRMAN: A five-year rolling plan, as is in place with the Main Roads Department for road infrastructure. There has been a suggestion that Queensland Transport should develop such a plan for public transport. I am wondering if your council would support such a suggestion. Perhaps you could outline to the Committee whether your members would have problems with that or whether they would support such a plan.

Mr Elliott: Does that therefore mean pulling it out of the annual Budget cycle and committing to a longer term timetable of public transport investment?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr Elliott: I think that would be well supported. As Stewart said earlier, we are sitting on allegedly the best regional transport plan around but it just happens to be \$12 billion short of money. All that is left seems to be some money to put out brochures. It seems that we are not committing to a staged implementation to fix the transport system, but we are allowing them to be politicised and marginalised and set on an annual basis, according to what happens to be the political priorities of that year versus the next. I think the sort of program you mentioned is very good. Associated with Lend Lease is Civil & Civic. When a lot of these civil works happen at once it creates a lot of work opportunity, but you go from flood to drought. That in itself creates some problems for the civil construction sector.

Mr Lummis: The Integrated Regional Transport Plan was a 25-year plan. It would not be that difficult to break that down, prioritise and then try to depoliticise the decision making in the process that goes forward and get almost like some bipartisan agreement that, yes, over the next five years the focus will be busway upgrade, train upgrade or something like that. There would still be the bigger picture, but I think the shorter term implementation plan would be a big step forward.

The CHAIRMAN: Do your members currently have problems because such forward planning in public transport is not in place at the moment, or does public transport not come into planning from a developer's point of view?

Mr Lummis: It is very much a part of planning, especially if you are looking at a greenfield project. Transport—that is, how you are going to service that community—is a major issue. You do not want to see some of the projects that I guess have occurred around the periphery of the Gold Coast. Those projects really are isolated. Unless you are a two-car family you are in real strife from a commuting point of view. I think it is an important issue. It is a case of the mix. That is, who bears the responsibility for it? Is it the private sector or the public sector?

Mr HOBBS: To get better movement around the city, would a monorail system work in Brisbane?

Mr Elliott: I go back to the opening statement. Congestion in the a.m. and p.m. is allegedly because of the CBD-generated work. We do not even know, but a lot of it may be going from Taringa via here to get to Mount Gravatt for work. That raises the thorny issue of river crossings. It is extraordinary to us that what is a very logical proposal has been dismissed completely as one which Government will not consider, yet the Gateway Bridge is now 15 or 20 years old and prior to that you have to go back pre-war to find when we built bridges. A couple of parts in this city are crying out for bridges. I guess Governments get concerned about the NIMBY factor, but I think it is interesting that, if a project is managed well and the need for it is demonstrated—an example is the City/Valley bypass—Governments can actually survive proposals to put in bridges.

I am trying to answer your question by suggesting that we need to look at the sort of traffic that is coming into the city. If we want to alleviate congestion, we need to look at opening some valves at other points surrounding the city and get some bypass roads going.

We need to reinvest in the bus fleet. We are committed to better public transport. We are not just a road lobby. We need to look at a better bus fleet that is more attractive to current car users—a bus fleet that offers the same amenity and comfort. In this climate airconditioning would be a plus. We should look at getting those sorts of things done first and then perhaps look at some of these other transport policy initiatives. We need to look at commonsense solutions.

Mr HOBBS: Do you think the cost of public transport is a big issue? Would it make much difference if the price was half or if it were a little dearer? Would people still use public transport?

Mr Lummis: I am not sure it is related to price. I think it is more an issue of timetable management, flexibility and comfort than whether the tickets cost \$2 or \$3.50. The alternative, if you want to drive and park, is just so much greater from a cost point of view anyway. I do not think it is part of the equation. Just coming back to your question about a monorail, that is a very thorny issue, and I guess we would need to understand how the Sydney model has or has not worked before we embark on any research there.

Mr Elliott: Public transport cost is an interesting issue. The public transport lobby, if you like, will argue that it should be cheaper and subsidised even more than it is at the moment. But you are only subsidising concession fares—pensioners and students. The objective ought to be to get people out of their cars and on to existing public transport. You do that by offering a better standard and a better amenity. We mentioned airconditioning, seating, comfort and so on. People will pay for that.

There is a great analogy with cinemas. They introduced the gold class cinemas and nobody really thought that would work. First of all cinema was going to be wiped out by video. It was not. They introduced gold class and there are punters lining up wanting to pay \$20 for a high standard of comfort to watch a movie. It is extraordinary. Price is not the only determinant. I think quality is much more important.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there anything you would like to add before we finish?

Mr Elliott: No, thank you. We have some material to leave here for the Committee if it is interested. There is some research that we have been able to do into the city and broader research in terms of urban management. We can leave those papers and they can go on the file if anyone is interested to look at them.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming. The next witnesses to appear this morning are from the south-east Queensland local authorities.

STEPHEN BAIN, examined:

BILL CROFT, examined:

KEN DEUTSCHER, examined:

JOHN FREEMAN, examined:

ROD GROSE, examined:

MAUREEN HAYES, examined:

JULIA KNIGHT, examined:

EDWARD SANTAGIULIANA, examined:

PAUL TAYLOR, examined:

PETER WAY, examined:

GARY WHITE, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you for giving us your time today. Seven of the region's local authorities provided submissions to this inquiry. All except Boonah Shire Council are represented here today. The Boonah council of course sends its apologies. I especially acknowledge the presence of the two mayors—the Mayor of Logan City and the Mayor of Redland shire. We have a representative from the Northern Subregional Organisation of Councils, NORSROC, which provided a late submission on behalf of its members—Noosa, Maroochy, Caboolture, Kilcoy and Pine Rivers Shires and Caloundra and Redcliffe Cities.

This hearing session has been structured to enable the Committee to broach a range of matters with you. We will ask questions of you about your submissions and invite comments and advice individually and collectively. We encourage you to contribute.

Today we will work through the issues concerning the standard of the region's public transport services, the management of public transport, funding issues and, lastly, issues about land use. Time permitting, we will then invite you to offer some closing comments. Would you like to begin with a brief opening statement? I know that you are all from different councils, so perhaps we could have two or three minutes from each council.

Ms Knight: The inadequacies in the public transport system on the Sunshine Coast, in particular for Noosa Shire residents, has long been acknowledged as having a serious impact on social disadvantage, in particular when it comes to young people accessing employment and training and elderly people accessing services. The hinterland towns of Cooran, Pomona and Cooroy have extreme difficulties when it comes to accessing public transport of any description. At the regional communities conference last year, the 900 delegates who attended in Nambour all cited addressing public transport as the No. 1 issue when it came to doing anything about social disadvantage and especially youth unemployment.

I think we have a situation at the moment where local, State and Federal Governments have attempted to address instances of social disadvantage by providing more services and facilities. Unfortunately, in particular for Noosa Shire residents, that is all very fine, but at the moment they cannot access a lot of those services, which are centred in Maroochy and in the major towns on the Sunshine Coast, and they cannot even access a lot of their local facilities because of breakdowns in negotiations with the local bus companies to go to places like the new Noosa Hospital and the leisure centre, which is a major facility for the community. At the moment there is no form of public transport to either of those major venues.

Cr Santaguiliana: The Redland Shire has a population of 110,000. We are in very close proximity to Brisbane. One of the unfortunate things about the Redland Shire is that about 70% of our working population has to leave the shire five days a week to go to work outside the shire. Of course, that creates a problem with transport. One of the unique features of the Redland Shire—and we are probably the only shire in Queensland to have this feature—is that close to 9,000 of our residents live offshore, that is, on the bay islands. The neglect of that transport system by Government is really abominable. We have unsafe facilities and a lack of facilities for those residents.

One of the concerns we have is that Governments have tried from time to time to put programs and projects in place, but they are not integrated. There is no coordination between departments. That really is a problem. We need to have leadership in getting these projects

coordinated so that they are integrated and so that we have cohesion of development. It is very, very hard when you have one Government department doing one thing and another doing another. As a council, we feel at times powerless.

A very simple example that I can give you is that the Government spent close to \$1m putting in a new jetty at Victoria Point two years ago, supposedly to serve one of the bay islands, Coochie, for passenger transport. Of course, we were asked to manage it. We refused to take the management of that jetty from Queensland Transport because we felt the jetty was unsafe for passenger transport. The local State member, because there was an election on, opened the jetty on the Friday. The workplace health and safety people from the State Government came down on the Monday and closed it because it was unsafe. We have still refused to take management of that jetty because the safety problems have not been rectified, yet Queensland Transport have issued permits for passenger ferries to operate from that jetty. There have been a number of incidents and accidents. It is very, very fortunate that no people have drowned or been seriously hurt when they have fallen between the passenger boat and the jetty steps.

Those are some of the problems that I see, particularly on the bay islands. Another problem, of course, is the lack of strategic planning. Instead of putting everything into Old Cleveland Road, there should be a corridor from the southern parts of the shire onto the Gateway Arterial, which would alleviate a lot of the problem. It would be better to invest our money that way rather than keeping everything on Old Cleveland Road and creating a huge bottleneck at Capalaba.

Mr Taylor: The Integrated Regional Transport Plan for south-east Queensland challenges local governments to take a lead role in coordinating integrated transport at a local level. A key part of having an integrated, sustainable transport system at a local level is public transport, and yet local government is not responsible for public transport. The issues raised in the Ipswich City Council's submission may not be the most important that you have received evidence and submissions on. However, they are geared towards improving communications and relations between local government and State Government, particularly Queensland Transport and Queensland Rail, to assist local government in taking that lead role in integrating transport and taking a bigger role in terms of understanding, contributing to and facilitating integrated public transport at the local level.

Cr Freeman: Thank you for the opportunity to present our submission to the Committee. Logan congratulates the State Government on its busway and integrated ticketing initiatives, which will markedly improve the bus service to Logan and deliver significant benefits to many of Logan's commuters. We would anticipate that many of the commuters who now drive to Brisbane will choose to travel by this bus service.

Our concern today is not for commuters, who already enjoy reasonably good transport, but for those who are dependent upon public transport in Logan City, either because they do not have a licence to drive or because they do not have access to a car. This includes the younger, the older and the poorer persons.

This Committee, I suggest, must understand that for those constantly dependent upon bus systems, life can be pretty miserable. The car has radically influenced the way our urban areas are structured, making us gradually more and more dependent upon it. Our submission points out that households with cars are typically 10 times more mobile than car-less households, which is a really significant problem for us in Logan. Logan City Council believes that the local bus services need not cost as much as they do. More accurately, we believe that it should be possible to provide local services that give better value for money. Commercial service contracts with specified minimum service levels based upon conventional fixed routes and scheduled bus service arrangements cannot provide the right incentives for an innovative, cost-effective local bus service.

But even with these savings targeted financial assistance to support socially acceptable levels of mobility for all Queenslanders is necessary and justified. Public transport is the only means available to many in Logan to access goods and services. Government has an obligation, we believe, to ensure that it does not, through its own acts, differentiate against already disadvantaged sectors of our society. This it does, albeit innocently, whenever access to a private car is made relatively more attractive, and that is our problem in Logan. The public transport system in Logan is run on the basis that it is more advantageous for people to use the private

car, but with the socioeconomic situation in Logan, we do not have the situation where people have a motor car to get around. As an example of that, we look at the extensions to trading hours for shopping centres, recreational and other services. If people in Logan do not have a motor vehicle, they cannot attend to those particular items.

Logan City Council urges this Committee to take steps to significantly improve local bus services in Logan and elsewhere in Queensland. Such improvements, we believe, would be: a re-evaluation of the Government's obligation with respect to the provision of transport service, including a clear statement of what levels of accessibility and mobility it deems acceptable for those without access to a motor vehicle; a major shake-up of service contracts to make them more outcomes orientated, cost effective, innovative and equitable between service areas; and a commitment to provide sufficient Government financial support to deliver accessible levels of accessibility and mobility.

Mr Bain: I am from the Pine Rivers Shire Council and I am speaking on behalf of NORSROC. Thank you for the opportunity to make a presentation this morning to the Committee. I will go through NORSROC's issues in point form. Our major one is funding. We are very concerned about the \$10 billion to \$15 billion shortfall that is in the IRTP documents. We are also concerned that that figure will obviously grow with time. Have any studies been done to work out whether or not the savings we are making now with no-new-taxes policies are going to cause us to have substantially greater taxes in the future in order to play catch-up, and does it mean we may have to implement some drastic measures in order to play catch-up at some time in the future? That is extremely important to us.

We believe that the data currently being used for a lot of the programs—and I have heard this said this morning—is now out of date. A lot of it is 1991 data or 1991-92 traffic survey data. It is important, if we are going to spend money on new surveys, that we actually spend money on getting this data updated; otherwise we are just putting old figures into new dollars.

Education and promotion is something that we see as important. For example, in Pine Rivers Shire, someone can tune into the television and see an ad for a Citytrain. One central train line runs through our shire, and most people have already done their travelling by the time they get to the train. We are wondering whether this concept of promoting Citytrain should be promoting all public transport rather than just one aspect of public transport.

We also have concerns with the conflict between State Government departments and Federal, State and local governments over the ownership of the public transport issue, and that was mentioned by the representative from Ipswich before. To give an example of how it can be difficult for local governments, one day some time last year I had a meeting with Queensland Rail over the proposed Petrie-Kippa-Ring rail line. They advised me in that meeting that there would be no progress at all on that issue. I got back to my office at about lunchtime and opened the mail to find a letter from Queensland Transport inviting me to a steering group to progress the Petrie-Kippa-Ring rail line. Those two things happened in the one day. As has been alluded to here before, sometimes we in council find ourselves telling the left hand of State Government what the right hand of State Government is doing. We believe that there needs to be a lot greater coordination.

Another example is the IRTP document. We have found ourselves on many an occasion having to educate Queensland Rail on what is actually in that document. We have a third line coming through our shire. The initial proposal on that third line was to remove the car parking from our train station so they could fit the third line in, and it was going to be council's responsibility to upgrade the car parking, until we pulled out the IRTP document and said, "State Government wants integrated transport planning." So that set of plans was scrapped and now they are starting to redesign again. That is a waste of money because of a lack of coordination.

I have heard some other things about education. I have heard here today that we have a demographics of who travels on public transport: those people who can get concessions, and it is the pensioners or the schoolkids, because they can get concessions. The rest of us get a company car—I think the figure was that 40% of us get a company car—and can use that. I would like to make a suggestion that most kids in the current transport system are turned off public transport by the time they have gone through the schooling process and get to the age of 17; they have had so many run-ins with bus drivers and bad experiences with public transport. Yet I take a trip overseas and I see that cable-car drivers and public transport operators who are

taking kids to and from school are revered by the community; because of the respect people are actually going to place their kids in that person's hands. That is something we do not see here. I believe that education of that group of people could be very beneficial, and also educating the community that these people are being trained to be more customer service orientated.

On a positive note, we have a very large subdivision going on in the north-east of our shire, the Mango Hill development. We have Queensland Rail working in with that developer and the council—and State Government is involved as well—to put the train line through that development. It is actually a rerouting of the existing corridor. That will have benefits for all. A lot of what I hear in the ultimate desirable outcomes for public transport are actually being achieved right now in that Mango Hill development.

Cr Hayes: With transport, it is very easy to drop into negativity, and I do not think we should do that. In Queensland we are victims of our time. We have to accept that the past has dictated that the car is king. That is the context in which we are working, and any amount of talking about it does not stop it. We must accept that first of all.

Secondly, it is not only sufficient to plan for the present and to define present difficulties. Queensland has taken—and I am quite optimistic about it—a significant step into future planning with the IRTP. The Brisbane City Council supports that future planning. We should be looking at where we are going and how we are progressing at the same time as defining difficulties, because in Brisbane we have difficulties.

In order to get the right transport answer, we have to ask the correct transport question. The question is: how do you get from A to B without polluting the air or congesting the city? The answer in Aramac, for example, to how you get from A to B might be to get your car or ute out. If you live in Darwin, there might be a different answer. So there is not one answer. There seems to be a public transport love now where people say, "Let's get everyone onto public transport." That is not possible. If you set an impossible task, you will never get anywhere.

The answer for Brisbane—and that is the only place about which I can speak with any authority—to the question how you get from A to B without polluting the air and congesting the city is that we have to get a significant percentage of people onto multiple people movers. It is not just the car that is the problem; it is the single occupant vehicle. If every car carried four people, we would have a quarter of the congestion we have now.

I have been in transport for six or seven years now, and it is very difficult to escape the associated negativity. But there is not only one question that needs to be asked. It is a question of future planning carefully done, funding for infrastructure, such as busways, and funding for operational issues, such as getting buses on the road and helping councils to run them. We also need a very big splotch of psychological conditioning and education. In Australia, we are conditioned to have cars. I go to meetings all the time and people say, "I have a car and I will drive it whenever I want to."

Brisbane needs to begin to fund infrastructure, but accompanying that must be a strong policy of saying to people, "You cannot have that free choice of a single occupant vehicle anymore. It is going to destroy our city. It is going to pollute and congest our city." We have a strong rationale for transferring to public transport, but how to do it is the big question. In all advanced transport institutions there is a big area of travel demand management, that is, saying to people: how are you travelling? Why are you travelling that way? Can you travel another way? That is what I call the tapestry of public transport. It is not just saying that public transport is wonderful. We need to define what it is, get the niche market and only then will you succeed. It is no good throwing your hands up saying, "Ain't it awful, we haven't got it." We need to plan carefully.

We will never get anywhere with those plans unless there is integration and a single management system of some sort. There are difficulties with single people here and there saying this and that. We will never get anywhere until we have integration so you can have the same ticket. People who elect me are always saying to me, "Why don't you hand out a paper ticket which can be used on anything?" That is integrated ticketing. But when we bureaucratically say "integrated ticketing", everyone groans. We have been working on it for 10 years and we cannot get it done. There is a perception in the public about that, which I believe is right. Why can't you have one ticket and use it wherever you like? Big, powerful institutions like QR use their weight and there is a real difficulty in being fluid.

I think there are difficulties, but there is real hope for the future with some of the things that we are doing. But—and I do not apologise for this—I have heard what some of these people have said. The State Government in Queensland is getting off very lightly in public transport. There is no doubt that other State Governments, for example, fund or sell their public transport systems. I think there has been a bit of push and pull until now. That is why I say management needs to make a decision not in competition with whether a train will run here, but to get all the elements of the system that we have got together working in some way. I see positive signs that that could occur. I could say more but I will stop because two or three minutes have elapsed.

Mr Grose: I apologise for our councillors' inability to come today. They have a council meeting this morning and they have asked me to come instead.

Gold Coast City is unique amongst Australia's cities. It is the only major city which is not a State capital which now has a significant size and a significant and sustained growth rate. We are Australia's sixth largest city. We now have more than 400,000 people, plus a million overseas visitors each year and 2.5m visitors from Australia, which makes it a fairly bustling area. We are now bigger than the city of Hobart and almost bigger than Tasmania in our own right. The State capital cities that are bigger than us have good public transport infrastructure, typically a rail-based system that they have inherited from the past. We do not have that, and yet we are now facing the sorts of transport difficulties that those capital cities have experienced.

My council is not a public transport operator. We do not licence or regulate public transport, but public transport is a big concern in our city and our councillors certainly get plenty of complaints about public transport. The city is responsible for land use planning and the local road system. It is not possible to divorce those issues from public transport itself.

A city transport plan was published a couple of years ago and has now been adopted by the council. It outlines the details of our future transport system and development. Council has based that city transport plan on the Integrated Regional Transport Plan, and we are now moving to implement the city transport plan. But it is a difficult task, and there is a significant funding shortfall identified in it.

We believe that, if the quality of life for Gold Coast residents is to be maintained and we are going to continue to attract visitors from Australia and overseas, improved public transport in the city is essential. It will not be possible in future to continue with a small rural city transport system where people get in their cars and drive everywhere. We need better public transport. We simply cannot, in physical, social, environmental or financial terms, do anything but turn to public transport. The growth of our city relies heavily on an increased use of public transport, on the existing system we have and on a new public transport system, which we see as being a light rail system.

The comments this morning about light rail in Brisbane were interesting. We see light rail on the Gold Coast as a fundamental element of the city's transport system, not as an add-on in the city centre. It would be a comprehensive metropolitan-wide system there.

As I mentioned, the funding gap in the city transport plan is our part of the funding gap in the Integrated Regional Transport Plan. We are concerned about where the funding is going to come from. We are concerned about the lack of Federal Government involvement in this. I heard Councillor Hayes talk about the State Government not being involved enough. We see the Federal Government's complete absence from transport in the Gold Coast as a great concern. We urge the Committee to consider this in its deliberations.

The CHAIRMAN: As a committee of the Queensland Parliament, we acknowledge that there are problems with public transport. There are a lot of concerns. That is the reason for this inquiry. We also appreciate the interest that local government is showing in this inquiry. We appreciate the time that you have spent preparing your submissions and for appearing here today. We acknowledge the fact that local government has hands-on knowledge of the needs of your own communities. That knowledge and your input here will be very valuable in the report that we will put to Parliament following this inquiry. So thank you all very much for your interest.

Mr HEALY: To back up what the Chairman has said, thank you for your input, both written and verbal. It has been very interesting to hear from local government the different problems being experienced in relation to public transport.

I want to touch on a few things Councillor Hayes mentioned. This is a question to either Maureen or Ken. You talked about integrated ticketing. It has been frustrating over the last couple of years because we have not managed to finally nail integrated ticketing. I know it is very simple to say, "Let's have that piece of paper", but when you look at technology, it is changing all the time. How do we get to that stage of integrated ticketing? You need only look at the Travelsmart Centre in the Valley and at other places around the world to see that things are changing. We have to get it right. Queensland Transport, in its submission to us, told us that we will have integrated ticketing by 2002. Are your ratepayers knocking your door down saying, "We are going to use public transport a lot more once we finally get integrated ticketing—that one single ticket"?

Cr Hayes: No. There is no time ever where constituents have knocked on the door saying, "I am going to use public transport." What they sometimes say is, "I will use public transport if you do this or that." All the overseas studies show that, if you can make a public transport system easily accessible, easy to use and easily understandable, that in itself encourages people to use it. There is a certain public transport culture that exists where people believe it is difficult to access. We put on a \$2 busabout ticket over Christmas, and you have no idea how much our patronage increased from that. Most of the feedback was, "It is easy to use. I only have to give the bus driver a \$2 coin." There is no worrying about zones or anything like that. Integration brings ease of use. In other countries you get one ticket and you know you can catch various methods of public transport. It is that ease that encourages people to use public transport.

In Brisbane, for example, when we get that right, we would expect a certain small percentage increase. But the fact that it is a modern way of going forward, and the only way to go forward, means we must do that. Brisbane City Council has developed its own smart card which people can use to pay rates, to make telephone calls and to use the public transport system. That is definitely the future, and it does have a patronage implication.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a question for Noosa council. You suggest in your submission that students are paying up to \$20 per day to travel by bus from Noosa to Maroochydore on Sunbus. It also states that a petition is being prepared seeking that something be done to meet the transport needs of Sunshine Coast tertiary students. Can you explain why these students are paying so much to travel by bus and what impact that has on the students? Can you recommend how that problem can be addressed?

Ms Knight: Currently, tertiary students cannot access concessions using Sunbus. They have to pay a full fare. Whilst Noosa is not that far from Maroochydore, we lack an integrated bus system which acknowledges that people might live in Noosa, work in Maroochydore and perhaps go to Caloundra for recreation. The way that the coast has developed and the way that contracts have been issued means that, whilst we have a system which will get you on a bus from Noosa through to Caloundra, it is particularly convoluted and extremely expensive.

The same thing occurs with school students who, in a lot of other regional centres, can use student passes at any time of the day to access buses. On the Sunshine Coast they can only do that if they are going to or from school. That means that for recreational purposes for a lot of young people it is out of the question to go to centres where facilities are because of the expense. Also, what might take 15 minutes in a car will take over an hour catching several buses to get to the same place. A lot of parents are not comfortable with their kids getting on and off a number of buses getting to a major location—for example, kids in Noosa who want to access Sunshine Plaza.

There have been a number of attempts to resolve the issue, but at the moment there is not a big enough demand to be able to offer those concessions. A lot of people have made the point that, when they built the Sunshine Coast University, accessing it was going to be a major issue. That is a particular problem for Noosa Shire residents. If we are going to encourage young people to access tertiary education, we have to do it in a way which does not encourage the use of a private vehicle. Even those who can afford private vehicles often have difficulties affording the petrol to go to and from university. If their cars experience mechanical failures, that often means a week out of uni because they are receiving Austudy and they have difficulties getting it together to pay for car registration and that sort of thing.

At the moment it is really limiting young people's opportunities to access training. Similarly, if they want to access TAFE, whilst the CSIT is a Sunshine Coast TAFE facility, its campuses tend to be split up. If you want to do office administration you have to get to Nambour. If you want to do child care, or something like that, you have to be able to get to Caloundra. If you want to do arts subjects you need to get to Cooroy. It makes it very difficult. A lot of people think, "Oh, yes, we have a TAFE campus in Nambour. Great." However, it only offers a certain amount of courses. If what people want to do is not offered there, a lot of them will opt for correspondence studies. A huge amount of students on the Sunshine Coast access QUT correspondence courses.

The CHAIRMAN: Would many students be paying \$20 a day for transport?

Ms Knight: Yes, quite a lot. A lot of them end up restricting the number of subjects they take, or they choose subjects which fall on the same day so that they do not need to go to the university on a daily basis. At the moment it is limiting both their opportunities and the university's opportunities to expand.

The CHAIRMAN: Are they private bus companies?

Ms Knight: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a number of them?

Ms Knight: We have Sunbus which basically covers the Sunshine Coast area.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Boonah Shire Council raised a similar concern in its submission. Are there any other councillors who would like to comment on this matter?

Mr Croft: The Logan campus of Griffith University has recently lobbied all agencies and had a protest outside its gates which was lobbying against the incapability of the local bus operator to deliver discount fares. The arrangement is that Queensland Rail offered to private bus services an arrangement whereby Queensland Rail will provide a discounted ticket for students to the point of destination—not only to the station, which in this case is Loganlea station. Queensland Rail was prepared to talk to private bus operators in an attempt to take that discounted fare to the university.

Queensland Rail approached Clark's Logan Bus Service. The company has a service which runs between Loganlea station and Griffith University. The company currently charges \$1.80 one way. Therefore, it costs a student \$3.60 to travel 2.5 kilometres between Loganlea Station and Griffith University. Queensland Rail offered a discount fare arrangement whereby it would pay the difference to Clark's to enable the company to offer the discount fare. A condition of the offer was that the bus system should be half-hourly to match the rail service—it is now hourly—and that it should be integrated with better timetabling. The buses had to leave within seven minutes, and that sort of thing.

The offer was attractive to Clark's, but the company was financially unable to make its books balance with the number of extra costs that it would incur because of the half-hourly service with the relatively small increase in patronage that it would gain. It was a very good idea to offer discounted fares to students. It would have reduced the fare to 90c, which is typical of what a student pays to get between railway stations and universities in Brisbane. However, it fell over because of the differences between the two agencies.

Cr Hayes: Discount fares apply for secondary students, but at tertiary level it is entirely up to the operators as to what they do. In the Brisbane City Council we had a system of yearly tickets and semester tickets. It was something like a contract with students. It cost nearly \$500 a yearly ticket. It was a contract whereby the students would use our bus system at all times. There was a very strong demand—as there is everywhere—for single trip discounts. So we introduced single trip discounts with some initial financial help from the Government. We had a huge patronage at first with a revenue downfall. There is a balance that is hard to get and which cannot be sustained by bus operators—particularly commercial bus operators.

Cr Santagiuliana: The problem in Redlands is fairly similar. The Moreton Institute of TAFE has two campuses—one at Mount Gravatt and one at Alexandra Hills. We had problems with access from the bay islands. Students had to pay \$4 a trip, which meant \$8 for the return trip. The students had to catch a bus. They were lucky because they could get a bus. They had to pay about \$3 to get to Alexandra Hills. The catchment area for the Moreton Institute of TAFE is

Wynnum/Manly, which is within the Brisbane City Council area. If you want to get from Wynnum/Manly to Alexandra Hills by car, it is about a 10 or 12 minute trip. If you go by public transport it can be up to two hours because you either have to catch a train to Birkdale and walk to Alexandra Hills, wait one and a half hours for a bus, or catch a Brisbane City Council bus into Brisbane and then catch a bus going back to Redlands. There is no thought given to the integrated transport system at all. It is a real problem for students. As you know, students are not really over-flush with money.

Mr Bain: At NORSROC there is a feeling that by the time a person gets through their schooling they are fed up to the back teeth with public transport. They go out and buy themselves a car. You have then lost that person on the bus system forever. We are educating these people the wrong way.

The CHAIRMAN: I will have to tell the students in Bundaberg how very fortunate they are.

Mr HEALY: Could I come back to Noosa again? I am sure that other councils have similar problems, but in your submission you say that there are a number of localities that would support a service, and yet the means of establishing the service are quite poor. Could you just explain what you mean when you say that the means of establishing the service is poor? Could you tell us how you understand the process that councils go through in getting a bus service started?

Ms Knight: When we say it is poor, I guess we mean that it is in terms of the community being able to prove to Queensland Transport, Sunbus, or whoever, that a bus company would not be economically disadvantaged in trialling a new bus route. There have been a number of discussions with Sunbus. In fact, Noosa Shire Council initiated a round of discussions last April with Queensland Rail, Queensland Transport, Sunbus and the Sunshine Coast Cab Company. After one day it was basically a question of, "We need some research done to prove a need. Where are we going to get the money from to prove this need?"

It is a particular problem for small communities such as Cooran and Kin Kin. It is possible to access council or ask council's assistance in providing money and/or project officers to do survey work. That is all very fine if the council has the money to spare to do that sort of thing. Kin Kin and Cooran have applied to Jupiters for funds to provide a small community bus. A number of communities are actively trying to resolve their problems because they realise that Sunbus will not be able to do extra trips.

It seems to fall down at the negotiating stage. If the council feels that an area has a good case, it will go to Sunbus and try to negotiate the matter. Basically, the answer comes back every time, "Unless you can prove that it will be economically viable, we are not interested." Late last year the manager of the leisure centre, along with the support of the council, had discussions with Sunbus about having a loop around the leisure centre, the Endeavour Foundation and the respite centre. It was going to add two minutes to the bus trip. Council suggested that maybe we have one less bus an hour. The residents would be quite happy with that if they could have access to the facilities. That did not suit the bus company because it would put them out of sync with their buses going to Maroochydore. We always end up at loggerheads. We are told, "You have to prove economic reliability. You have to prove that we can fit a new route in with our current timetables and the way in which we operate." There does not seem to be any give and take. The notion that the company is providing a public transport system does not seem to have any meaning at the moment.

I guess council is at the stage where we really need the State Government to come on board and put some pressure on privately owned companies to acknowledge that there has to be a compromise. At the moment, it is very much their way. A bid has been put in for Sunbus to provide one service on a Sunday morning from Pomona to Noosa and one service back to Pomona at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. This will allow young people to access entertainment options on the coast. We have not yet had a response, but this would probably be about the 100th letter that the council has written.

Mr HEALY: Could I ask another question in relation to transport on the Sunshine Coast, particularly in relation to taxis. Is it just me, or is there a problem with the taxi service on the Sunshine Coast? I find it very difficult to get what I consider to be an acceptable taxi service on the Sunshine Coast. I feel I am waiting longer.

Ms Knight: We have a dearth of taxis on the Sunshine Coast. For example, on a Friday night it is a major issue in Mooloolaba where most of the nightclubs are situated. Trying to get people out of that area on a Friday and Saturday night is terribly difficult because of the lack of taxis. It has got to the extent that nightclub operators met a couple of months ago to look at the possibility of introducing restricted taxi licences. Such licences already exist in Ireland. Under that type of licence, a private car can operate as a taxi for a certain period of time. The idea is to improve an operator's ability to get people out of a particular area.

A lot of them operate their own buses in order to get people out of the area at night time. You are right. I live in the hinterland and I have to get to the airport on occasions. It is a joke to even consider getting a taxi. A taxi has to come from Gympie to where I live—a distance of 45 kilometres—and then there is another 50-odd kilometres to the airport. The only way I could get a taxi to come out to where I live was to pay for the car to come from Gympie to pick me up. I think the trip to the airport was going to cost something like \$45.

Mr HEALY: It just compounds the issue.

Ms Knight: It does.

Cr Hayes: I just want to make an observation. I would slit my wrists if I was in the situation you are in, that is, constantly sending 100 letters and getting no response. I think we really have to get above that detail to get an answer, because the answer is certainly not there. It is certainly not placing pressure on commercial operators. You cannot place pressure on commercial operators to operate uncommercially. That is just not the case.

Ms Knight: Yes, we realise that.

Cr Hayes: I think we really have to get the thinking to the stage that, in the spirit of the IRTP, every local area develops their own transport plan. The funding has to inevitably come from Government, because there is not money in public transport. We really need to say that the answer to all of that is a transport plan developed with full consultation with the locals and then approaching the State Government sensibly and saying, "Here's our proposal. We need this much money over this many years." That is the only way forward in trying to get particular bus services from here to there. We have this heartache in Brisbane as well. The ratepayers themselves are now paying \$30m. That is what Brisbane ratepayers put in for their public transport system that 10% of the people use. The public transport answers are all difficult and costly but in my view absolutely worth it.

Ms Knight: I totally agree with you. Probably the one comment I would make is the lack of access to funding for communities to be able to resolve these issues for themselves. They acknowledge that you cannot expect a commercial company to start running out into hinterland areas. A lot of those hinterland communities are more than happy to resolve those issues for themselves. It is having access to funding to be able to do that.

Mr Croft: In relation to the business of operating commercial service contracts with the outer areas, the commercial service contractor is required to deliver minimum service levels. As long as those minimum service levels are served, then the bus operator has to operate commercially, only supported by concession for top ups. To ask a commercial service operator to do any more than that is going to be directly against their notion of commerciality for the reasons we have already outlined. However, the Act does contain provision for financial assistance to commercial bus operators where a need can be defined, knowing that that particular extension to the service would otherwise not be provided commercially.

To my knowledge, no-one is able to access that special assistance. Certainly, Logan has never been able to access those provisions under the Act. We do not know why that is. It is there. The Minister has the power to do it, but we do not know how to do that. I think that is your question. I do not know how you define a useful thing which requires subsidy support for the operator—it is called "financial assistance" in the Act—and how that is actually tapped.

The other issue about taxis is worth mentioning. There does seem to be a resistance to think of taxis as a potential public transport mode. A taxi is a vehicle. It can carry people. It seems impossible to accept the notion that taxis could themselves be subsidised to provide public transport services in the way that commercial service operators would. It seems to me completely likely that a bus operator might well subcontract a taxi operator if he could deliver the services much cheaper. We have seen examples in Brisbane where that was done. Approaches by Logan

to Queensland Transport have frowned on that. They say, "No. You will not subsidise taxis to provide public transport services, but we would subsidise a great big bus to carry two or three people to do the same thing." There are some inconsistencies there.

Another point related to this is that Brisbane is now producing 50 passengers per head of population annually. The Gold Coast is delivering 40. These are very good outcomes. Logan achieves 10. This is under the same commercial contract arrangements. The commercial service contracts do not relate to outcomes. They say, "Put some buses in. We don't care how many passengers you get." Places like the Sunshine Coast, Logan and the Redlands have very real difficulties in delivering the sorts of outcomes that places like the Gold Coast, with its population density, and Brisbane can deliver. Brisbane has to do it at an enormous cost to get that result. Nobody denies that those qualities of service are delivering those results.

If we could start looking at outcomes—the number of passengers carried—instead of inputs—the number of buses we put out there—it might be a different way of approaching the task of delivering public transport services. We have to ask why Logan, which is a residential suburb of reasonable density on the outskirts of Brisbane, is only delivering 10 passenger transport services per head of population compared with the Gold Coast's 40 and Brisbane's 50.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you have private bus companies in your area?

Mr Croft: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: They are not being subsidised at all?

Mr Croft: They are operating under commercial service contracts, which are defined as service standard A3. Brisbane has to deliver A1, which includes night-time services, evening services, Sunday services and so on. There are no Sunday services to three-quarters of Logan. There are no evening services to the same areas. The only parts of Logan that get Sunday and Saturday services are the places that are very well off. For some reason or other, we do not believe in putting bus services into the poorer areas of the community, the reasons for which I cannot for the life of me understand. That is how the commercial service contractor is set up. The bus operators delivering those services are not getting the passengers of anything like the level that would justify that investment.

Cr Santagiuliana: I want to make a brief comment about bus services. The scenario in my shire is that, up to about two and a half years ago, if the previous licensee of the bus service was running late on one run, he would stop the bus and tell the people on the bus to get out because the bus had to turn around and go back and start the service again, never mind about delivering the people on the bus. It was find your own way home. This is one of the endemic problems of public transport when referring to private operators. They look at the dollars and they look at the time, but they do not look at providing the customer service. This is why we are not getting the people on these services. They have been trying not to use them because of what has been happening.

Really, we can go on with this all the time, but we need to look at the broad picture of what is happening to public transport and integrated transport in south-east Queensland. As chairman of the SEQROC group of councils, we have these discussions regularly at SEQROC. We now have this super-duper highway to the coast. It is a great thing. I congratulate both sides of Government for getting this up, because it is the best thing that could happen to this State. It will be a great economic growth, but within 10 to 15 years we will have to look at building another one because we will vandalise that road by continually adding extra roads coming on to it. It will choke up the traffic. I think we need to have a much wider strategic plan of where we are going with transport in south-east Queensland. Perhaps Mr White might like to comment on that.

Mr White: The comments that have been made so far to the group are indicative of symptoms of something that is going on. I feel that an integrated transport strategy now is no longer a luxury, as it seems to be perceived. It is a necessity that is part of us as a region becoming an urban area. We are experiencing the same types of problems that have been experienced elsewhere in the world. We need to look at our challenges as part of an integrated approach. One of the key features required of Government is to emphasise coordination and consistent planning across jurisdictions.

It must be acknowledged that transport policy and transport policy implementation is the responsibility of more than just one department. It is not just a transportation issue; it is part of an

integrated approach as to how we plan and frame our regions for the future. Many initiatives have been taken by Governments and various councils, but what we fail to do is focus on it in an integrated way. Many of the messages that have come from this table relate to the lack of integration.

The sad side of that is that, if we do not address it, the huge potential we have and the initiatives that have been taken by various parties may end up as a hotchpotch of very good initiatives but which fall short of our potential as a growth area in south-east Queensland. The integrated issue is fundamental to what we are looking at. Our Mayor has emphasised from the Redland's point of view his role in SEQROC. A message that continually comes through is the need to look at transportation as part of an integrated focus to do with land management and the economic catalyst it is for future change. It is not just a transportation issue in its own right. I think we have to get into the big league in terms of looking at transport.

Mr HOBBS: I have a question to Brisbane City or perhaps the others involved. It refers to the light rail project. I have been trying to get my mind around where we are going and where we are up to with this. We all agree that we have to have a good transport system, but how we achieve that is difficult. We heard evidence earlier this morning that it is believed that the light rail system probably will not resolve the congestion in the city, because perhaps they are people travelling from one side to the other side and passing through. Where do we go with that? Is light rail the way to go to move people? Will it stop congestion in the city?

Cr Hayes: Our view is that a modern city that eventually, because you have to plan for the future, moves a lot of people around certainly needs a component of light rail. Heavy rail is very expensive. About four or five years ago the Brisbane City Council looked at the next step as to whether to go with light rail. We started to look at busways. Eventually, the mid-term solution was busways. That would inevitably solve some of those big situations. But I think it is a mistake to look at the current proposal for light rail as a total solution or even a major solution. Looking at it as step 1 of a much longer-term solution is the way to see it through. If we had a component of light rail in the central city—I do not think we need a circular one; I think we need a through one—that would be an inevitable and valuable step 1. In later years, we may even take it along the busway corridors. They are now public transport corridors.

In the long term, looking at it in a very hard-headed way, transport solutions are difficult, long term and not glamorous. They are all very difficult. If you ask the Brisbane City Council's point of view, we know that light rail is part of that answer. We need to get that first step right. But, in a 20-year plan, light rail needs to extend. Only in those very difficult and arduous steps will we get a long-term answer.

Cr Santagiuliana: I make the point that we are talking about Brisbane City. I think we need to look at it in a broader sense. Brisbane City is just the centre of the doughnut. Brisbane City is not the centre of the universe. Brisbane City is a centre of growth in south-east Queensland.

Cr Hayes: I cannot believe you said that.

Cr Santagiuliana: It is not. I tell Jim that regularly. You know that. When you look at south-east Queensland, we really need to plan for south-east Queensland, not just Brisbane City. Light rail would be just one of the raft of things we are going to use, but we need to have other strategies as well. We cannot continue to build road after road after road. We say that we cannot subsidise public transport too much. What do you do when you build a road? When you build a road, you subsidise the car.

Mr Bain: While light rail might have a viability in the Brisbane CBD because of the issues that were mentioned, we are concerned that because it is trendy to be talking about it we might end up with light rail in Pine Rivers, for instance, when a bus system or a heavy rail system is more appropriate in the long term, particularly if we look at the Petrie-Kippa-ring corridor where we are looking at a long-term solution which might be heavy rail. However, light rail was mooted because it is trendy to talk about it at the moment. That is a concern we have.

Mr HOBBS: But if we are trying to move people, would a monorail system be better? The concern raised this morning was blockage of the different lanes. Say, for instance, George Street and other streets were halved. What happens when you get a fire, the postman and all that sort of business? Would a monorail system work?

Mr Deutscher: Part of the problem with monorails is that really they are too high. They seem to be up out of the way. We have seen a lot of the monorails around the world not really achieving that goal of getting people on them, although they are away from traffic. Our comments on the light rail proposed for Brisbane would be that traffic congestion would obviously increase from closing some of the streets proposed. That might be okay if car trips were replaced. But as it is proposed, it does not extend far enough. The Government's view is that in the long term they will extend it. What we have here is a mismatch between long-term planning and short-term outcomes. It is difficult to match the two in that case. We would say that light rail and public transport should be on the ground and should be accessible to people, but they need to be matched with a balanced transport strategy so they can replace car trips.

Cr Hayes: Public transport needs to be really obvious and cheerful. Lots of people say, "Let's put it up in the air or let's put it underground," so it is all hidden and the cars can drive where they want to, but it really has to be integrated with surface travel very clearly so people understand it is a good way to go.

Mr Grose: We see light rail on the Gold Coast as an integral part of our future transport system. We do not see it as being a blockage in the roads. It would typically be in the median. We have some relatively wide road reservations. It would typically run through very high density population areas along the coastal strip and to a lot of attractions that people want to go to on the Gold Coast, such as the convention centre and the casino. It would stretch down to Coolangatta Airport in the south and to Runaway Bay in the north. Also, it would have links out to the railway stations on the Gold Coast railway line.

The only place that there might be any traffic congestion is through Surfers Paradise, but the roads are being changed there anyhow to take the south-bound traffic that currently runs through the centre of Surfers Paradise on to Ferny Avenue, one street further back, with a view to turning that into a sort of pedestrian/transit mall almost. Over time we would see that restricted to private cars. So light rail would be running in its own corridor there, which could also be shared with buses because it would be a hybrid system over time as it developed.

Earlier you were talking about serving new areas with public transport. We think it is essential in new areas that public transport is not just subsidised but also heavily subsidised so that you can get the public transport system operating in there very early in the piece. I note Bill's figures about 40 trips per person per annum. It is nice for a Gold Coast figure, but it is very uneven. There are parts of Gold Coast City where there are households with three or more cars. About 20% of households in some areas of the city have three or more cars. The national average for that is 11%. That is in areas where public transport is very poor and population densities are relatively low. In other parts of the city, such as Broadbeach, where there is actually a very good public transport system that operates 24 hours a day, 24% of homes do not have a car. Yet in another part of the city where public transport is very poor, 2.5% of homes do not have a car. So good public transport brings a culture of using public transport. That follows through to people's car ownership.

Mr White: I mention the system that exists in Portland, Oregon. The system is so friendly that it has become such a part of their way of life. A light rail system—an extension of the tramway system, which is part of their bus system—is a very friendly way of transporting yourself around the city. I think that was the point Councillor Hayes was making. Public transport becomes part of your life and not an add-on. The model they have in Portland is a classic example of where the community works very well with its transportation infrastructure. Portland, Oregon, is a city not dissimilar from south-east Queensland.

Ms NELSON-CARR: I direct this question to Councillor Hayes. The council is unique in that it is the only Australian local authority that provides public transport services. Can you tell us how this came about and outline for the Committee the benefits this brings to the council and to residents, as opposed to services being provided by private operators?

Cr Hayes: Before the Brisbane City Council came into being in 1925 some of the fledgling councils had non-integrated systems. When that big council came into being it sold all of those systems to private enterprise. That went on for about 10 or 11 years, but they were not doing any good with it. So the council took it back and has retained it since then.

The benefits to the public are that it is a very responsive system. There are 26 elected representatives and each of them represents a small area. They drive me crazy coming to me

saying, "This is my need", and, "This is another need." So you could not get a more responsive system. Secondly, there is the view that you put. That is, you cannot ask a commercial operator to have what I might call "the public good" as an integral part of their planning. They are commercial operators. They do public good, but only a Government in public transport knows what is going to be good for that city.

Our view of transport is sometimes quite different from the views of others of us around the table, because we see transport as the first slice of a big pie, which is, "How is Brisbane going to develop?" We have land use planning, which supports transport. We have put public transport first throughout a large organisation. We are able to have a strategy that suits and a very responsive operation, because we run the operation, that serves those purposes. It very carefully tries to balance the community service obligation that we have. Being elected representatives, we are very mindful of that. I think that is a really strong argument for public ownership. Secondly, because we are responsive we are able to make that operation a responsible one.

I know that the situation described in which small operators are having difficulty and cannot service the people is ripe for the international takeover. Anyone who knows anything about it will understand that there are the sharks of international takeover nibbling at the edge of Brisbane all the time. Sunbus is part of that. Big international companies are the only ones who can answer that fragmented need and still make some money and provide a bit of a public service. We in the Brisbane City Council consider ourselves lucky that our own ratepayers have committed. No matter what research we carry out, that comes back first, "We love you to own and operate the system. We consider that the best." And I consider that the best.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Would you advocate that other local authorities take up the gauntlet and do the same thing?

Cr Hayes: I think it is too difficult for them at this stage. Historically it is not something they have had and their whole budgets are set quite differently. But I agree, and I think very hard consideration should be given.

Again, I think a central government that has a plan for south-east Queensland that includes a particular view of public transport is the only way to go. Once you come down to saying the word "bus" you are almost completely done for, because the answer is not bus. It is what Eddie and Bill have said. The answer could be maxi taxi. It could be a case of getting those six people who need it to gather at a person's house. A maxi taxi slightly subsidised could be a highly commercial way of getting over to Maroochydore, for example.

There needs to be a more imaginative, lateral set of thinking than simply bus. It could be any number of other solutions. If the consumers are a set of university students, you might put a bike path down and get them all to ride bikes to university. It has to be a question of how we best get them there, not, "Will we put a bus there?" As Bill said, that is sort of self-defeating.

Cr Santagiuliana: We have been involved in a pilot study with Queensland Transport in relation to putting a transport interchange in Capalaba. It is a bit more advanced than the planning stage because we are buying property. Queensland Transport has agreed to put, I think, \$4.5m into it. We as a council will put X amount of dollars in as well. That is what the partnership is all about. We are quite happy to go down that road, provided it is coordinated and integrated. We believe that this interchange at Capalaba will be something that can be used by other local authorities.

Mr Croft: In response to the question about whether local government holds and accepts the responsibility for public transport in this area, certainly we are the recipient of a lot of complaints. In that respect, people believe that local council does have some responsibility for the delivery of services.

We have to separate the source of funding, whether it be taxpayers or ratepayers, to see who actually holds responsibility for delivery of the service. You could imagine a situation where taxpayers' money could be delivered by grant to a local authority for it to control public transport. You need not necessarily think of it as being a rate collection. The responsibility for delivery could be passed more to the coalface, if you like. It is a critical question.

We would have to believe that Queensland Transport is not close enough to the issues to be held responsible for delivering responsive services. You could talk about who is responsible for

the services and separate it from where the money is actually coming from in the first instance and think of some other mechanism to do that.

Mr Bain: Taking that even further, Ipswich have put forward a suggestion relating to a five-year rolling program. That would help councils to know further into the future that the money is coming. That helps us with our road planning. I heard the Mayor of Redland say earlier that we are currently subsidising the car by building roads. That is an issue for us.

We are sitting down and trying to do our planning. We do have subsidy arrangements with Queensland Transport, but we cannot plan for next year with a lot of the grants that we get from State Government. Sometimes we will get that money in February and we have to have it spent by June. With a five-year program we could actually say, "We do not need to build that road because in five years' time some infrastructure will be put in." We could have the opportunity to do a lot better planning at council level.

Mr HEALY: I put on the table the issue of the management of public transport in south-east Queensland. Quite a few of the submissions we have received have suggested a single agency to manage public transport. I have a personal problem with that because of mistakes that have been made in the past. What are your views on the idea of a single agency to manage public transport? Is there another way to achieve the types of things we need to achieve, with ticketing coordination and other things, without having a single agency?

Cr Hayes: I think you need to get that structure right. I do not think that structure has a managerial level asking, "What are the details of that operation?" I think that is up to the councils. They say what is needed, they plan it and they very carefully organise the funding. What is needed is a body which re-examines the funding and where it goes but which has a say on the integration of those systems across borders. I think that is where you can have a say.

For example, if we did have light rail, new heavy rail and buses in Brisbane, there would be the nightmare of three separate bodies saying who should go where and who should take what. But there could be a body with a funding capability, extra to the big operations, saying, "These are the integrational principles by which you will run it." I do not see a great big, overarching powerful dictator saying that. I see more a coordinating role by a set of people to make existing efficient systems cooperate. I think it is that, more than starting from scratch and taking a dictatorial approach.

Mr HEALY: Will that solve some of the problems on the Sunshine Coast and at Redlands and at Logan?

Cr Hayes: I think it would. I suppose it is a first step, because at the moment they have no solution. There isn't one. I think someone looking at transport in south-east Queensland would have to address that where it has not been addressed at all, except in a very clumsy, contractual sense of who can make money from it. I think we probably need a more planning-oriented look at what exists at the moment, without making great pronouncements.

Cr Santagiuliana: That is correct. We should have that. I will give a quick example. Brisbane City and Redlands agree that we would like to see Brisbane buses into Capalaba so that we can get to the service and get students from Wynnum/Manly into the Alexandra Hills TAFE. There is no agreement because the bus company that currently has the licence to run into Redlands refuses to cooperate. It is a commercial decision. There needs to be integrated decision making. One service will come to a certain point, and the next service will come to that point and continue from there. There is no integration and no cooperation between some of the services. That includes Queensland Rail, by the way. Queensland Rail is a law unto itself.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you have a coordinating role between Transport and your private bus companies?

Cr Santagiuliana: We attempt in Redlands.

Mr Bain: I have worked at three councils. My opinion is that councils almost earn that role by default because of the number of complaints they get through the community. Councils end up being forced to go in and coordinate. It is very difficult to get Queensland Rail to attend a lot of those meetings. I am in the minutes of many meetings saying, "I note that there is no Queensland Rail representative yet again." Councils do take on that role, but it is by default because of the pressure put on us by the community.

Mr Croft: There is a formal process in place through an organisation called the Regional Industry Working Group, which Queensland Transport chairs and sets up for each of its local authorities. It is a forum that the bus operators, local authorities, Queensland Rail and Queensland Transport in the chair manage. Their function and their focus, though, is short-term infrastructure provision to enable bus operations to travel. They will not discuss and are not capable of discussing the sort of operational subsidy type arrangements or the delivery of alternative services with the bus operators. The example I gave of Queensland Rail's offer to Clarks arose out of that organisation. So there is a formal organisational structure in place for that to happen.

The CHAIRMAN: I know that members have a lot of other questions they would like to ask, but we are going to run short of time. In the time that is left to us, I think we would rather hear from the councils about a couple of issues. The first is management. How do you think things can be better managed? The second is funding. We would like your ideas about where the funds should come from and how funding should be done. The third is land use, with regard to future developments. We would like your views on how to get land use practices in place and decisions that support efficient and effective transport, especially public transport.

Mr White: I might open the batting there on behalf of the table. It seems to me that the land use issue is fundamentally part of where we want to take ourselves in the future. I was talking to a transport planner in Toronto many years ago, and he said to me, "You always use land use as the excuse." You tell us what your vision is for the future. You tell us as a Government what your vision is for the future for south-east Queensland, and we will provide you with a suite of transportation products. They are out there; they are used all around the world. Unless we decide that we are going to have a particular urban form for south-east Queensland, it is going to be very hard to home in and work out exactly which transport option is the best one to go on. So I think we have to concentrate very hard on looking at the urban form that we envision for south-east Queensland for the next 20 years, look at what economic issues we need to look at and then hone our transportation products around them. Many of the frustrations we are hearing around this table are because we are reacting with our transport solutions, as opposed to seeing them as part of an integrated process. I know it sounds like the cracked record that keeps reappearing, but it really is the cracked record, and I think we do have to coordinate those issues as part of a long-term vision.

Cr Hayes: I think the horse has almost bolted in that respect, and we really have to start to draw back, because the land use planning has been based—and you can only look at it for one second—almost solely on the unfettered use of the car. It is not that everyone was stupid beforehand; it was just that people thought that was the way you were going to get around. We are trying to impose on top of that a system that has a set of quite different basic principles. That is what the difficulty is caused by. You are not going to get people getting out of their cars, and whether you have a right to do so is another thing. But what Governments do have the necessity to do is to make clear to their people not that there is this poor relation called public transport you should be subsidising, but make clear to people how, with all of our decisions currently, we subsidise the car. I have been to transport conferences where they put up the subsidies for the car, and they are 10 times those given to public transport. We help the car so much that you would not believe it. Once you make those things clear, then public transport decisions become clearer, that they are not sort of a poor charity. If you want your society to operate properly, you should look at the balance between those two things.

In modern transport tables, they are starting to count in to the cost of the car hospitalisation, deaths, pollution, all of those things, because we have come to accept that. The car kills hundreds of people every day. I always say this: if some child has a peanut butter sandwich and gets sick, we take peanut butter off every shelf in all supermarkets in Australia, and yet people get killed every day by the car. We have simply grown used to it.

So I think that the first thing to really clarify this situation is to just see how much we are giving car users, and we are giving them an enormous amount of money. I think that we should really get that clear, and then councils would be able to say, "If we are going to operate properly, give us the same amount that you are giving the car", and then I think we would be okay.

Mr Bain: Councillor Hayes mentioned that the horse may have already bolted, and certainly by the number of cars on the road, that could be true. When we look at the situation,

there are a lot of car companies making a lot of money out of the fact that there are a lot of cars being sold, and one-car households are now three and four-car households. What we should be looking at if we want to get a good and efficient public transport system is not subsidising those cars, because the horse has bolted. We have to start taking some more drastic steps possibly and putting user pays onto the cars. So we should be looking at the price of fuel, and can money from the increase in the price of fuel be—

Cr Hayes: And road pricing.

Mr Bain: —hypothecated back into public transport, and these are issues that will reduce the fact that we are subsidising the car and will enable us to put more financial resources into public transport.

Some of the ideas that NORSROC has put up include transponders that go along with your registration and your registration sticker. I personally have not been anywhere where I have actually seen those in operation, but my understanding is that you are only allowed a certain number of trips into the city before your car cannot cross a barrier, or something like that. Some of these ideas might be—

Cr Hayes: I would like to see that in Brisbane!

Mr Bain: As I said before, some of the measures could get drastic if we do not start allocating the money to this \$10 billion to \$15 billion shortfall that we currently have. The steps are going to have to get more drastic each year.

One of the things that NORSROC has also suggested is salary packaging. At the moment, the way the Federal Government tax system works, if you have a company car, the more you drive it, the better off it is. Maybe we should be looking at a system where part of the encouragement to companies is to hand out a book of taxi vouchers or public transportation tickets to their staff as part of a salary package, which would encourage more use of public transport rather than the company car.

Cr Santagiuliana: I do not think that the horse has bolted. I think that south-east Queensland is a very unique area. We have a lifestyle which is second to none in the world. There are always great opportunities to improve what we have. We should really be working together in this growth management. SEQROC is a great example of councils and the State Government working together to try and come to grips with the management of south-east Queensland growth. The problem is that I do not think bureaucracy has really come to grips with it at all. I think they like to build their empires and separate and conquer as much as they can. A clear example of that is that a number of State Government departments really have policies contrary to each other, which we find difficult as council to work on. For instance, DMR seem to have different ideas and different policies from the Local Government Department. Fisheries, you cannot talk to them because they know everything. Queensland Transport seem to sit back and just cop it but do not do much about coordinating things. Really, that is what it comes back to. There is the will to cooperate at the political level, a very strong will, but we just have not got our act together. We really have not said, "This is the plan for south-east Queensland or for this region for transport, for growth management, development, and everybody should stick to it." Unfortunately, that is the problem as I see it. We need to have that very strong plan on the ground.

Cr Hayes: With funding.

Cr Santagiuliana: With funding. But if we have all the will and we put that plan through legislation, then I believe that we will go forward. But while we continue all having this goodwill, nothing actually gets done, because when it comes down to actually doing things, they have different plans, different policies.

Mr Grose: One of the most important parts of the Gold Coast City transport plan is the section on funding and the costs of implementing that plan. It is pretty clear to us that something like \$3 billion is needed over the next 30 years, and only something like \$2 billion is identified under current arrangements, leaving about a billion-dollar shortfall. Last year I took an item through my council about the need for what would be loosely termed a State fuel tax, similar to what exists in other States. Motorists in other States pay more for their petrol. Part of that money goes to the Federal Government and is then passed back to the States. The States used to levy it in their own right. That was found invalid by the High Court and it is now collected by the Federal

Government and handed back to the States. In Queensland the fuel companies collect the money and send it to Canberra; the Federal Government sends it to the State Government; the State Government gives it back to the oil companies. It is about 8c or 9c a litre that we are talking about.

Cr Santagiuliana: 8c.

Mr Grose: 8c. We thought in south-east Queensland that something like \$400m a year would be available out of that, and part of that would be collected from Gold Coast City. At that time our council—and we have since had an election and some of the councillors have changed—unanimously voted in support of putting that option forward to the State Government for consideration.

Our plan identifies the consequences of the current scenario of where we are going with the city with the growth and the transport needs and what is going to happen in the city over time if we do not start to improve it and get more use of public transport. We are not trying to stop people driving their cars; we just want to provide alternatives to them so that there is a choice that can be made, and if there is not a public transport system there that they can use, it is going to be difficult to get them to use one, and it is going to take money to do that. If the money is not there and there is a source of funding out of fuel tax that would be available, we thought it was a good thing that the State could consider.

If you think of the wider implications of it, increasing tax on the fuel would perhaps reduce the amount of fuel that is used and cut the use of cars on the roads; it would cut the environmental emissions that come from cars; it would preserve a resource that is going to run out over time—there is only a finite amount of fuel in the world, and each litre that is used is a litre that is not in the ground for use later on; it would provide money for improved public transport, better roads, road safety and so on. But the State Government rejected that because of the philosophy of no new taxes and no increases in taxes above the CPI.

It is a tax that is paid in other parts of the country. Those States and Territories have not faced economic ruin because of it. The price of petrol in Queensland has changed markedly over the last 18 months or so because of other factors. The 8c that was talked about at the time would have been lost in the wash. It is paid in Sydney or Melbourne, and we are not placing this State at a disadvantage because of that, and yet we are ignoring a potential source of funding there.

Mr Croft: Just to add to that, we would not separate management and funding. Management is the management of finances. If the IRTP, in presenting a very good integrated solution to the way we should take south-east Queensland forward, identifies a funding shortfall, the first action is to make sure that we use the moneys we have got better, and there is evidence that we are not doing that, particularly at the low level local bus operators and so on. If you wanted to get more people into buses out of cars, you could do much more for much less than building a great deal of infrastructure. So if there was to be a defined shortfall in funding over the 15 years—it is less than that now—that the IRTP is looking forward to, the first management obligation is to make sure that we are doing as best we can with the money we have, and making sure that, in that, we satisfy our social justice obligations first. That would be Logan's claim, that your first obligation is to improve life for those who otherwise cannot do that.

Mr Deutscher: I think what Bill is saying seems to be the case, that we are not going to get the money; the shortfall is going to be there, and it is about prioritising. We have seen the situation with GST where it does apply to a bus fare, so bus fares will go up under GST and petrol should stay the same price in all parts, including south-east Queensland. There has not really been any objection to that in the community. So these things about raising taxes and things to support public transport have been around for a number of years, and they do not really seem to get a guernsey in actually getting done in Queensland. So it is important that we get the planning and coordination right. I think we have heard today about what role local government can play, and particularly because they control town planning, they control parking, they control urban sprawl. There is simply no point in local government saying to State Government, "Public transport is your problem", and there is no point in State Government saying to local government, "You are not doing enough for town planning." It is just a circular argument. If management arrangements were to be changed, you certainly would not want some centralised public transport agency in George Street deciding what was going to happen behind Noosa for public

transport. It would need local government involvement in the management of that public transport commission.

The CHAIRMAN: Any further input from our councils?

Mr Taylor: Following on from issues about pricing, road pricing, fuel taxes, the need to get extra funding, the problems of the existing transport system are recognised by Government, but I do not know how well they are recognised by the community itself. Everyone wants everyone else to use public transport, but I like to still use my car. In Ipswich, the planning scheme certainly encourages high density residential development around public transport nodes, around district centres, walkable communities, yet that sort of high density residential development is less than 5% of the current housing market. The demand for housing is still on the urban fringe. People still seem to want to choose lifestyle aspirations which require one or two cars to meet those, and they do not see anything necessarily wrong with that.

There is the issue I think Councillor Hayes raised, that it may be socially unacceptable to have single-occupant vehicles. I do not know whether the community sees that as socially unacceptable, but that social unacceptability of it, I think, needs to be brought out to the community so the community understands why it is socially unacceptable before we see major changes in terms of where people choose to live. If they see, by choosing to live on the urban fringe, the problems that they are causing for the whole community, then the community and perhaps political acceptance of what are currently seen as perhaps more draconian funding measures through road pricing and increased fuel taxes may get a higher degree of acceptance by the community.

Cr Hayes: I think that is a very insightful little comment, because there is no doubt that we are rapidly approaching the area where it is not just going to be education and encouragement; we are going to have to introduce Government settings which discourage the use of the car, and that might be addressing costs of parking, road pricing, making clear the real cost of car usage. In political terms, all of those things are what Sir Humphrey would certainly call very brave decisions, so we really have to look very carefully at them, but I think that the future of south-east Queensland is beginning to demand them.

Cr Santagiuliana: I would like to make one more comment about waterborne transport if I could. Our shire is in a unique position. We have, as I have said, 9,000 permanent people living offshore and they require transport. Water transport is no different from bus transport, but it is treated differently. I do not think Queensland Transport knows that these people exist. The facilities are really antiquated. I do not know whether members have travelled on ferries in Indonesia, but we would welcome those ferries to operate out of Moreton Bay.

I would ask the Committee to think about that problem and to consider water transport. There do not seem to be many regulations. A lot of the current operators are most skilled at stealing passengers off one another—and I mean stealing them off the jetty. They do not pay much towards infrastructure. There is very little infrastructure, except the one provided by council and a little by Queensland Transport.

Brisbane port authority seems to have the say in what happens in our section of Moreton Bay, yet I bet it would not have spent \$1 during the last 10 years on anything down there. Recently we brought to their attention a vehicular barge ramp that was being used that was dangerous. It had been dangerous for quite some time. The authority came down and closed it. That seems to be the only action that it takes.

I urge the Committee to treat particular passenger ferries in the same way that bus licences are treated. Because that is what it is; a bus on the water. We should license those operators in the same way that buses are licensed. We should not allow people to just start up a service and do as they please.

Mr Way: I would like to make one comment in closing to reinforce the five-year rolling program for public transport infrastructure. We have heard a lot about funding issues and the role of local government in terms of funding. From Logan Council's point of view, we strongly resist the view that council has an obligation in terms of cost for operations, but we do acknowledge the infrastructure side of things. That is one of the issues that we find frustrating in having a plan in place so that we can marry our infrastructure requirements or commitments to what is being done at other levels. I think it reinforces what has been said around the table on issues such as

coordination. We are all in this together. If we can all operate in a coordinated and integrated way, local government can probably play a greater role in ensuring that its infrastructure provision coordinates far better.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure you are right there.

Ms Knight: Madam Chair, if I could make one last comment. We need to look at funding innovative options for hinterland areas, especially given the fact that Noosa Shire has a population cap which it expects to reach in 2007. Once that is reached, we will still have a significant population in the hinterland area that will not be seen as commercially viable in terms of public transport.

For the reasons that have come out around this table, we need to look at what other funding options are available to smaller communities, given that private bus companies even in 10 years' time will still be able to use the same arguments. That argument applies only where land is available for people to move to. Whilst you will get an increase in the hinterland areas, it will probably never be seen as a viable population base for any commercial operator.

Youth unemployment, youth suicide and access by the elderly to services are all issues that are going to become chronic. They are chronic now, and they will only get worse if we concentrate only on public transport in our major centres without acknowledging innovative options for hinterland areas.

Mr Grose: In the Gold Coast we have some areas which are on the fringe of urban development. I know the Committee has received submissions from Studio Village and people from Helensvale indicating the disadvantage that those people face. They are not the wealthy silvertails from Broadbeach and Main Beach; they are average working people. There are young people who are too young to drive cars. They need access to entertainment, apprenticeships and so on. The lack of public transport in that area is a chronic problem.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for your contribution today. I think local government does have a big role to play and I am not referring to funding. You do have a big role to play because you have the hands-on knowledge of what is required in your areas. You have the ability to play a coordinating role between private operators and the State to highlight the needs in your own areas.

Coming from local government, I think land use planning is extremely important. It is becoming more important because more and more people are wanting to move further out of the cities and the built-up areas into outer areas. A lot of them, once they get there, decide they want facilities that are available to people in the centre of the city. They do not want just the provision of public transport but a lot of other services. Local government has to decide where it is going to allow development for residents in the future. Thank you very much for your attendance today and for your contribution to our inquiry. It is very valuable.

The Committee adjourned at 11.17 a.m.

The Committee resumed at 11.49 a.m.

IAN DOUGLAS SCHMIDT, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: I welcome Mr Ian Schmidt. Could you please provide the Committee with your position in the department?

Mr Schmidt: I am employed as the Director of the SEQ 2001 Regional Resource Unit in the Department of Communication, Local Government and Planning and Sport.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to give us an opening statement perhaps outlining the SEQ regional planning project?

Mr Schmidt: Certainly. My intention was to speak to the submission that has already been made. I will address those issues. SEQ 2001 commenced in 1990 as a result of concerns about the high population growth being experienced in south-east Queensland. There had been strong population growth in this region for the last 20-25 years, but in 1990 or thereabouts that population growth started to cause concerns. An expression we use is that it had "broken through the comfort zone". People were starting to feel uncomfortable about how to manage the impact of that growth.

At that time some population projections were produced which indicated that the population in south-east Queensland would grow from just under two million people to about three million between 1990 and 2011. The more recent population figures from the 1996 census indicate that those population predictions are still reasonably valid. It is expected that there will be a slight decrease, but only by about 60,000 or 70,000 people at this stage. We will still reach a population of around about three million by the year 2011.

As a result of the concerns of population growth, the Queensland Government at the time convened a growth management conference in December 1990 and invited representatives from all Governments and various community sectors to discuss the issue. The outcome of that conference was that there was agreement that work would be done in a collaborative way between all Governments and the community and business sectors to produce a framework for managing the growth. There was no suggestion that the growth would stop or be curtailed, but we needed to have a rational way in which it could be managed. So that was the outcome from the conference.

The next year the Government set up a task force which was funded by both State and local governments to the tune of just over \$2m. It was staffed by a range of people seconded from State and local governments and consultants. Between 1991 and 1994 a considerable amount of policy work was done on the impact of population growth. A range of modelling was done on how that population increase might be accommodated in the region in a way which would cause the least environmental damage and provide the most efficient and orderly settlement pattern that we could have. We wanted to accommodate the population growth without destroying our environment, but we also wanted a compact settlement pattern which could be readily serviced by public transport.

The major planning output of the SEQ 2001 project is a document entitled the Regional Framework for Growth Management. I have the latest copy here. It was produced originally in 1994. During 1994 and 1995 it was subject to some further refinement at the subregional level. Then in 1995 the document was slightly amended and reproduced as a regional framework for growth management. It was endorsed by the Government of the day as the primary regional planning strategy for south-east Queensland to which all agencies would have regard for planning, budgetary and infrastructure decisions.

In effect, the original framework was a non-statutory document. It was developed on a collaborative basis between the State, local government, the Commonwealth and the community sector. It sets the scene for how we would envisage south-east Queensland looking in about the year 2011 in terms of where the population would be accommodated, what would be the major centres, what critical environmental areas would be protected, and those types of things.

The program has undergone a number of reviews since 1995. It was reviewed in 1996 and we added an update to it which, in effect, was to prepare an economic development strategy for the region to support the framework. That work has been completed. I should also say that in 1996 all Governments in the region—the State Government, the Commonwealth Government and 17 of the 18 local governments—signed a memorandum of agreement acknowledging the

importance of the document and agreeing to implement the actions out of it. We have recently tested that through our regional coordination committee which oversees the project. The view of the coordination committee is that that MOA is still valid and everybody is still committed to its implementation.

As I said, the document contains a range of sections which, when brought together and integrated, establish a pattern of settlement which, as I said, protect—and these are the broad principles of the project—our environmental areas. They seek to increase employment growth so that the region does not have an economic development process of just fuelling itself on the growth, but broadens its economic base. We have a distribution of employment so that it is not all continuing in the city centre of Brisbane or the periphery of the Brisbane city centre.

We have a number of nominated key centres in the region which we are looking to support to assist that. The other principles would be that we would attempt to increase housing choice and density. Increasing density is an important part of it, but it is not saying that people should not have a housing choice. However, where appropriate—and particularly around the key centres and transport interchanges—we should try to increase density which will make for more use of public transport. I should say that the whole document has the thrust of trying to reduce private car use and to have a settlement pattern which is supported by public transport.

The program has continued. It is overseen by a regional coordination committee which meets on a two-monthly basis. The chair of that committee is the Minister for Planning. Other State Ministers include the Minister for Families, the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Environment and Heritage. There are four senior local government representatives from the region and the chair of the subregional organisation of councils, the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, and the chair of our non-Government advisory committee also sits on the committee. The committee's role is to oversee the development, monitoring and implementation of the original framework. As I say, that work has continued since 1994.

We are currently updating the actions. Last year we undertook a review of those management arrangements in relation to the regional coordination committee, and that was publicly advertised. From the submissions and the comments which were received it was discovered that people felt that it was working well. They recommended a couple of changes. One was that we should have the Minister for Families on the committee, and that has since happened. Another recommendation was that we should have a better consultation process with the indigenous community. We now have the indigenous sector represented on our advisory committee.

In summary, I guess we could say that, as it has been endorsed, it is an indicative plan. It is non-statutory. It sets parameters for how we would like to see the region developed over the next 15 to 20 years. The other point I would like to make is that, although it is a non-statutory document, under the Integrated Planning Act it is now recognised as a regional dimension which, in effect, means that all local governments are required to coordinate and integrate the policies and actions in their local planning schemes.

We undertake what we call an implementation audit of actions each year. The outcome of that has been that, by and large, we feel that all the agencies which are responsible for actions under the framework are undertaking significant work, as are local governments.

I guess the last comment I would make about the framework is that it is supported by a number of other strategies which take the work down to a more detailed level. The principal one is the Integrated Regional Transport Plan. There are strategies in relation to the south-east Queensland air quality strategy which has been produced and is being implemented. There is also a water quality strategy for the greater Brisbane area which is now being implemented. We have an open-space strategy, which is now called the regional landscape strategy, which is being implemented. There are a range of supporting strategies which are primarily about taking it down to another level.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Having said all that, from the planning perspective how important is an efficient and effective public transport system for the development of the region?

Mr Schmidt: I guess from our perspective it is highly important. We would say that an efficient public transport system is important in its own right for a whole range of social and justice issues in terms of allowing people to move about—particularly people in the lower socioeconomic

areas. I guess, bringing it back to our planning policies, the policies are broadly designed to encourage public transport. Perhaps I could answer your question by saying that public transport is important in terms of such matters as trying to reduce problems with air pollution, congestion and the associated health and economic costs that go with that, and allow people to move about. I guess there is a whole range of other issues. If we look at other cities overseas we see that the private motor car has become the ruler of the road.

We have included in our documents, as I said, a range of policies which include increasing housing densities to encourage public transport. We have a policy adopted for major centres which is intended to encourage the development of major Government agencies and employment nodes so that people who are living around those areas are close to their employment and are not travelling long distances. The settlement pattern recommends that we have four major residential areas within the region. Those are the Gold Coast, the greater Brisbane area, the western area out towards Ipswich and the Sunshine Coast. Public transport is an important part. We have tried to get the relationship between where people live and where they work working better so that we can reduce travel whilst at the same time providing people with the alternative of using public transport to get to their destinations.

Mr HOBBS: From the point of view of the Department of Local Government, what are the major problems that you see in the south-east Queensland area? What is the priority of those problems that we should be addressing?

Mr Schmidt: Our major concern is that if we have a continuing increase in population, and if we follow the trends in terms of the use of private motor vehicles, those relationships will continue to escalate—the more people, the more people we have in private motor cars making single occupancy trips. I guess that is the broad issue. If we have a do-nothing situation, we just increase the population and we increase the number of vehicles on the road. As we know, that is going to create a whole range of issues about congestion and the problems associated with that.

An issue we have concern for is that we need to contain the development areas and avoid urban sprawl. The further that people move out from the cities and the major key centres, the further they have to travel to their employment. Without restricting people's options in terms of where they live—and rural residential is obviously an option—we would be looking to contain the residential areas.

Some other research has shown that public transport services become more difficult when people move further away from the centre of the city into areas where populations are less dense. That is clearly an issue in the outer parts of our region. They are issues about which we would be concerned. Similarly, there are issues in relation to some of the public transport that is being provided to the major employment areas in the outer parts of Brisbane. There are some issues that are related to public transport services to the Sunshine Coast which are now being looked at.

In summary, we would support the work that is being done under the regional transport plan and the more recent Vision 2007 which identifies a whole range of those matters. By and large, we would generally support those as being the major issues. As I said at the start, the major issue for us is that we need to have some policies which will change the trend of more people, more cars. I guess that is the major issue for us.

Mr HEALY: I know you have identified those problems, but coming up with recommendations to address them is the most difficult thing from the department's point of view. Is there anything there that we should be concentrating on at the moment to try to address some of those issues?

Mr Schmidt: I guess from our point of view we have invested heavily on the development of the regional transport plan and the plans that have been prepared by the Transport Department. I certainly support the actions and proposals that they have. The integrated regional transport plan was developed to achieve broader outcomes of the original framework for growth management. We have had a large input into those and we are very supportive of them.

Perhaps I could make three or four suggestions which we think would help provide better public transport. Firstly, we need to continue to work on implementation of the actions and strategies in our regional framework. I think that that sets the overall pattern of development for the region. I think it is important that we try to achieve that. We need to continue to work on

implementing those. We are doing some very good work on that, and I think it needs to continue. I think we particularly need to support the measures that reduce urban sprawl and increase densities in appropriate areas, particularly around the key centres and the transport interchanges.

Mr HEALY: It is nice to have a broad statement like that, but it comes down to the individual local authorities approving those developments. What role can the department play to try to influence those councils to look for a better option?

Mr Schmidt: We have set the scene in the sense that our regional framework actually contains a growth settlement map. It is an indicative map in terms of the areas that we think should be developed which will have least detriment to the whole region. Local governments have adopted this document. Two things are happening. One is that local governments are now required to prepare new planning schemes under the Integrated Planning Act. They are using our regional framework as the context for that. So they are taking that settlement pattern as a context for that.

The second point is that the document and the strategies are adopted by local governments and have to be incorporated into their planning schemes, because the document has now been recognised by the Integrated Planning Act. In terms of the process of local governments developing planning schemes in which they would include areas for future residential development, those plans are subject to being signed off by the planning Minister on behalf of the State Government as having all of the State and regional interests incorporated. Part of our planning department role would be to ensure that local governments are in fact only moving towards extending, if necessary, residential areas that fit within the broad indicative growth settlement pattern.

The other thing we have been working with local governments on, and it is now probably more possible, is that a number of local governments have very large areas of rural residential land. I understand that some local governments have rural residential lands zoned which would last for 140 years. There are enormous amounts of land where people could in fact move which is part of that urban sprawl. I am not saying that we should do away with all of that. I have said a couple of times that our policies are about choice. People need to have choice. However, we would certainly be encouraging local governments with those large areas zoned for rural residential to look at zoning back some of that land.

The difficulties, as you know, with settlement patterns on broad fronts and outside our existing settlements are the expenses in relation to providing services to those people. The policies we have in our document cover those issues. As local governments prepare their planning schemes, those matters are reviewed by our planning department and need to be signed off by our Minister in the sense that local government has accommodated those things. That is the detail of how we would go about it.

Mr HEALY: The framework itself in 1994 was really a reaction to the increase in the population growth in south-east Queensland. Do you think the framework you have put together now which councils are adopting has led to a significant downturn in that population growth, particularly from interstate? We are now not simply making it open slather for people and for councils to accept the fact that this land is going to become available.

Mr Schmidt: No. These policies have not reduced population growth.

Mr HEALY: No, the attraction is not there, is it? In 1994 we had a huge population increase. It had been over a period of years, but it was around late 1990 through to 1993-94. We had a significant increase in our population and that put pressure on south-east Queensland in particular, the end result of which was SEQ 2001.

Mr Schmidt: I guess my answer to that is that we monitor the amount of residential land available for development. Government policy has been that we are not going to have policies which prevent populations from moving into the area per se. Capping the population has been done in some local governments. Noosa, for instance, has done that, as you are aware. The document is called A Framework for Managing Growth. It is about accommodating that growth in the best possible way to achieve our social, environmental and economic objectives. In a sense, I do not think the document is being held up and used to say, "Don't come to south-east Queensland." What it is saying is that if you come to south-east Queensland these are the sorts of areas that we will see developed as residential areas. It will be contained in that way.

Mr HEALY: It is more of a controlled situation.

Mr Schmidt: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: In developing that planning framework, was much emphasis put on not just the provision of public transport but the amount of public transport available?

Mr Schmidt: One of the early significant issues recognised in terms of how we would develop a set of integrated policies to manage the growth was that there needed to be a far better public transport system. During the time we just referred to, there were something like 1,000 people a week moving into south-east Queensland. There was a lot of discussion as to whether south-east Queensland was going to grow into another Los Angeles. Whilst that might have been emotive, it was in some ways realistic. If we do not have policies that contain the growth of private motor vehicle use, that is a distinct possibility.

One of the issues that we are aware of is that in settled areas the actual growth corridors are harder and harder to find. We have to make the most of what we have. It is much more difficult now to introduce new major transport corridors. Recognition of those types of things indicated that this whole document had to be underpinned by policies which supported a reduction in the use of private vehicles and an increase in the use of public transport. Scattered through this document in a whole range of sections are particular mentions of increasing public transport.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had a number of councils here this morning giving evidence. They have a lot of concerns about public transport in their areas. Would all of those councils have been involved in that planning framework?

Mr Schmidt: They have been. All the councils have been involved in the development of the regional framework itself, as have the business and community sections. Similar processes have been used in relation to the development of supporting strategies such as the Integrated Regional Transport Plan. One of the issues I think I mentioned before—I intended to; I may not have—is that the Integrated Regional Transport Plan recognises a shortfall of funding. Whilst that shortfall of funding is there, there is always going to be some lag in terms of us developing optimal transport systems. From our perspective, we would like to look at ways in which we could find that funding shortfall. That is for policy debate at a higher level, but that is certainly going to be an issue if we are always going to have that shortfall. The other issue that we need to deal with is to look at those particular outer lying areas. It is an issue in many ways of economics. How can we provide public transport for those areas in terms of what funding is available?

The CHAIRMAN: It is not just a matter of funding. What we are hearing is that there is a lack of coordination in better using the services we already have. I was interested to know whether there was much work done on regional planning with regard to where public transport should be going in the future.

Mr Schmidt: I apologise if I am repeating myself here, but our principle objective was to get a settlement pattern which would best accommodate the population growth and which we felt had the best opportunity of being able to provide that public transport to reduce those other impacts in relation to air quality, congestion and so on. The work that has been done in more detail has been done by the Integrated Regional Transport Plan. That has looked at the whole region and subregions. Whilst I have not been intimately involved, I am aware that they have looked at each of those subregions in some detail as to how they can improve public transport in those areas.

Mr HOBBS: In relation to the regional growth framework you talk about, are councils obliged to comply with that? Is there any indication that some might not? They are all signed up, but what if they break away?

Mr Schmidt: Firstly, prior to the Integrated Planning Act, when it was purely on a voluntary and cooperative basis, we have found that councils were complying with it by and large. As I indicated earlier, now that the document is recognised as a regional dimension under the Integrated Planning Act, there is now the requirement for our Minister to sign off that these regional dimensions have been incorporated in the planning scheme. The third monitoring process we have is that local governments have agreed and comply with an annual audit of implementation in relation to the actions. They are giving us information in terms of what they are

doing with those. Our view is that, by and large, they are, but there are also some other ways in which that can be monitored.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions, that concludes the Committee's questions for today. Is there anything further you would like to add?

Mr Schmidt: I think I have said all I need to. Thank you. I wish you well.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming. Thank you for your input into the inquiry.

JON CHARLES DOUGLAS, examined:

COLIN DAVID JENSEN, examined:

PHILLIP WILLIAM STAY, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: I welcome representatives from the Department of Main Roads. Would you please state your positions.

Mr Douglas: I am currently Acting Manager, Traffic Management.

Mr Jensen: I am the Executive Director of Strategic Policy.

Mr Stay: I am the Director of Programs Development.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to begin with an opening statement?

Mr Jensen: Certainly, just a brief statement. As the Committee is well aware, Main Road's role in public transport is really one of a support agency within the Transport portfolio. We work with Queensland Transport in terms of integrated planning and then respond in terms of the road infrastructure required to meet that. Importantly, the road network is not just about public transport. It is just one component of our business. We also have to deal with the freight transport task and private vehicles as well.

In addition, it is obviously a Statewide focus. We are not just in south-east Queensland. We must balance the competing objectives across the State. That is as much the difficulty of the task as the integration between the different modes. Also, in terms of finances we have to balance across those priorities a limited budget which is applied to where the greatest good is achieved, consistent with the multiple range of objectives we are trying to achieve in each of the regions.

Certainly we consider the public transport targets in south-east Queensland out of the IRTTP ambitious and visionary, but it is necessary to actually set a target which cannot be achieved in the short term, but which can be aspired to in terms of actually trying to get some behavioural change and trying to get some shift towards them. Indeed, our planning is actually done as if those targets will be achieved. So all of our planning in terms of road infrastructure delivery is targeting against those IRTTP targets. We not only strongly support them; we are extremely hopeful that they will be achieved, or else we are not actually investing significantly into the network.

Mr HEALY: I know that it is a pretty broad question, but what does the department see as the main problems with the south-east Queensland public transport system? Can you put them into some sort of priority order?

Mr Jensen: It is a broad question. Certainly, as I said in my opening, it is not our prime focus. To state what I am sure you have read in many of the submissions and heard from many of the people who have appeared before you, mass transit works best where there is a commonality between the origin and the destination of the travel. Certainly in mass transit, the focus then needs to go on to integration of those services to achieve the best objective.

One of the problems, we believe, is in terms of ensuring that, within the public transit that is being provided, we do achieve that integration—not just with the hard infrastructure but also the soft, the services. We have a particular focus towards delivering towards that, but it is something we can only assist in achieving.

Also, I suppose, it is important that the actual operations are well managed within the public transport services themselves, so that there is integration not just from the planning, where I believe there is a prime focus, but also down to the actual operations, between the different components that make up a complicated transport system.

Lastly, whilst mass transit works best between mass movements of common origins and destinations, that is not the whole problem. Indeed, there is also the need to deliver some flexible, lower volume transport solutions. I believe that is a particular challenge, in addition.

Mr HEALY: Given those problems, do you have any recommendations on how to address them?

Mr Jensen: It is not in Main Roads' prerogative to make particular recommendations, but perhaps I can give some insights into where those solutions may come from. The first, as I have said, is a high quality integrated public transport service that can actually target the mass transit

problem. I mentioned in the opening that we are actually targeting towards the IRTP percentage market share being achieved. So we are relying on great numbers of commuters being removed from the road system as such and put into road based public transport or non-road based public transport.

We are seeking, I suppose, a reliability focus in terms of the consumer and a consumer focus in its own right, to make sure that we are actually delivering against what the users require rather than what the operator wants to provide. Also, we are seeking to get integrated service provision up from a project level to the planning level. That is, I suppose, the underside of the iceberg. That is where a great deal of activity has to occur, but it is not actually seen until it is delivered in either an infrastructure solution or a service.

Another issue is land use and transport management. Rather than just trying to focus on the problem, let us try to get back and look at a solution upstream a bit. So we need to start to get some land use solutions—indeed, as a whole-of-Government activity, not just in the Transport portfolio. You would be aware that there is a great deal of focus emerging on that, to try to remove some of the transport task. Also, there are several measures that are applicable in terms of just straight transport demand management.

Finally, I mention the behavioural aspects of transport. Most commonly we tend to see the infrastructure solutions and we tend to look at how people are using services, but there are some significant behavioural changes that need to occur. Part of that is the recognition of the role of public transport by the consumer.

Ms NELSON-CARR: How important is this high quality, effective and efficient public transport system to south-east Queensland's roads? I would imagine that private vehicle travel has a big impact.

Mr Jensen: As I said, Main Roads is actually targeting the amount of transport that would be generated after the public transport targets have been achieved, which still means something like in excess of a 50% growth in the transport task on roads. So even at that level it is a significant increase. The transport demand increase is very significant. Allowing for the achievement of the IRTP targets, we are still left with a major challenge in relation to the road system.

In addition I would like to put a slightly different emphasis on that challenge. Whilst the scope of your hearings is actually to talk about public transport and the implications in south-east Queensland, the significance also is that we are trying to provide a road system that will also feed the economy through freight transport, for example. We are trying to provide a balance. That leads into questions about how you actually provide that and in what areas you provide that. I come back to my comments about needing to plan up front as to how to get the freight task satisfactorily managed without negatively impacting through congestion. Yet that very congestion might actually be one of the behavioural change mechanisms which assists people to get on to public transport.

The other component of what we have in terms of the public transport versus private transport aspect in south-east Queensland is that we believe there is an element of planning a road system which actually encourages usage in conjunction with the integrated public transport service. I stated before that a line haul mass transit solution is desirable and in some ways easier to achieve in transport operations, but the road system needs to form a part of that to aid that to occur, rather than be in direct competition with it. We believe we are doing that at the integrated planning level, before we get to projects.

Mr HEALY: You might not have these figures with you, but I am trying to gauge the balance, say over the last five years, between the amount of money spent on road maintenance and the amount of money that has been spent to boost road capacity. We may even get you to provide some of those figures to the Committee, if you could—say, from 1994-95 to 1998-99. We would like to know roughly what the amounts were—the balance between maintenance and boosting road capacity with new roads. From your point of view, is the balance correct, particularly in south-east Queensland at the moment? If it is not correct, are there ways we should be challenging that balance?

Mr Stay: The Committee may be aware that the Public Works Committee has just had an inquiry into road maintenance in Queensland. It has certainly gone through that whole issue.

Whilst I do not want to go into the details of its recommendations, I think generally everyone would accept that more is needed for road maintenance. However, funds are competed for between capital works and maintenance of the existing asset. In south-east Queensland, just for this particular year, I see that maintenance will be about 13% and, subsequently, 87% for—

Mr HEALY: We are dealing mainly with south-east Queensland. Is that a Statewide figure?

Mr Stay: No, that is for south-east Queensland. Maintenance is much higher in the remainder of the State.

The CHAIRMAN: Thirteen per cent of what? Do you know the figures?

Mr Stay: For this current year it is around \$560m for south-east Queensland.

Mr Jensen: Obviously we will come back to you with some figures specifically about the south-east Queensland cash flows. In advance of those figures, there is a slight difficulty in terms of an apples and apples comparison with what you would determine to be maintenance and what we would call maintenance. Part of that is to actually do with ordinary maintenance, or maintenance that just keeps the road surface intact, versus the planned expiry of the life of the road. So there are two components to that and we will try to put that in simple terms to try to make the comparison as complete as possible.

Mr Stay: The other factor, of course, is that the Pacific Motorway is nearing completion. Of course, there is still funding this year for that project which, once again, distorts that particular figure. We will look at the past five years and give you those trends.

Ms NELSON-CARR: So in finding the right balance between the different transport investments, can you tell us how the transport funding cake is divided between Main Roads and Queensland Transport and between roads and public transport? Is there a process to check that there is a correct balance?

Mr Jensen: I will attempt to answer the question at two levels, perhaps. At the first level I will explain the planning task in terms of the desire to have the correct balance in investment between public transit—and the question there is the amount into services versus infrastructure—and the road systems. Then of course the question comes back to the amount of money going into capital works versus maintenance of the existing \$22 billion asset throughout the State.

To start with, the integrated planning task actually occurs long before anyone actually sees a road project or a busway or a heavy rail extension. That planning task is what I was referring to as the hidden part of the iceberg. Main Roads and Queensland Transport within the portfolio undertake that integrated planning task. Indeed, there are many cases throughout the State where we are not stopping at the level of whether it should be a road based solution or a transit based solution. Queensland Transport actually assists Main Roads by continuing in some of that planning activity after something has been determined to be a road based solution. Such is the level of cooperation at a regional level—I am applying this across the State and not just to south-east Queensland—that the solutions are taken down to exploring road based and non-road based solutions.

In terms of the way that investment then occurs, you called it slicing the cake, and I think that is not a bad analogy in that it is a very finite sized cake—it always will be—and we look for opportunities in terms of private sector involvement, not just in public transport but also in the roads case.

Taking that down one level in terms of looking then at whether there is a transport budget which is allocated between the two cases, it is a matter of the way CBRC decides to approach that year by year or Government by Government. Our current case is one where both agencies within the portfolio have considered our 10-year financing requirements. Obviously I cannot go into too much detail in terms of a CBRC submission. To keep away from the policy component of it, the actual application of that is to say, "Here are the road based requirements"—not just in south-east Queensland, unfortunately, but across the State—"and here are the public transit based solutions." It extends into maritime services and the like as well. We then look at the comparative needs. Unfortunately, when you add up all of the needs the dollars will not be sufficient to address those, and so some policy decisions are made as to which ones to target in the current Budget cycle.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Are you operating from a formula? If another region needs something more than somewhere else, where the money has been allocated, can you relocate that funding?

Mr Jensen: Obviously I can only respond for Main Roads in terms of Main Roads as an agency. There is not a formula as such to allocate funds between regions in the State. A comparative assessment of needs across the State is done. That is the future needs, not current. Even with maintenance, it is not actually a case of walking the road network and determining maintenance needs. It is actually predicting when maintenance is occurring. The Public Works Committee recently looked at that. We will try to provide a summary of those results as well for the Committee's purposes.

There is one aspect, I suppose, which is like a formula in terms of allocating funds throughout the region. Put simply, to make a shift of funds where there has been a historical level of funding in a local community for roads purposes, it is practically extremely difficult to go and change that, as you are well aware just from your own constituencies.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Has it ever happened in Queensland?

Mr Jensen: It has, yes. It often happens, I would have to say. It occurs with two major constraints. One is in terms of what the community expectations and needs are in the short term, as opposed to our longer term horizons, and the second is employment needs—not just for the roads and transport construction services unit work force but also for the local government work forces, who do a large amount of roadworks throughout the State, and for the private sector, which does a large amount of roadworks throughout the State.

Indeed, as Phil just mentioned with the Pacific Motorway project being a special initiative now being near the end of its delivery, it is a real issue to look at the way the construction industry responds in south-east Queensland. If I could take that as a very large example, which obviously is offset by other capital works programs in south-east Queensland, and then translate it to any smaller community throughout the State, we have to be very careful that we do not make rapid shifts of funds in any one area without being very mindful of the consequences of it. Consequently, the easiest way to shift funds is in any growth capital. So if there was any, for example, special initiative funding that I just mentioned for different cases, that is a mechanism by which an extreme need can actually be met from additional funds. A rural example might be to progress the sealing of road to Cooktown, accelerating that work.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Thanks for that.

Mr HEALY: In your opinion, does the current planning for the SEQ region, as it is embodied in the IRTP, provide the correct balance between infrastructure-based transport solutions and the other what could be called softer options, such as the investment in better public transport services or ticketing systems or better education or better promotion of public transport? It is probably a Dorothy Dixier for someone from Main Roads, because you obviously think the balance should be tipped in your favour, but is the balance right there?

Mr Jensen: I would not call it a Dorothy Dixier in terms of—no, that is not actually my response. You mentioned it as a balance between—I will just call it soft and hard, so infrastructure and non-infrastructure solutions, hard and soft respectively. It is a balance, and it is actually one which has to be done jointly. I do not believe you can implement infrastructure without actually looking at the service commitments to it. It would be farcical to construct a railway line and not run services on it, to quote a flippant example of that. If you took that down to some more specific case examples, I think the initiatives in terms of integrated ticketing, for example, to make the use of the system easier from the consumer's point of view, as well as the many agency sort of benefits that come from it from operations, which is obviously quite out of my depth of knowledge now, I believe that that sort of initiative is actually well placed and getting the balance between improving infrastructure so that services can be run efficiently and actually supporting it.

I suppose an example of it from Main Roads' point of view would be: over the last few years we have implemented, with Brisbane City Council, a number of joint initiatives to do with traffic management. It goes under the banner of traffic management, but the focus has been trying to improve many of the transit services. For example, on the Gympie Road corridor, which is our component of the road system leading into the city, and then the Lutwyche Road/Bowen

Bridge Road corridor system, we have jointly put in place bus stop information signs. Those information signs actually, I suppose, interestingly, fulfil two purposes. One is: if you arrive at a bus stop on schedule and then a minute later you are wondering whether you missed the bus or whether it came on time, it actually precisely tells you not the scheduled information but where the bus really is, so how soon it will arrive at the stop. That reliability factor, I think, is extremely important in the use of any system, and I can apply it to using the western Queensland road system. To know whether the road is open or not due to flooding is another initiative that we have been doing lately.

So back to public transport, in terms of those sorts of improvements, it is actually something which still diverts funding; it is still going to take money. I will not pretend that those sorts of soft initiatives are actually going to be cheaper than infrastructure solutions in many cases, but I think they provide a valid balance to it to provide both solutions.

Mr HEALY: We seem to have the balance right as far as the planning for this region is concerned, as pertaining to what the IRTP embodied, if you like.

Mr Jensen: I suppose stepping back a level, in terms of talking about actual projects, I could quote many projects which actually, I think, help with the balance. In terms of what the IRTP specifically says, I suppose the way that Main Roads would view the IRTP is that it is actually a living document. It has actually been published some time in the past. That is not actually the way that we use the IRTP; more so the IRTP I would describe as a conversation between Main Roads and Queensland Transport. So in developing the Roads Implementation Program, which is our works program and our planning program, we actually do that in consultation with Queensland Transport. It actually drives out of that high-level planning I was talking about earlier down into particular solutions. Queensland Transport inputs to the development of that, and then that is our public statement of what we are actually going to do with the road budget.

I do not want to comment about the past IRTP because, to some extent, that is not what we read. It is actually the conversation that we are having throughout the planning continuously.

The CHAIRMAN: Do your transport investments in the south-east corner conform to the objectives of the Integrated Regional Transport Plan?

Mr Jensen: I suppose the planning process is specifically designed to ensure—"conform" is an interesting word, I suppose, when you are talking about something downstream compared to an objective upstream. If you picked any individual road project, yes, you should be able to trace back the linkage between why you are doing that particular improvement through to an IRTP objective. The reason I say that you actually have to trace through the linkage is one of, I suppose, a coordinated delivery of projects in terms of I believe—and this is almost a personal belief, but it is manifest in the way that Main Roads and Queensland Transport do their participatory planning—that it is far too late to discuss a project about what you are going to deliver.

If you are trying to determine whether a single project is going to deliver your IRTP objectives, you have missed the point of the story. The point of the story is to get upstream and to say, "What package of hard and soft solutions in terms of infrastructure solutions are actually going to deliver your objectives?" So that is where the true conversation has to occur, and is occurring, to actually say, "Well, look, this package of road improvements or this package of transport solutions or this package of services, or intelligent transport system applications even, will actually deliver your objectives." When you then go and look at any one project and say, "Well, how does this fit?", you have to look at the package of projects of how it fits.

The CHAIRMAN: So there is actually no process in place that makes the department follow the plan?

Mr Jensen: No, there is. Specifically, as I said before, in terms of the Roads Implementation Program, part of the internal consultation before it goes to the Minister for approval or to Cabinet for approval, before it becomes a public document, is to do that final check-off with Queensland Transport. If there are any concerns being raised, even at a project level—and I stress that that is a long way down the planning process—if there are concerns there, they should be addressed before we actually go public with our roads program.

The CHAIRMAN: Has the government funded or supported any significant road projects in this area that were not in that plan?

Mr Jensen: The immediate response is: not one comes to mind, but if you have one that you want to discuss, I am sure we can go back and get some information on the project that you would have in mind. My answer is: no, I cannot quote you an example, but if there were concerns of the Committee in terms that they would want to see how there was a linkage, we could do that out of session in terms of tracing it back.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not have any particular project in mind. I am really looking at whether that integrated plan overrides anything else that might come in.

Mr Jensen: I come back to my earlier statement, that the IRTP itself is a living document; it is not actually a single snapshot in saying, "Well, look, that is the plan", and indeed, when you read it, it does not have that degree of detail about it, I suppose, and there was the comment earlier about: how much of the non-infrastructure component is in there versus the infrastructure component? It is a living document, and as part of that, as I called it, a conversation between the two that will actually detail how those projects emerge.

Ms NELSON-CARR: In your submission you comment on investment in public transport improvements, and you say that all improvement measures must be located where they will benefit the most people in order to attract the maximum potential ridership and deliver the best value for money. This approach also ensures that the maximum potential community support can be marshalled for continued investment in needed public transport improvements. 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. From your submission, Main Roads sees busways as an important contribution by the department to public transport. Will busways poach passengers from Citytrain, and will busways deliver taxpayers the best value for money public transport improvements in the areas that they will serve? It is a bit longwinded, sorry.

Mr Jensen: No, that is okay. I suppose, quite clearly, Main Roads is not in a position to be able to comment on the direct patronage share between a busway system and the heavy rail system or, indeed, a light rail system. That is not the depth of the planning side that we integrate to. However, I suppose a couple of observations might be useful for the Committee. One is that, particularly with any infrastructure rather than service provision, there is a degree of inability to provide the precise amount of improvement that is necessary today versus planning for the future. By that, I mean a narrow road versus a wide road, or the Bruce Highway at two lanes which needs to be widened to four lanes. Obviously you cannot put in slightly more capacity; you end up doubling the capacity by going to four lanes. The same is true in terms of public transport infrastructure; it is not possible to actually just ramp up very small improvements. So sometimes I believe that there is an implementation of something like a busway or heavy rail extension which could appear to be almost an oversupply of capacity which would be actually appropriate in the future. I cannot comment about detail, but that is an observation.

Further, in terms of the way that we would view road-based public transport solutions—so a busway versus a bus lane or a high occupancy vehicle lane, or even just improvements to traffic signals, a bus-only lane at traffic signals, or indeed a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes in terms of trying to prioritise buses through traffic signals—that is the degree by which we, Main Roads, are trying to look for examples of providing bus patronage an advantage through the road system at the lower end of the market instead of the busway system at the higher end of the market. The two are planned together, but I cannot particularly comment on the way that it interacts with the rail system.

Ms NELSON-CARR: Is that because there has not been a lot of data collected, because that is one of the issues that has been raised this morning, in that research is—not scarce, but it has not been conclusive.

Mr Jensen: Particularly about what I would call the transport modelling between the different modes?

Ms NELSON-CARR: No, just across-the-board, just generally, in that it is hard to gather data on a range of issues. So that would apply here, do you think?

Mr Jensen: I think the only way that I can usefully comment is actually to draw on my previous professional life where, indeed, I have been in terms of transport planning and transport modelling personally. Queensland has been in the fortunate position where it has highly valued over the years good data quality in terms of its planning decisions, and I would actually point you to previous High Court decisions in New South Wales where transport projects were overturned because of poor data quality. Having said that, it comes to a question of: when is enough data enough data?

My personal observation would be that household travel surveys or interview surveys of particular traveller behaviours and what drives that travel behaviour is increasingly becoming very expensive. It is not something I have been involved in for a number of years, and Queensland Transport would be better placed to directly answer the question. But as an observation, increasingly I think the way the profession is moving—and, as I stated, I have left that profession for some time now—is to start doing more targeted surveys, and to some extent I think that is confusing the marketplace a little bit as to which are the best forms of planning surveys. I can only comment as an observation because, as I said —

Ms NELSON-CARR: Observation is fine; anecdotal evidence.

The CHAIRMAN: If 87% of the road budget is being spent on increasing the carrying capacity of our roads, is the efficiency with which the region's road network is being improved contributing to the lower use of public transport?

Mr Jensen: The figure is somewhat confusing, so I will get Phil Stay to explain it.

Mr Stay: We need to clarify that that figure is out of this current RIP for this current year, and it includes also that a substantial portion of this year's expenditure for capital works in the south-east Queensland region is going to be completing the Pacific Motorway. So, unfortunately, that distorts that particular maintenance figure. As I said before, we will get a trend for the last five years and provide that to the Committee. It would be more than just that—what did we say—13%.

Mr Jensen: Sorry that we are unable to give you the figure on that, but we will come back to you with some information. The total roads budget, I suppose partly to explain the inability to answer the question on the spot, is anything from loans funds in terms of borrowings of past roads programs to accelerate works, so there are loan repayments; there are the very planning initiatives that we have been talking about in terms of investing and actually planning what the right solution should be; then there is the capital works component of it, which could be viewed as being separated then into: what of the capital works is actually a capacity improvement versus something which might be purely for safety reasons versus something which might be to actually improve the efficiency at a particular intersection? So I think we will have to go away and try to give you some figures to give you some impression about what is a capacity improvement.

To come back to my earlier comment about an expected increase in traffic in excess of 50% on the road network and what we are planning to deliver in accordance with meeting the targets, that is where the level of investment is at. Indeed, we are keen to see those targets met because we have some very high priorities throughout the State that we are also not meeting. We would be keen to see some of those dollars addressing problems across the State in matching the priorities and objectives for the State, not just one component.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not concerned so much with the figure that is being spent. We have had evidence from other sources that indicate that we keep building bigger and better roads, and that is discouraging people from using public transport.

Mr Jensen: To refer back to my earlier comments, firstly, it is hard to make an incremental improvement to any infrastructure. It tends to go from something which was insufficient and inappropriate to something which, on the day that it is opened, appears to have excess capacity. So there is an element of that. Secondly, it goes through the planning process that I talked about earlier in deeming whether this is part of the package that we should be putting in place. We would tell you that it is part of the package that is necessary for the future.

Ms NELSON-CARR: With massive projects like the Pacific Motorway, which has been widened and realigned, does it encourage urban sprawl and increase separation between residential and employment locations, which is contrary to the IRTP?

Mr Jensen: At its very simplest, any transport improvement in service or infrastructure will encourage travel. The underlying component of the question is a differentiation between accessibility and mobility. In trying to strive for some form of equitable accessibility—access to the goods and services to provide for the needs of the community—it can also increase mobility. That is equally true whether we build a busway, a rail line or a road. Indeed, it applies to mobile phone services or the Internet.

In terms of the Pacific Motorway solution, it comes back to the ability to provide services in increments versus providing for the needs of the future. There is no doubt that the Pacific Motorway is a difficult project. Building on top of a heavily trafficked existing corridor means that we are not planning to go back and do it again in the near future. To build a six-lane road which will become heavily trafficked and then, whilst trafficked, have to add another lane to either side is a real factor in terms of road safety—road safety for the motorists using it and for the construction workers, which is of increasing concern in constructing in heavy traffic environments.

Mr Douglas: The motorway, as part of that planning activity, incorporated provision for high occupancy vehicle facilities. We are going to look at an intervention time at which stage you can take one of those lanes as an HOV lane from the existing carriageway and then link north. As part of the South East Transit Project, there is a 21-kilometre section of high occupancy vehicle section facilities proposed from there into the south-east transit facilities.

Mr Jensen: The Committee would be well aware that, if we were to open a high occupancy vehicle lane on the Pacific Motorway right now with four lanes where there used to be two lanes travelling in either direction, it would be counterproductive in the way that the motorist uses a high occupancy vehicle lane. There needs to be several components for a high occupancy vehicle lane to be successful or perceived to be successful by the motoring public. One is that there is a clear benefit in using the lane. There needs to be a level of congestion almost in that corridor before a time advantage becomes real. Secondly, there is an issue of enforcement. If people believe it really does not matter whether they drive in this lane or that lane, that behaviour would start to apply across all of our high occupancy vehicle lanes and transit lanes, and we are trying to push behaviour the other way.

Mr Stay: Laying some blame on roads for creating urban sprawl is a little unfair. It is a national problem. Our Government is trying to tackle urban sprawl through the Integrated Planning Act. Main Roads supports that. We do not necessarily need to be continually increasing the capacity of our roads into regional parts of south-east Queensland.

Mr HEALY: It is a funny thing, though, because it has happened before. Despite the best efforts of our planners, major projects such as the Logan Motorway eventually attracted an urban sprawl. We announce a road project and a new corridor, and people go out and protest and say they do not want it. Then they go and live beside it. It is an attraction; it is a brand new road. It is an attraction in that people want to get onto that road. Perhaps through the IRTP or some other planning mechanism we can try to prevent those people from taking advantage of this new facility by encouraging them not to go and live beside it.

Mr Stay: As Colin has mentioned previously, it is not limited to roads. If we do a rail link to the Gold Coast, people suddenly start using that. If we do a high speed rail link to Caboolture or to Rosewood, they also start using those particular modes.

Mr Jensen: You touch on an interesting aspect, that is, those that benefit should pay and those that pay should benefit. This extends far beyond transport infrastructure or transport services as a matter of Government policy. It is a debate or a discussion that we follow with great interest, but we recognise the imperatives.

Mr HEALY: Do you think private motor vehicle usage is being subsidised by Government in south-east Queensland?

Mr Jensen: To answer the question, you really have to look at all transport services. I could try to draw on some previous experiences in trying to answer that.

Mr HEALY: Has any research been done into that?

Mr Jensen: There has been no recent research across all transport modes to determine the degree of corporate taxation versus user charge being applied to transport modes. Previously, in a different professional life, I tried to do that sort of analysis. The difficulty in doing it tends to be exactly as I said: separating what is construed by Government to be a taxation

charge—for example, the Commonwealth putting a levy on fuel—and asking whether it is a taxation mechanism to raise revenue. Government must have revenue to be able to operate. Or is it a user charge which must be applied back?

The reason for making that distinction is that, if you are a motorist, a truck driver or a public transport operator and you are paying charges, levies and taxes, you can add all that up. If you try to add up on your balance sheet the environmental concerns or the road capacity you are consuming or the track time you are consuming, you might come up with something which is relatively balanced or collectively in the right ballpark. But that is only from the consumer's point of view. If you look at it from the point of view of an operator or an agency, you would say that was taxation not a user charge. It applies across all the modes of transport.

Mr HEALY: You would obviously love to see some extra funding in your budget because of the demand on Main Roads for both maintenance and new infrastructure. At the end of the day, Governments are going to have to somehow find that extra funding. If the balance is not quite right or equitable in relation to charging individual motorists for the costs of road damage, congestion and environmental impacts, it has to come from somewhere. I guess it has to come from the taxpayer, does it not?

Mr Jensen: Ultimately, rather than say the taxpayer—because I come back to my separation of user charge and tax—I would like to think it came back to the person benefiting who would contribute to the cost of providing that benefit. You would have to separate the general taxpayer in terms of a consolidated revenue picture and the amount of consolidated revenue that went into transport services. Secondly, you would have to look at the user, the person who is getting some benefit out of using the network or living closer. Thirdly, you would have to look at the person who has been negatively impacted by the transport service or infrastructure but who might not be even benefiting.

Mr HEALY: That is where ITS would come in.

Mr Jensen: Yes. I was trying to think of a simple road solution, but it is a bit hard because roads have such a high degree of connectivity. I will use a rail line as an example. As a commuter, I would love to live near a heavy rail line to give me a high-speed service to my destination. Or, to be more precise, I would like to live near the rail station, where I can get onto it to use the high-speed service to my destination. But if I live near the track, I get the noise or the inconvenience from that service but not the benefit from it. That was where I was trying to make the distinction.

You mentioned ITS. Main Roads has a strong involvement with intelligent transport systems. I am the Vice-President of ITS Australia and I have a few other roles in this area. Certainly ITS is a great enabler, but that is all it is. We must ensure that we have the right policy mix of Government and then the right planning response in terms of an integrated response before we jump into any one solution.

It is the same with all the infrastructure issues we have discussed, such as integrated ticketing, integration of services and consumer focus: ITS will be a great enabler. My own personal message about intelligent transport systems is that it is a great enabler because it acts in cohort with a lot of private sector or other interests. In other words, it is not a transport-alone solution. Some of the technologies being employed are able to be used for great benefit in some of the other applications, which means that the cost of applying them to transport solutions is significantly less.

Mr HEALY: Is the department looking at any alternative charging regimes other than ITS? Or is ITS the only broad-based road pricing regime that you are looking at?

Mr Jensen: Can I test what I hear the question as? In terms of the application of intelligent transport systems to implement a road charging system, there are alternatives. Fuel levies are a form of collecting revenue for use—efficient use or inefficient use, depending on your vehicle size. It is pretty blunt, but it is very cheap to collect because every fuel station is basically a tax collection authority. The Commonwealth then passes on or partly passes on some revenues.

With ITS, the benefit of private sector involvement is that you can act just like that but with some other non-traditional sources. Banks traditionally have reasonably high charges. If we look at the Gateway Bridge as an example with Queensland Motorways Limited, the objective of collecting the toll on that bridge is to do it efficiently. That is, it should not delay the person who is

travelling and it should not cost too much. To use a visa card, a mastercard or a debit card would be extremely expensive. Using an ITS application like electronic toll collection, for which there is a tender out currently, is more efficient. It is efficient both from the consumer's point of view, which is very necessary, and the operator's point of view.

Mr HEALY: Private sector involvement—things such as shadow tolls, which are being spoken about at the moment and which work in some overseas countries—combined with ITS may be an alternative form of funding for some road infrastructure projects which Governments unfortunately do not have the money for at the moment.

Mr Jensen: Pragmatically speaking, that is a pretty real summation. The benefit of intelligent transport systems is that it is a reasonably simple and convenient mechanism to use. It is auditable, which is very important for revenue collection, and increasingly—and 10 years ago this was a major concern—it is able to protect the privacy of the consumer. The concern in the past tended to be that anything which was added to a vehicle in order to make a payment would be used against a person, for example, "Why were you travelling on this road at this time?" Those concerns, provided you state them as a policy objective up front, are easily achieved.

⁷¹⁸ **The CHAIRMAN:** That concludes the Committee's questions for today. Is there anything further you would like to add?

Mr Jensen: I suppose we will take the opportunity to provide you with some written information in which we will try to address the nature of the consolidated questions you have been asking. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much for coming and for your input into our inquiry.
The Committee adjourned at 1.10 p.m.

The Committee resumed at 2.18 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, these hearings of the Travelsafe Committee will now resume. I welcome Mr Rex Davis.

REX DAVIS, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: For recording purposes, would you please state your name and your position.

Mr Davis: Rex Davis, ARC Research Associate, University of Queensland.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to begin with an opening statement?

Mr Davis: Yes. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee today. My opening statement is somewhat lengthy, but I would like to go over several issues stemming from the research conducted by myself and my colleagues at the University of Queensland, and the implications for the present and the future from the issues highlighted by the research.

This research generally provides percentages and spatial identification to deficiencies that any user of the public transport system already knows exist. It is important, though, to concentrate on being positive. I see the Committee's inquiry as being a potential and timely catalyst for change. The Committee can make recommendations from this inquiry that can attack the core of the public transport problem and finally begin the journey towards a system that south-east Queensland requires.

Unfortunately, before I can outline some of the solutions I need to categorise the key problems that are causing this public transport system to perform inadequately, and why the plan on the table—namely, the Integrated Regional Transport Plan—will have a minimal impact on improving public transport in the region in its current form.

Before I detail the problems, I would like to put on record that there are many reasons to be optimistic about the future of the public transport system in south-east Queensland. Firstly, over the past 10 years there has been a strong political will on both sides of the House to achieve a better public transport system. There is no greater evidence of this than the fact that the IRTP, a document which emphasises public transport as the solution to the transportation woes of the region, has been supported by the past three State Governments. Few, if any, Government policies can bear witness to that longevity.

The importance of bipartisan political will in desiring to achieve a better public transport outcome for south-east Queensland cannot be understated. I have little reason to doubt that the current Minister, the Premier and the Lord Mayor are anything less than passionate about achieving a better public transport system for the region.

Secondly, the IRTP is a document of sound planning principles which was universally accepted by local government authorities and other parties at its launch in 1997. The concept of removing piecemeal planning and limiting the past tendencies of providing road solutions to transport problems is, on face value, very admirable. The IRTP is a 25-year plan with system-oriented, modal share targets for the year 2011 which are to be achieved through a package of new transport opportunities, corridors and system improvements.

Yet, despite political goodwill, the widespread acclaim provided to the IRTP at the time of its inception in 1997, and the support of local government, the research conducted by myself and my colleagues indicates that the IRTP in its current form is destined to fail, mainly due to its inability to achieve improved public transport patronage. I see that there are five key reasons why the target indicated in the IRTP will not be achieved.

Firstly, planning in Queensland Transport is conducted from the completely wrong angle. Queensland Transport has not conducted any research into how long it takes each individual in the region to conduct the trips that their lifestyles require they undertake. To outline a plan for the IRTP you need to know how long it takes an individual residing at 3 Somewhere Street, Anywhere Heights, to undertake a trip by public transport to reach, as an example, the local medical centre, the closest hospital, the nearest convenience shopping, the nearest retail shopping or supermarket, employment nodes—not only the CBD but also local factories and other regional employment areas—the local State and private schools and universities.

This information represents the central building block from which the planning process originates. It is an intensive although by no means unachievable modelling procedure. Without

this information, there can be no methods for integrated planning in any shape or form. Intuitively, it brings into question how current plans such as the busways or light rail can be appraised without any information on the current system's performance. If we do not know how long it takes people now to conduct a variety of trip types, how can we prescribe solutions?

Second, and following from the first point, there is no process to determine what projects should be undertaken and in what order. This is one of the great failings I see in the IRTP in its current form. I have indicated in my submission that long-term plans need to be a mixture of relevant and flexible. We do not want to lock ourselves into a plan that may require us to build outdated technology. We want flexibility. However, the IRTP is so flexible that two of the first projects announced after the IRTP's release—namely, the Brisbane light rail and the City/Valley bypass—were two projects not considered essential within the IRTP when it was released in 1997.

Part of this problem relates to the lack of logic in establishing the transportation plans I mentioned earlier. However, it also indicates that the IRTP lacks significant substance to achieve its model share targets. It also belittles the concept of integration. How can a plan be long term and integrated if it is not then able to include two major inner city infrastructure projects that were not deemed priorities just two years earlier? The light rail and City/Valley bypass were not considered in 1997 and are now deemed by transport officials as being consistent with the IRTP and one of the steps being taken to achieve IRTP goals.

Third, the IRTP and, to that extent, Queensland Transport lack the answers to the other difficult questions. Too much of the plan focuses on radial trips to the Brisbane CBD. It could be argued that, apart from school transport and journey to work trips to the Brisbane CBD, the public transport system provides few other uses. How can it be a transport alternative, particularly for the disadvantaged, the poor, the disabled, the young and the old, when it only serves two transportation markets—namely, some school trips and travel to the Brisbane CBD? What if you do not need to go to the CBD? What if you are a pensioner living at Bankswood Court, Camira, and want to go and see a movie or do some shopping at the closest retail centre, the Redbank Plaza complex, which is only 10 minutes away by car? Without a car, it would take you almost 50 minutes and require two buses. Nevertheless, you are doing much better than the great mass of people who our research indicates have no public transport options at all.

Is it so important to replace the frequent hail and ride service currently enjoyed by the people of New Farm to build an expensive light rail project that will make their trip more comfortable and reduce it by a couple of minutes? Can anyone tell me that this is the most important issue in terms of achieving IRTP objectives, especially the objectives relating to a socially just transport system? If we justify the expenditure of Government subsidies on the grounds of achieving social objectives, then how do we come to the point that we cannot integrate pensioners in the outer suburbs with their local communities yet we can have prioritised a system which is servicing a gentrifying community with escalating property values? Again, I want to reiterate the point that I am not against the infrastructure projects being proposed. They are indeed an important issue with approximately 172,000 workers travelling to the vicinity of the CBD each working day.

However, apart from our pensioner in Camira, what is being done for the 147,000 workers who are located in the outer northern and southern suburbs of Brisbane or the 114,000 persons working in adjoining local government areas to the Brisbane City Council? It is this lack of planning in relation to the non-standard CBD or school trips, particularly in relation to outer suburban areas, that worries me. Research conducted by myself and others on public transport equity indicates that many of the services to many of the suburbs with the greatest public transport needs are those with the lowest level of service, and Queensland Transport has nothing up their sleeve for them. This is not a political failing but one of the bureaucracy. I am certain that members on both sides of the House are looking for better outcomes than this.

The fourth problem is the lack of accountability in assessing public transport performance. Again, I do not want to be taken out of context. I am not accusing anyone in Queensland Transport or any related body of being involved in misappropriation or corrupt behaviour. What I am saying is that there are some inherent problems in the way transport projects are assessed. Many of the contracts between Queensland Transport and service providers are hidden from view. We the public do not know what the expenditure is for and what outcomes are specified. However, the problem is more fundamental than just not being able to see what the objectives

are in service arrangements. The basic problem is that Queensland Transport and the other institutions involved in service and infrastructure delivery have it too easy in terms of professional transport expert scrutiny.

Generally, the only criticism of transportation projects comes from a mixture of community groups, who are dismissed as being dominated by people who are greenies, those with vested interests, not in my backyardists, or people misinformed and requiring education; politicians, who are dismissed as having their own agenda; and transport experts from outside of Queensland who are dismissed as Mexicans and unaware of the local nuances. You simply do not see many people who are educated in transport related fields and those who are not associated with lobby groups providing any criticism of the major transport institutions in this State. They may perceive that some of the projects or solutions being suggested are far from perfect, or may even be absurd, but who is going to attack their major client or employer? Put simply, the level of debate from transport experts in this State is stifled due to the fact that it is professional suicide to attack the major players.

The fifth and final problem is that history tells us that improvements within the existing institutional framework will be at best slow or not achieved. However, we do need to take the debate above the point where we lament the fact that we do not have integrated ticketing and zoning due to the problems of multiple levels of government and different ownership regimes. I do not buy this argument.

The Goss Government established a transit authority which had a central role in the coordination and integration of the public transport system and with quasi veto powers over major roads. The National Party opposed this, not because it was against better public transport but because it was against an increase in the bureaucracy stemming from the 45 staff taken from Queensland Transport. Since 1996, the number of staff at Queensland Transport at an AO5 level or higher has increased by over 90 positions, with most of these positions occurring, ironically, in the areas of transport planning and rail performance. While it may be argued that this may be a function of major projects such as the south-east transit busway being implemented, consultancies have also risen by over \$14.5m per annum during that period.

I have a different view to many transport experts on the issue of a transit authority. I am not against establishing a transit authority. However, with the Department of Main Roads channelled off in 1996, what is Queensland Transport if it is not a transport authority already? It funds most of the Government's subsidies in relation to public transport in the region. It is the sole source of subsidies for private bus operators and Queensland Rail. It partially subsidises Brisbane Transport. It has people liaising with local authorities. It writes plans on best land use practices and conducts long-term planning. It is involved in discussions on all new infrastructure.

So why does everyone think we need a transit authority? The answer is that Queensland Transport delivers consistent poor performance. This can be traced, in my opinion, to the department's inadequate structure. Bus contracts are examined at Transport House in the Valley and rail contracts in the city, while on an all together different floor future transport planning is occurring. The public servants of these areas will tell you about the latest public finance theory. They can discuss with you at length the paradoxes of the contestability theory, but they would not be able to inform you how the contracts they are developing improve the everyday life of south-east Queenslanders. Where is the glue that brings the entire vision together?

The department took five years to develop a service agreement with Queensland Rail. When an organisation takes five years to develop an agreement with a sister organisation that merely tinkers at the edges of system performance, then something is not quite right. With the buses being examined in one area, rail in another and future planning in a completely separate unit, then never the "train" shall meet.

I have outlined the major problems, but what can we do to fix things? I do not boast that I have all the answers, but I do believe that I know a few issues which the Committee could take up to begin the correction. I am going to list my solutions in terms of potential recommendations that could be made by this Committee. The recommendations are designed to achieve one singular outcome: turning the public transport planners around so that they focus on the individual. We want planning that makes sense and which examines how people can be made better off.

The first recommendation is to conduct the accessibility modelling in 2001 along with the new transport demand survey. Until this modelling is conducted, then the plans outlined in the IRTP do not make sense. Next year is a census period. As such, there are economies in constructing an accessibility database and a travel demand survey. These are essential tools for evaluating service delivery and the construction of new projects.

The second recommendation is to maintain the IRTP but order a revision to be completed by the beginning of 2003. The IRTP has some good underpinning, but as its planning focus is fundamentally top down, as opposed to bottom up, there are problems. An IRTP rewritten with local area plans such as those provided in the City Plan and a reassessment of the expenditure per area would also improve the IRTP. This would enable us to identify what we currently spend, the outcomes we are currently achieving, how we can utilise the existing resources better and where we need to spend additional resources to achieve better outcomes. The IRTP's identification of a funding gap for services within the region without identifying where the expenditure needs to occur is unhelpful. We need to bridge the gap. I envisage a document that identifies, suburb by suburb, current service level deficiencies and the actions required to achieve IRTP outcomes. This increases transparency. The rewritten IRTP would also have clear guidelines for project prioritisation—a true end to piecemeal announcements and the beginning at last of integration.

The third recommendation is to examine the funding of Brisbane Transport's deficit. One of the greatest impediments to Queensland Transport acting as a transit authority is the fact that it does not provide the full funding of the public transport subsidy provided to Brisbane Transport. The Brisbane City Council is being asked to put additional dollars into ensuring that the Brisbane bus system works. Currently the State Government puts in \$25m and the Brisbane City Council puts in \$40m. There is no logic as to why Queensland Transport continually aims to shift the fiscal burden on to Brisbane Transport when it is continually improving its performance. With the Brisbane City Council putting in a subsidy, there are two masters in the system. We need to ensure that the State Government is the sole bankroll of public transport subsidies and that there is no longer any excuse for not achieving integrated zoning and ticketing. Senseless bureaucratic penny pinching in this regard is the key obstacle to system integration. It is illogical and unnecessary.

My final recommendation is to organise a review into Queensland Transport's structure. Queensland Transport clearly requires change. We need to examine the department's structure to examine how better coordination and system integration can be achieved. Certainly the department needs to focus more on the achievement of outcomes. There are significant improvements, such as bringing the planning, bus and rail areas together, which are likely to prove both effective and economical. If more radical approaches are required, such as establishing a new entity, then we need to look at those, too. Without change we are in for more of the same, and the region simply cannot bear it.

Mr HEALY: Can you expand a little on one of those recommendations? That is, it seems strange that Brisbane City Council and Queensland Transport are funding one particular facet of public transport, that being Brisbane Transport, being our bus service. Are you suggesting a State-owned bus service?

Mr Davis: I am not necessarily recommending a State-owned bus service. I am recommending that the State funds the public transport deficit.

Mr HEALY: To replace the subsidies currently paid?

Mr Davis: Paid by Brisbane City Council. Unless you put that extra money in, there will constantly be the argument, "Why should we pay for it?" The issue of the Brisbane City Council subsidy is one of the key components which prevents things moving forward. If you look at the other side of the argument, Queensland Transport is saying that only \$25m is required to achieve the IRTP aims in the Brisbane City Council region. If you look at the targets relating to public transport increases, all of the emphasis is on Brisbane City. That is the main emphasis. Queensland Transport wants to increase Brisbane City's public transport modal share by 20%. It is a question of logic as well. What is the logic of not funding the full amount of the Brisbane City Council deficit?

Mr SULLIVAN: Your submission concludes in fairly blunt terms that the IRTP will not achieve the mode share targets that it set for public transport. You have given us some reasons,

but how sure can you be that it will not reach those targets? Surely the transport projects implemented by Queensland Transport since the IRTP came out in 1997 have made some difference—or haven't they?

Mr Davis: They will make some difference, but there are a couple of points to make in relation to that. Take the issue of busways. With a separate corridor you might gain some time by travelling faster than stationary cars and being away from congested roads, but that is nothing if there is a 30-minute wait for a bus, which equates to a 15-minute headway. Or it is nothing if you have to walk 750 metres to a bus stop to accommodate it.

One of the issues in that whole component is that we need to look at where these new services are being put down in terms of what people have already. Certainly most people in Brisbane City would not exactly jump up and down and say that they are doing quite well in terms of the public transport system. There are major deficiencies, certainly. You need look at the components and compare them with other areas. I spoke about the pensioner at Camira. There are far more significant problems in those areas. It is a question of priorities and what is being achieved. Certainly, a number of the projects that are being undertaken will have some impact, but most of those issues are aimed at improving the quality of the service as opposed to actually extending or improving the public transport system to meet those who do not have any at the moment.

Mr SULLIVAN: You mentioned the first reason it would not achieve its goals as being that there was no research done on the lifestyle trips. On what basis do you think Queensland Transport has made its IRTP planning recommendations?

Mr Davis: There are two points here. Firstly, before the IRTP came about there was a Roads Implementation Program, which Main Roads has always put forward as its strategic plan. It saw a series of deficiencies in the road system, and it has a prioritisation process by which it will actually deal with those. There was no public transport equivalent of that. It was already examining the bus situation from the Brisbane City Council point of view, and establishing separate corridors is a good point. But a lot of the options were not heavily appraised in any shape or form when they were initially put in. Light rail was not in the IRTP in the first place, admittedly because it was announced as a federally funded initiative, but there was no assessment as to what it would actually achieve. In fact, the last assessment of the light rail project was done in 1992 by the Urban Renewal Task Force, which was less than complimentary of its potential success.

Mr SULLIVAN: The message I seem to be getting is that, if it is going to do a project, Queensland Transport can actually do it pretty well. It can do the planning and the various assessments, et cetera. But you are saying that the initial questions—that is, whether it should be doing this project in this spot at this time for these people—are not being addressed because the real problem is that there is no or very limited public transport in the outer areas, yet we seem to be duplicating things in the inner city which is improving the quality of public transport for some people whilst ignoring the vast majority of needs, which are in the outer suburbs.

Mr Davis: Yes, very much.

Mr HEALY: I have a question about integration, which is a basic and an essential part of a successful public transport system and something that I guess we still have not got right in south-east Queensland. From your research and your experience—I understand that in a previous life you did have some experience with Queensland Transport—why has the integration of the region's public transport services not happened and how could a department allow, for example, Brisbane City Council and Queensland Rail to set up electronic ticketing systems that were different and incompatible? Why is it that bus and train services do not coordinate properly?

Mr Davis: This goes to one of the points I made about Queensland Transport's structure. When you have a situation where in one section someone is specifically and singularly looking at bus issues and in another section someone is specifically and singularly looking at rail issues and then on a totally separate floor in a totally separate area someone is looking at the future of the system, it is not hard to see how it comes about that we are not looking at issues of where buses should meet rail stops.

For example, the bus and rail contracts are specifying particular patronage increases, but a lot of what they are trying to achieve is out of the control of the actual service operators.

Improving certain things requires coordination or integration on particular components. I think the fact that they are singularly looking at the one component in terms of the buses or in terms of the rail, as opposed to the system altogether, leads to the problems.

Another problem is that issue I raised in relation to the funding arrangements. It is very easy to see how arguments between the council and the State Government occur when there is a funding arrangement such as is the case, because they spend so much time saying, "We are not going to pick it up." The only person who misses out in that situation is the user of public transport.

What happened in terms of electronic ticketing in 1995 I am not sure, but it certainly was a great tragedy that there were machines installed that do not work. It is not the case that I can take the two-zone public transport ticket I have in my pocket and use it on the rail system. So this afternoon when I go home to Shorncliffe I will be taking the 407 to town, walking up to Central Station and buying a separate ticket. If you look at the price of the tickets between the two areas—on one mode of transport I am travelling some 20 kilometres—usually you find that the rail ticket is cheaper than what works out to be the case for going to the university over two zones.

Mr SULLIVAN: Where around the world have you seen good public transport systems for a comparable size city? I do not want examples that sometimes get thrown up to us like Hong Kong, Singapore and the Netherlands, which, because of their high density, simply do not equate to something like the Australian or south-east Queensland scenario. Where are some successful areas that do have a good public transport network that are comparable to Brisbane?

Mr Davis: I am not avoiding the question, but this is one of the arguments that I have been contesting for a while. I am not against looking for different solutions from different countries, from different cities, but take in 1965 when we looked at Brisbane City and we were faced with transportation problems. What everybody did was looked around the world and tried to find a solution from other countries that suited here. As a result we came up with the Wilbur Smith report, which was implemented in some phases but not in others, and then afterwards and in hindsight, everyone states that that is bad planning; that that freeway solution was something that we should not have done. What is different then from what we are doing now in terms of looking at the Portlands and the Torontos and the Ottawas? What is different from what we are doing now in terms of looking for a public transport solution to the mistakes we made then, looking for a freeway solution back in the sixties? It is my argument that we need to take the reverse approach. We need to look at every single property and say, "Right, for that person going from here to there by public transport, how long does it take them? They have this set of needs and they need to go to these places", and we can group them together to a certain extent, but looking at particular suburbs and, within that component, saying to ourselves, "We need to find solutions that would achieve IRTP objectives on that small-area basis."

Mr SULLIVAN: I understand that, but are you saying that nowhere from your research have you seen places that have successfully done that?

Mr Davis: For starters, I have not exactly categorised all the international systems. It is very hard to overlay, for example, the busways of Toronto and place them over the top of the Brisbane City Council system and say, "Yes, they are just like us. We can do that." I find that very, very difficult. I think it is best to just be Brisbane. Have a look, certainly, at what systems work, but there is nothing specifically that says that this system, conducted in this area, will work well here.

Mr SULLIVAN: If you were Premier, Transport Minister, Treasurer, king for a day—or maybe we need a little longer than that—and you were to make five decisions with respect to public transport in south-east Queensland, what would be the five decisions you would make?

Mr Davis: Decision No. 1 is that I would bring about a—I do not like using the term "reform unit", but some sort of arm's length body to have a look at Queensland Transport's structure and, at the same time, conduct that accessibility modelling. We need to have a situation where we look at what is going wrong specifically in terms of that arrangement. Secondly, I would immediately sit down with the council and stop penny pinching over that \$40m. If it has to come from somewhere else, it has to come from somewhere else. But that is the first step towards getting the integration. So those first two things for starters. No. 1 is put it into train; No. 2 is something you would try and set up on the second day. That leads to No. 3, which is: once that procedure is put into place and we can restructure the department in such a way that it makes

sense, the results of the accessibility model and the travel demands survey would provide local area plans, while at the same time looking at the expenditure per area, as to what we could do. So from those three levels, I think we would be able to point where we could then say, "This is where we need to go. These are the sorts of things that we need to do to achieve these targets."

A lot of it would relate more than anything—even though this is not what people like to hear as much—to service provision rather than infrastructure development. There are certain infrastructure issues that we would have to address, but in a lot of cases—even though it is not the trendy issue; it is not the issue that people get as excited about—a lot of the issues are just putting buses closer to people and subsidising those or working towards a better way of achieving that. So they would probably be my four key immediate decisions.

Ms NELSON-CARR: If you were to restructure the department, what sorts of job losses would there be?

Mr Davis: I do not know in terms of job losses; I could not actually say how many people at this particular point are in each of these sections. But I will say this: you do not need to spend as much time as we do presently looking at the mechanisms of relationships between all the different authorities. You would be refocusing a lot of the components into an outcome-oriented approach. So there would be perhaps less people doing contracts and more people doing research in terms of outcomes. So I do not know if the Transport Department is specifically oversized, but I would suggest that there would be too much of an emphasis on certain areas, and re-emphasising those, whether it is done with the existing personnel or other personnel, would be the issue.

Mr SULLIVAN: Travel demand management. We have heard a bit about that in the past. You seem to be doing travel demand assessment and then trying to match the public transport system, particularly bus, to that. What about travel demand management, particularly any comment on the South Perth scheme that is under way?

Mr Davis: There are two issues with the travel demand management issue. One is bringing people closer to the existing public transport systems, which is a good idea, which is all part of the land use component. The other issue, of course, is the whole road pricing issue. With the whole travel demand issue, there is a specific equity issue that worries me. I believe that we specifically need to provide people with a public transport system that they can use as an alternative before we look heavily at travel demand management issues. So, in other words, if there is a stick and a carrot, I believe in the stick second. We have to try and put in the issues with the carrot first, and if people are not coming across, then that is the time to start looking at stick issues.

The CHAIRMAN: You have referred a couple of times to the \$40m and the Brisbane City buses. What do you see as the major problem there, and what would you do about it?

Mr Davis: Where I see the major problem coming from with the State Government not funding that additional \$40m of the Brisbane City Council budget is that, specifically, you have then two masters. There are two people putting community service obligations into the public transport system. As a result, we always have two people to talk to. Once the State Government is the sole person in terms of bankrolling public transport subsidies, then we do not have to consult as much. Queensland Transport, at that stage, would be the only person putting in public transport subsidies. So if you are the only person funding it, if it works on the case of building a house, you are the main contractor. You are the person building it, singly you. You do not have to ask somebody else who is putting in half the funds—it is not half the funds, but some of the funds.

The CHAIRMAN: But in this case, the buses belong to the Brisbane City Council. Do you not see a comparison there with other private bus companies?

Mr Davis: Certainly, but the Queensland Government already funds all the private bus company subsidies as well. It is only the Brisbane City Council situation where the city council has to put in a subsidy as well. So the Queensland Government already provides subsidies to private bus operators, to everybody else, to every other public transport provider, bar the Brisbane City Council, bar the Brisbane Transport situation, where they provide less than half.

Mr SULLIVAN: So if we were to do a comparison with the State transit authorities in, say, New South Wales or South Australia, the fare subsidy, which I understand is based on for every

dollar taken on the bus, how much is given by the State, I believe that ours is relatively low. If we were to come to the levels of the other States, how much would the \$25m actually be?

Mr Davis: I could not tell you. I have not done that research.

Mr SULLIVAN: What about fare subsidy? You say there are the two masters there. In the other States, where they have a single State transit authority, there is the one master, and they seem to be putting in more money.

Mr Davis: Certainly—and the IRTP as an example makes this clear—we are not going to get out of the situation where we are not going to have to put in more money. It is as simple as that. For the system to work better, it is going to require greater funding. I guess the argument I am putting forward in terms of that \$40m—it is one of those issues which all of a sudden moves things a lot forward a lot quicker. I guess I am not looking at it in terms of subsidies per fare as much as looking at the sense and the logic of achieving integration by removing this consistent hindrance.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know that the council would see \$40m or \$26m as a hindrance. The Ipswich City Council in its submission proposes that Queensland Transport needs to develop a rolling five-year works program for public transport infrastructure. Would you think that was a progressive idea?

Mr Davis: That would follow from the argument that I mentioned before, on the fact that there was a Roads Implementation Program before the IRTP came into place, and there was not a similar sort of arrangement for public transport. That would help to bring into account the prioritisation process. So, yes, that would be a necessary outcome of bringing about the prioritisation process.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the Committee has any further questions for you this afternoon, so that would conclude our questions. Is there anything further that you would like to add?

Mr Davis: No. I think I have said it all. I wish you all the best. I always enjoy speaking before the Travelsafe Committee. I think you do a very important job in terms of improving the level of debate in this area, and hopefully you will be able to do something that will make things right.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

HANS WESTERMAN, examined:

The CHAIRMAN: I welcome Professor Westerman. Professor, would you please state the position you hold at the university.

Prof. Westerman: I am an Emeritus Professor of Town Planning at the University of New South Wales. I am also an Adjunct Professor at the Griffith University, which is an honorary position. I also appear as a private individual. I have my own company.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you like to begin with an opening statement?

Prof. Westerman: Certainly. Do you have a copy of the evidence that I have prepared?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Prof. Westerman: Would you like me to read the statement so that other people who do not have a copy can hear it, or can I take it that you are familiar with what I am wanting to say?

The CHAIRMAN: Our research director has advised that copies are coming over for everyone else to read, but the Committee already has them.

Prof. Westerman: The submission that I would like to make to you focuses on the need to increase the share of public transport in the region and the strategies for achieving it. The main points of the submission are, first, that the greenhouse issue is becoming far more serious than is commonly thought and it cannot simply be solved by planting trees. There is a lot more to it. The problem is that we build our cities around the motor car.

The second point is that we need to adapt our urban region so that it is increasingly developed around public transport. The third point is that this requires key actions on land use linked with clearly targeted investment in public transport now. The fourth point is that, if realistic pricing for private transport becomes a necessity, as it now is in Europe, we should be better prepared than we are now.

In simple terms, what I am saying is that we should make sure we get the land use system right to get the most efficient public transport possible. When that is in place, then we can start to squeeze the motorist to use the public transport system more intensely. I am concerned that we might think about putting more infrastructure in when it does not serve the jobs and the locations where everyone wants to go. A land use system is of crucial significance.

I would like to talk briefly about ecologically sustainable development—ESD. It has been defined in many different ways, but the latest version that I like is an OECD definition—

"Transportation that does not endanger public health or ecosystems and meets the needs for access consistent with (a) sustainable use of renewable resources at below their rates of regeneration"—

that is different from what we often hear; we hear "the same level"—

"and (b) use of renewable resources at below the rates of development of renewable substitutes."

I know that these are all clouded words, but when you look at it closely and understand what it means, we are faced with a serious problem. The only way to compare it is to think back to the seventies when the oil crisis occurred. I could only drive on alternate days. Even then the petrol price was not the issue; it was the supply. Now I think that is a permanent situation.

Per capita transport generated greenhouse emissions in Australia are among the highest in the world. One-third of the average family's greenhouse emissions are the result of transport activities. Greenhouse emission from an average car is about 4.3 tonnes per year. As I say, planting trees is a short-term solution, but it is nowhere near the solution for the longer term.

In 1998 the Chartered Institute of Transport in Australia stated—

"We are at the climax of the fossil fuel stage. We have reached a crucial stage in the development of our local, national and international transport service. Our present path is leading us into potentially serious economic, social and environmental problems. 'More of the same' in our current transport plans and ways of thinking is no longer tenable."

There are many other alarming data related to health. Health is not clearly visible because it is so individual. But there are clear health consequences of air pollution, traffic noise and so on. I have

accessed some reports on congestion, and the Brisbane region will suffer serious congestion in about 10 years' time. There are issues regarding energy use, air pollution and so on.

But the general point is clear: we have a problem of major proportions, especially in this region with its rapid growth, generally low density, dispersed activities and far-flung residential areas. Much more will be needed than providing some public transport infrastructure and setting targets which may be, but are generally not, reached.

Public transport is a key element, but our cities have been developed around the motor car. It comes down to accessibility as well as convenience, cost, safety and comfort. Accessibility is the cornerstone of a functioning society. In the last century accessibility was equated to accessibility by car. We built our cities around automobility. In the industrial world, it is the car that has become the defining technology of our built environment. It sets the form and shape of cities, to quote from Professor Cervero. It dictates the scale of streets, the relationship between buildings, the vast amounts of land devoted to parking and the pace at which people experience urban life. It dominates and segregates cultures, old from young, home from job and store, and rich from poor.

If we are propelled towards greater use of public transport, we must not just focus on the provision of infrastructure and running an efficient service. We need to rethink the way we create accessibility and organise the location and the concentration of urban activities so that accessibility by public transport is at least as good if not better than accessibility by car. In my paper I have indicated a number of critical questions about accessibility which I do not propose to talk about now.

Public transport requires an integrated approach towards land use, transport and the environment. We need to consider a pattern of land use activities which is clearly linked or integrated with public transport. We have a vision for 2007 but no vision for land use. That is the weakness in this approach. The IRTP identifies a preferred land use system, but there is no proactive approach to its real integration.

I have been a planner for a long time, and it is wonderful to produce these documents. By the way, the IRTP is excellent; it is a model for the rest of Australia. I do not want to run it down. It has set a new standard, but we still have to go further. When you think about real integration, it is wonderful to identify key centres, but how are we going to achieve them?

There was an interesting policy some years ago in Melbourne which lasted only six weeks, and that was a requirement that all new office development with 10,000 square metres or more should be located near a railway station. That policy lasted only six weeks. Why? First of all, there had been no consultation with the property and the development industry. Secondly, there was no way in which the land could be obtained at a reasonable price. So the land market had its own answer. That was an interesting policy, but it failed because of that reason.

However, if you look at what they are doing in Sydney—for instance, Green Square, which is one of the new railway stations on the new line to the airport—they have produced a development corporation. It is an organisation established only for this period of major change. We have to work with the private sector to get the land in the right ownership and in the right form. These are the kinds of things that may be necessary. The market will go some way but not without some help. The market does not take into account the longer-term costs of continued automobility. With a pro-active approach, one could start with desired outcomes and then nudge private development with incentives and disincentives to the preferred location.

There are three strategies for sustainable transport, and I would like to talk about two of them. The supply of public transport infrastructure and the provision of a high-quality service are very important. They create an opportunity for choice in transport mode for those who have a choice, which is about 40% at present. There are many people who do not have a choice at present. But it does not follow that the choice will be exercised. We set targets and expect them to be achieved because we have provided the infrastructure. Let us say we have a busway. Will it be used? Does it serve people's needs? It does not necessarily happen because the jobs, houses, shops and schools are dispersed and it is much more convenient to use a car.

We need to do a lot more if we are to discourage the car and encourage public transport. Travel demand management is on the agenda. It is interesting that the OECD has said that, in order to achieve the definition of ESD that I mentioned earlier, one-third comes from new

technology and two-thirds come from travel demand management. So this is a big deal. It is important. We must remember that.

There are three components to travel demand management. The first is the linking of accessibility with transport. That is a land use aspect. The second is networks and the way we manage them. The third is pricing. Linking accessibility and activity is a key action. There are several things we can do. First, we should endeavour to focus and concentrate people generating activities into major multipurpose centres, which are also nodes in the regional public transport network. They are also major interchange points to local services and should be designed so that interchanging is seamless, including timetabling and ticketing.

It has always troubled me seeing mothers with prams and people with baggage trying to go up stairs. It is not user friendly and does not encourage public transport. Seamless changing is very important. It requires a proactive partnership with the private sector, property owners and the development market.

The Government can do a great deal. It seems counterproductive when one Government agency, say a health or education authority, decides to build a new hospital or a TAFE college well away from a designated centre which is accessible by public transport. We do it in Australia. We rustle around trying to fit public transport in. You must designate what you want and then get the infrastructure in there so it fits. We cannot work with carrots only; we must have sticks as well. So I would discourage out-of-centre employment generating activities, like call centres or outlying shopping centres.

Here we can learn something from the United Kingdom. They have preferred locations, and then they have a system called the stepped approach which proponents have to follow. If they comply with the designated location, everything is rosy. The further they move away from that location the more they have to pay. If they get approval for an outlying shopping centre they may have to run a bus service there for ever and after. It is that sort of polluter-pays system that is now being used in Britain.

Thirdly, we can apply the principle of linking activity to accessibility by defining in advance the type and the level of accessibility that we seek to achieve, say in new residential areas. If a proposed new suburb does not comply, it does not get approved. It is as simple as that. We have to be very positive about these things. If we want public transport to be incorporated in all developments, we should manage it in this way. There may be density provisions such as higher density housing within 400 metres of the station, and 800 metres for medium density housing.

Fourthly, we need to actively pursue the notion of transit-oriented centres and urban villages built around our precious assets such as stations. It shows the importance of identifying station locations and routes upfront. I have a marginal involvement in some of the studies that are going on at the moment with railway extensions, and I am distressed to see that the land has already been developed and subdivided around where the station should be. It is going to be awfully hard to build up enough passengers around the station because we did not think of it early enough.

Fifthly, we need to identify people corridors which are used for buses or light rail. We must ensure that we get people-generating activities around them. The idea is that if you do the transport route, think at the same time about the footprint. You build them together. If you do not look at what goes alongside the light rail you are not being very productive.

Sixthly, I want to refer to activities with low employment and visitor attraction, such as warehouses and distribution centres. Do not try to run a bus service to those places when there are so few people. You cannot do that economically. In those cases there are alternatives. In Britain they have what are called green transport plans. The private sector is encouraged to prepare commuter plans for their staff.

Earlier today I was asked about what was a good example. Portland is a good example. I suggest you put that on your list of places to visit. No two places are the same. The idea of importing ideas from overseas is fraught with problems. What works in one place does not necessarily work here. However, Portland, Oregon, is an interesting place. Portland has commuter plans. All firms which employ more than 50 people have to prepare commuter plans. That is required by law.

In essence, what I am advocating here is the rather large task of progressively adapting a car-oriented region to a people-oriented region. I am convinced that public transport and land use activity must always be considered together at all levels of planning. It is so fundamental that it should be written into our planning system.

I want to say a few words about infrastructure development and management. In new areas we do not lock people into car dependency and say, "Oh, well, they haven't got enough people; we can't provide an effective service." The sequence of development is terribly important. Instead of leapfrogging and having a bit here and there we should really develop at a density and at a scale which makes it possible to provide a good public transport service.

In North Lakes, a major integrated new residential development, the local council—the Pine Rivers council—has required the developers to contribute \$600,000 to a fund for the operation of bus services from the start. I think that is an excellent idea. Such a system could well be used elsewhere. A point that is worth making is that that may be all right for residential areas, but it does not help with the major capital investment—such infrastructure as heavy or light rail.

Mr SULLIVAN: Where is North Lakes? In what city is it?

Mr Westerman: North Lakes is near Strathpine. It is a Lend Lease development—a big development. It is very substantial. What is important to my argument is that if we want to build a city around public transport, the heavy rail investments and the light rail investments become very important and different tests apply. I imagine that if you had evidence from a rail authority they would say that it is not economic—that the benefit/cost ratio is not favourable. I would say that we have to look at it on a system level. We have to look at it as a whole.

When we are thinking about these railway extensions and so on we have to ensure that the benefits are locked in as well. It troubles me that we create a railway station and provide a windfall gain for people living nearby. It really should go back to the public who funded the investment.

I am coming near the end of my presentation, but I want to refer to pricing and funding. I think it requires a lot more thought to consider pricing. It is now on top of the agenda in Europe. I have a lovely quote here from the Dutch Minister for Transport and I would like to read it to you—

"In the seventies and eighties it became clear that in the race between mobility and infrastructure, the latter would lose. Not only because of the financial crisis suffered by the government, but especially also because of the environment. The government started implementing a policy to get people out of cars and into public transport, but it didn't work. The car is a habit that people are not about to relinquish. So where do we stand now? Mobility has brought us many good things. Freedom of movement and booming economy. But like many good things, mobility has another side. Scarcity of mobility space and the environment is suffering and a lot of traffic is a threat to safety."

Here comes the crunch—

"We need to link the price of mobility to the direct and social costs that are related to it."

I find the same argument in the British literature. The British Government is moving in that direction—as is Germany. I think we need to have a good look at it because the price of travelling by car is not the real cost. Congestion pricing, road pricing, the valuation of scarce resources, life cycle costing and fuel taxes are all on the agenda. The idea is that he who travels more, pays more; he who travels less, pays less. It may well be that there could be some differentials in urban areas where there is a real choice in mobility where travel costs a lot more. In the country areas there is often no choice and the rural economy depends on mobility. We have to be able to constitutionally do that. I have argued that fuel pricing is the wrong way around, in that people in cities should pay more and people in the country should pay less. As you well know, fuel pricing is a hot political item. It is all very well for me to say that, but it is a different thing to go out in the electorate and sell it. It is harder than selling the GST.

We can do what they do in the UK, and that is promote green transport plans. The Government provides tax concessions and tax advantages to companies that make it easier for staff to use other modes of transport than a car. Here, we provide subsidies and taxation advantage to employers who make cars available to the staff. In the Netherlands, the

Government provides tax concessions to people who travel to work by public transport rather than by car. This may be beyond the scope of this Committee, but it is something to look at.

The ideas I have put forward always depend on integrated planning and management. It is impossible to consider sustainable transport and achieve targets without considering the location and distribution of activities, the basic infrastructure of all forms of transport and how it is to be used at the same time. I believe that the right business in the right location and the right use of the transport networks is a substantial agenda, but there is another dimension, and that is the approach that we take towards the travelling community. I was interested to hear the previous speaker mention that. It is so important that we understand that we have a client. The client does not just use public transport. The client walks to the station or the tram or the bus. There is a whole sequence of actions that we need to understand. We must be far more conscious of the multiple use of transport modes in our total transport task.

In all planning we must think of the community because it begins and starts with them. There are practical things we can do such as TravelSmart and green transport plans. There are also the big picture issues such as the greenhouse emissions problem, the inevitable carbon crunch, increasing congestion and the impact of transport on our health and safety. I think we are accustomed to an unfettered right of access wherever and whenever we want and by whatever mode we choose. This is fine in country towns and in small cities, but in large cities such as the Brisbane conurbation, it is this attitude which produces congestion and pollution. Some members of the Committee may come from country areas and thus do not have much to worry about. In large concentrations of people we do have to worry. We need informed debate. We need to really bring this down to the public. We have to consider how we can adapt the city from automobility towards greater public transport mobility. The debate is only beginning. I think that is enough from me for the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you have covered most of the questions we had for you. How critical do you see travel demand management and how would you convince the public that it was for the best benefit?

Mr Westerman: Travel demand management has many dimensions. Often we have to provide high occupancy lanes or bus lanes. This is possible if you have enough buses sitting in the high occupancy lane. The public is not going to like it if there is a lane provided for only public transport and they see a bus only every half hour. Then we come to other travel demand management matters such as parking pricing. We have to be very careful about that, too. If there is parking pricing, there should be some benefits elsewhere. These things should not be a bottomless pit. People should see that improvements are being made in the public transport system to make it easier for them to travel to those centres.

There is a lot of interaction in the community about all of these measures. I am really arguing that if we do not start up-front with getting our planning system and our land use system straight, we are never going to win. The pricing one will have to come. It will have to get a lot worse before the politics of it have the right sort of smell about them. I have been in the profession for a good many years. I believe that the most prudent action is to provide choices. We must progressively move towards an active centres policy. Our approach to key centres is very good. The integrated transport study proposes it. We have no mechanisms for making it really happen. We find that one department relocates and another department does not. The Government can do a lot about locating itself in the right location. The Brisbane City Council has decentralised some of its offices. I understand that some of these locations are fine but others are not from an overall point of view.

I have an understanding as to why that was done. It related to business economics, but there is more to it than business economics today. It is accessibility in the longer term. We all can contribute to these things.

Mr SULLIVAN: You mentioned Portland, Oregon. I understand that there is not going to be any single solution we can impose on Brisbane, but there have to be some places that are doing public transport better than we are. What are some of those places doing it better than we are?

Mr Westerman: I can give wonderful examples from overseas.

Mr SULLIVAN: I do not mean places like the Netherlands, Hong Kong or Singapore. Their population density does not even compare with ours.

Mr Westerman: No, we cannot do that. We are a different city. We have to realise that the particular shape of the development is very linear.

Mr SULLIVAN: So where are some good public transport systems in comparable cities to Brisbane?

Mr Westerman: I think you would have to go overseas.

Mr SULLIVAN: Where?

Mr Westerman: Portland would be one. After all, the overall metropolitan population of Portland is 1.4 million.

Mr SULLIVAN: I just want a list of three or four places that we can follow up that you think would be good places to look at.

Mr Westerman: I would have to think about that in relation to cities that are comparable to Brisbane. I would suggest that sending you to Europe is not going to be all that helpful. The trouble is that the United States has not done very much in this field. The only places that have really done work is Portland and San Francisco, but San Francisco is so much bigger than Brisbane and has a different geography. I would have to think about that. It is not that simple.

Mr SULLIVAN: Sure.

Mr Westerman: There is one other place. If you want to work out a travelsafe plan, you must go to Ottawa.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think we are going to have any success in gaining the funds to do that.

Mr SULLIVAN: We just need to learn what has been done in those places.

Mr Westerman: Ottawa has a very advanced busway system. They worked that out very well. Do not overlook going to a place like Canberra. From my point of view, they have the right system in the right place. They established a number of major regional nodes and put Government offices there. As a result, the public transport usage in Canberra, a city of comparable size, is much higher than you would find elsewhere. That is really what I am trying to say. If you get that right, you can start doing something. I do not believe that we are going to shift people out of cars into public transport if there is not a better system for them to go to. It is all right for the CBD. But, as a city grows, the distance from the CBD becomes larger. Therefore, these key centres become so terribly important. We really should as a policy try to constrain our development there, but then we do not own the land. We have not mentioned anything about land management. That is why the Melbourne policy in the 1980s fell flat. It did not have the means of achieving it. It is complicated. It is not simple.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further questions, the Committee has concluded its program for the afternoon. Thank you very much, Mr Westerman, for taking part in our inquiry today. To the members of the public here today, thank you for your interest in our work. I trust it has been of interest to you. The next hearing for this inquiry will be from noon to 2 p.m. on Monday, 19 June. I thank everyone for their interest in our inquiry. I now declare this hearing closed.

The Committee adjourned at 3.34 p.m.