

Questions on Notice Additional Budget Estimates 2008-2009

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Portfolio

Tuesday 24 February 2009

QON No.	Date Asked	Hansard Page Reference/ Written	Senator	Question
CORP 01	24/02/09	6-7	Bernardi	<p>[Planned Staff Number] Senator BERNARDI—.....Have staff numbers been reduced as a result of the efficiency dividend or any other budget changes? Mr Taylor—Yes. I will get David to reflect on the precise numbers. Mr Banham—Our staffing number as of 31 December was 1,249. That is actually an increase since the last hearing. We have had some increases in some measures outside of the regional offices. The total number of staff from regional offices, which we reduced, is around 32. Senator BERNARDI—Let me just clarify that: the total number of staff in regional offices has been reduced by 32; is that correct? Mr Banham—As of 31 December it is 21 that we have reduced in the regional offices. Senator BERNARDI—So 21 as at 31 December, yet overall staff levels have been increased to 1,249. Mr Banham—That is correct. Senator BERNARDI—That is an increase of how many? Mr Banham—Thirty-two. Senator BERNARDI—Where have those increases of 32 staff occurred? Mr Banham—Eighteen of them were in the Office of the Infrastructure Coordinator, which is Infrastructure Australia, established last year. Fifteen were in Infrastructure investment and 13 were in the Office of Transport Security. Senator BERNARDI—That is more than 32. Mr Banham—It is the net of the 21. Senator BERNARDI—Net of the 21; okay. Are you able to tell me what level these positions are? Mr Banham—The additions? Senator BERNARDI—Yes. Mr Banham—No. I would need to take that on notice. Senator BERNARDI—If you wouldn't mind, that would be terrific; thank you.—....</p>
CORP 02	24/02/09	7	Bernardi	<p>[Planned Graduate Recruitment and Cadetships] Senator BERNARDI—Do you have a formal process for planned graduate recruitment or identification of potential additional staff? Mr Banham—For recruitment of graduates? Senator BERNARDI—Yes. Mr Banham—Yes. We have a formal graduate recruitment program every year. Senator BERNARDI—Just briefly, how does that operate? Mr Banham—I will need to get the full details to you. Senator BERNARDI—That would be fine, and can you include other similar programs, whether they are related to cadetships or interns, or however you might like to describe them, not just graduate recruitment.</p>

CORP 03	24/02/09	7-8	Bernardi	<p>[Turnover Rates] Senator BERNARDI—I would presume that you retain records about your retention and turnover rates of staff. Mr Banham—Yes; we do. Senator BERNARDI—Do you have those records available or are you able to recollect them off the top of your head? Mr Banham—No. I would need to take that on notice, but we should be able to get back to you today. Senator BERNARDI—That would be good. Specifically, I am interested in the relative ratio of turnover or staff retention over the last three or four years. Mr Banham—We will be able to get that. Senator BERNARDI—If you can do that, that would be terrific. Whilst there have been some additions in staffing, has there been any change in consultancy expenditure since we last met? I am not sure whether questions were asked in this regard at the last estimates.</p>
CORP 04	24/02/09	9	Bernardi	<p>[Replacement of Capital Items] Senator BERNARDI—Did the agency receive any depreciation funding for recurrent expenditure in the last financial year? Mr Wood—The department received depreciation funding. That is disclosed in our portfolio additional estimates statements for our revised budget for 2008-09. Forecast depreciation expenditure is about \$13.9 million. Senator BERNARDI—Has any depreciation funding been used for purposes other than the replacement of capital items in 2007-08? Mr Wood—No. Senator BERNARDI—So how much has the department spent on the replacement of capital items in the first six months of this financial year? Mr Wood—I will take that on notice.</p>
CORP 05	24/02/09	9	Bernardi	<p>[Programs Tracking for an Underspend in this Financial Year] Senator BERNARDI—Are you able to provide me with a list of programs that are currently tracking for an underspend in this financial year? Mr Wood—We could provide that. We recently updated our budget estimates in the 2008-09 portfolio additional estimates statements. We did have a reduction in our estimate for a couple of programs. Senator BERNARDI—Can you tell me what those programs are? Mr Wood—They are disclosed in our portfolio additional estimates statements. Senator BERNARDI—I do not have that. Mr Wood—Sorry, if it would help, we could provide a table to you later. Senator BERNARDI—That would be great. If you could provide a table, that would be terrific. Thank you. —.....</p>
CORP 06	24/02/09	10	Bernardi	<p>[Staff Employed on Media-Related Duties] Senator BERNARDI—But we are getting diverted. With \$500,799, could you tell me how many staff are actually employed within the media-monitoring section of the Department—or on media related duties, I should say? Mr Banham—In going to media monitoring, it is a fully contracted service. Our staff may work on the periphery to help with the distribution, but it would not be material and we would not record that level. Senator BERNARDI—Okay. What about media related duties within the department?</p>

				<p>Mr Banham—Staffing numbers? I will need to get back to you on those.</p> <p>Senator BERNARDI—Okay, that would be great. Thank you. —....</p>
CORP 07	24/02/09	10	Bernardi	<p>[Department's hospitality Spend]</p> <p>Senator BERNARDI—....What about hospitality? What was the Department's hospitality spend in 2008 and also the financial year to date?</p> <p>Mr Banham—For the 2007-08 FBT year, it was \$109,692.</p> <p>Senator BERNARDI—Do you have details for the financial year to date?</p> <p>Mr Banham—No, we do not.</p> <p>Senator BERNARDI—Would you be able to provide those?</p> <p>Mr Banham—We can get them on notice.</p> <p>Senator BERNARDI—Equally, I would be interested in the date, location and purpose of the hospitality expenditure. I am happy to put these questions on notice as well, just to clarify it for you.—.</p>
CORP 08	24/02/09	12	Bernardi	<p>[Department's Spend on Community Meetings]</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—.....What is the expense of, say, the Department, or the Minister's travel expenses for these community meetings?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—All of that information is publicly available via, I think, PM&C estimates, Senator McGauran. I think it is regularly asked for and regularly provided. We are happy to take it on notice but I am not sure that we would have that information readily at hand. Quite genuinely, I think Senator Faulkner provides that information for the total cost across the whole of government through the PM&C estimates. I am sure if you raced around there you could even get the information out of him today—if it is on.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—Thank you, Minister, and I would ask that you specifically provide the department's cost for travel expenses.</p> <p>Mr Taylor—I am happy to take that on notice, but David Banham will probably provide a reasonable outline of where we currently sit.</p> <p>Mr Banham—Since the last hearing, there have been meetings in Launceston, Corio and Campbelltown. The Department's cost for Launceston was \$1,953. For Corio it was \$1,064 and for the recent meeting at Campbelltown it was \$1,063.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—For the Minister?</p> <p>Mr Banham—No, those are departmental costs.</p>
IA 01	24/02/09	17	Milne	<p>[Climate Change Taskforce]</p> <p>Senator MILNE—I was not talking about the Department of Climate Change. I am talking about the task force for climate change in this Department. There is a climate change task force in this agency. How many meetings have you heard with the task force in this agency?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—We have a small unit that is working with the Department of Climate Change looking at transport impacts in the broad as part of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. I would not have expected that there would necessarily be meetings between that unit and Infrastructure Australia, because Infrastructure Australia is engaged in a different task. It is involved in providing advice to government on a prioritised list of major projects, whereas that unit is working on the existing transport system and how the CPRS might incorporate the transport networks. Mr Deegan has outlined where his focus has been; it has been with the Department of Climate Change.</p> <p>Mr Deegan—Thanks, Mr Tongue, but I am sure that a lot of the issues would be raised in parallel.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—It is just that in your key priorities for this year it says:</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the newly established BITRE Climate Change Taskforce to: • forge linkages between climate change policy and sectoral regulatory frameworks; • coordinate the Department's policy input; and • analyse the implications of carbon emissions trading for transport systems ... <p>I would have thought that if that is seriously what the task force is doing then there would be a fair amount of cross-over with Infrastructure Australia.</p> <p>Mr Deegan—My office may well have met with them. I will need to confirm that.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—Yes, and just confirm that it is not really a high priority—</p> <p>Mr Deegan—Not at all.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—in the agency, I mean.</p> <p>Mr Deegan—I will need to confirm that one way or another. We have taken it very seriously.</p>
IA 02	24/02/09	20-21	McGauran	<p>[Building Australia Fund]</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—I would like to know what the \$7.9 million was spent on.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—Mr Deegan, would you like to take him through the \$7.5 million?</p> <p>Mr Deegan—I would be happy to do that if you like. I will take that on notice and give you a detailed response.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—If you do not mind, because what was originally in the Building Australia Fund is being whittled away before your very eyes. The recommendations are just going to be a useless exercise it seems.</p>
NBII 01	24/02/09	25	Bushby	<p>[Maintenance Funding for Tasman and Brooker Highways]</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—During the campaign prior to the last election, the then opposition undertook to extend Tasmania's national network to include the Brooker Highway from Granton to the Port of Hobart and the Tasman Highway from Hobart to the Hobart airport. Has this been achieved yet?</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—The government has formalised the arrangements to extend the Brooker Highway.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—Does that mean that you have taken over control and responsibility?</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—That enables the state to utilise maintenance funding in relation to maintenance on the highway.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—Those sections of those two highways now have the same status as other national roads?</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—Correct, Senator.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—What date did that take effect?</p> <p>Ms McNally—That was in February 2009.</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—Early February 2009.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—Just very recently.</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—Correct.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—Has the Department revised any of its estimates for costings as a result of the responsibility for taking over those two sections?</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—The maintenance funding that has been provided provides for the Brooker Highway.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—Has it increased as a result of taking on those two?</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—The funding is as committed by the government. It was \$31 million for maintenance funding plus the additional \$1 million provided as part of the nation building.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—That is not just for those two sections though.</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—That is for the network as a whole.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—The national network. And that has not changed as a result of taking over the</p>

				<p>responsibility for those two sections in February of this year.</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—Correct.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—There is currently work being undertaken on both those sections of highway. Have the funds to cover the cost of work on those two sections been accessed from federal funds under that maintenance program?</p> <p>Mr Rokvic—I will have to take that on notice, Senator. The question is about timing as to when those works were undertaken.</p>
NBII 02	24/02/09	26	Bushby	<p>[COAG Agreement]</p> <p>Senator Conroy—The COAG agreement, which has been signed off—and I think one of your colleagues may even have asked me a question about this in the chamber—is quite clear about the requirement that the state governments have signed up to. So the basic premise of your question is handled by and responded to by the COAG agreement, which is very black and white about the responsibilities.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—And what does it say with respect to this?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I will happily get you a copy of it. As I said, I did read it out.</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—But the particular question I am asking—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—You are trying to suggest that there is cost-shifting—</p> <p>Senator BUSHBY—There quite clearly is.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—The point that I am making is that the Prime Minister and the premiers signed up to a COAG agreement, which we will get for you and I will read out to you again. I think I read it out three times, from recollection, in the Senate in response to your questions. It is very clear about stopping the cost-shifting blame game. But I will get you a copy of it.</p>
NBII 03	24/02/09	28	Williams	<p>[Bolivia Hill]</p> <p>Senator WILLIAMS—Who is responsible for New South Wales infrastructure? I see some of the people on the list here are obviously not here today. Anyway, I want to raise one issue about a black spot on the New England Highway. The New England Highway, of course, is Highway 1, which is the total responsibility of the federal government. In general, the New England Highway is in pretty good shape. There has been a lot of work done at places like Black Mountain near Guyra and bridges near Tenterfield et cetera. There is an area known as Bolivia Hill. Would you be able to do some investigations on Bolivia Hill? How can we go through that process? There was a young fellow killed there about three weeks ago and it is a place that requires the most attention on the whole New England Highway, as I see it. I was wondering if your Department could perhaps have a look at that Bolivia Hill problem. No doubt it would be an expensive job to repair, but on the main highway, on one like this, it certainly needs attention and I would appreciate it if you, through the Department, could have a look at that area.</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—Certainly. I will take that on notice and have a look.</p> <p>Senator WILLIAMS—That would be wonderful. Thank you.</p>
NBII 04	24/02/09	28-29	Milne	<p>[Australian Rail Track Corporation – Advanced Train Management System]</p> <p>Senator MILNE—I am not sure if my question comes under Infrastructure Australia, in which case it has gone, or whether you can answer it, but one of the issues that the railway community raises with me quite often is the need for an national digital train control system for Australia. Can anybody tell me whether that is being progressed? It is part of the intelligent networks we need around the country. We are talking about broadband, we are talking about an intelligent electricity grid and it and it seems to me that a parallel project ought to be a national digital train control system. Could you tell me whether</p>

				<p>there is anything happening on that front?</p> <p>Mr Williams—As part of the nation-building statement in December last year, part of the moneys being provided to the Australian Rail Track Corporation included \$45 million for the trial phase that is currently being undertaken by the ARTC. It is a \$90 million trial in South Australia looking at the advanced train management system, which is effectively a digital train management system. If the technology is proven and it is moved into the implementation phase it could see the removal of track-side signalling. It would effectively use satellite and other technology in the cabins. That has the potential to significantly increase the productivity of the rail system in terms of being able to have more trains on the track and the headway or distance between trains could be reduced allowing for more efficient use of the train tracks. I also note that it was on the Infrastructure Australia priority list as something that needs to be looked at.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—You have just indicated that it is \$90 million pilot and that \$45 was allocated.</p> <p>Mr Williams—The amount of \$45 million is coming from the Australian government through the equity injection into ARTC, and the other \$45 million is coming from internal reserves and revenues from ARTC.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—When will the trial be completed and, assuming that it is successful and proves what the proponents say in that it is shown to lead to a much better outcome in terms of productivity, what is the projected cost of implementing the system nationwide?</p> <p>Mr Williams—I would have to take those questions on notice.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—When do you expect the trial to be completed and evaluated? If I could have two separate dates for when you expect to have some recommendation for government.</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—I will ask David Marchant to talk further after lunch specifically in relation to that trial. David is from ARTC. In terms of the advanced train management system and the trial, for reference it is outlined on page 49 in the nation-building booklet.</p>
NBII 05	24/02/09	29	Milne	<p>[Education Campaign for Level Crossings]</p> <p>Senator MILNE—I look forward to that happening nationally at some point. I want to go on and ask about the boom gates and active controls at level crossings. Whilst I welcome that funding it has been put to me that, if it does not have an education program with it, it will not necessarily improve safety outcomes. It has been put to me that young women in particular—which surprised me again—actually race the boom gates. And in Queensland they had to engage in a program of education in infant schools to get children to say from the back seat, ‘Stop the car mummy.’ So it is counterintuitive because you would assume boom gates would make it much more safe, and I certainly hope it does and certainly support the initiative. I wonder whether there has been any consultation with safety authorities about the education program that might go with it?</p> <p>Mr Williams—The primary focus of the boom gates measure is on the infrastructure side of things in terms of the installation of boom gates and other active control measures at level crossings. I know that a number of the states have their own programs relating to level crossings. A number of those have elements of education campaigns. Also through the Australian Transport Council process, there is a rail level-crossings group, whose membership includes state and territory governments, the Commonwealth, local government and industry. That brings together all of the issues relating to level crossings. Through that process there is coordination of effort in relation to level crossings across the country.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—Would you please take on notice a question to be put to that coordinating group as</p>

				to whether there has been any consideration given to an education campaign to be rolled out across the country in conjunction with this infrastructure spend on level crossing boom gates. Mr Williams —Yes.
NBII 06	24/02/09	29-30	Macdonald	<p>[Nation Building – Land Transport Infrastructure Commitments] Senator IAN MACDONALD—....Talking about the boom gates, this was part of the \$42 billion package, wasn't it? Has that been rolled into the nation building fund? You are in charge of the infrastructure in the \$42 billion package? Mr Williams—I have responsibility for the boom gates program. Senator IAN MACDONALD—But all of the infrastructure programs, the spending will come through your Department? Mr Tongue—Those bits of infrastructure are associated with the transport system, but— Ms O'Connell—That is right, but not the infrastructure related to, for example, schools. That is being managed by a different Department. But the four measures I outlined were the four measures of the \$42 billion nation building package: boom gates, maintenance, community infrastructure and black spots. Senator IAN MACDONALD—What is the figure that your Department will have to spend? Ms O'Connell—It is approximately \$890 million. Senator IAN MACDONALD—I thought it was more than that. Ms O'Connell—No, that is just from that particular measure, from that particular stimulus package. There are the December nation-building stimulus package components as well. Senator IAN MACDONALD—So what did you say? Ms O'Connell—\$890 from February. Senator IAN MACDONALD—And how much from December? Ms McNally—\$711 million on roads. Ms O'Connell—And there was \$1.2 billion on rail. Ms McNally—Of that, the boom gate level crossings is \$150 million. Senator IAN MACDONALD—And that is additional to all of those other figures you have given? Ms McNally—It is incorporated in the \$890 million. Ms O'Connell—And that is on top of the existing commitments around road-building, rail et cetera. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Do you have a global figure for what those existing commitments are? Ms McNally—We will have to take that on notice.</p>
NBII 07	24/02/09	32	Macdonald	<p>[Duplication of Burdekin River Bridge] Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is there any work being done on duplication of the Burdekin Bridge? I have raised issues with the minister on the absolute need for this, which was demonstrated again by the floods just recently. Ms Goodspeed—Since your last question on notice, the Australian government has committed \$25 million for maintenance and rehabilitation of the bridge. Senator IAN MACDONALD—No, that was before the question on notice. That is annual maintenance that you have got to do on any bridge. I mean planning work on a duplication. It will be 10 years down the track. I have raised it with the minister and got the political reply that you would expect. I am just hopeful that perhaps he took some notice and that planning work might have been ordered to start. Has it? Ms McNally—The Australian government is not contributing any funding to any particular planning work, but we can take that on notice and have a look at what the Queensland government is doing in that regard.</p>

IA 03	24/02/09	36	Macdonald	<p>[Cooroy to Curra Upgrade] Senator IAN MACDONALD—You heard me ask some questions about this very important Cooroy to Curra upgrade. Has that project attracted the attention of Infrastructure Australia? Mr Deegan—Again, there are two parts to that. We are continuing to look at both the Pacific Highway and the Bruce Highway about road funding. The department is dealing with, as I understand, that particular project as part of AusLink, but we have been asked for a general view of alternative approaches to funding of these two major highways. I will check whether that particular section is part of the Queensland submission and come back to you.</p>
IA 08	24/02/09	37	Bernardi/Milne/ Macdonald/ McGauran	<p>Senator BERNARDI—I refer to Mr Eddington’s comments and to his letter. There has been some concern raised by Mr Eddington that a lot of the ‘projects submitted to us were close to pork-barrel initiatives’. This is quoted in an interview with Mr Eddington in <i>The Deal</i>, which is the <i>Australian</i> business magazine. Obviously he has the same concerns about these things as Senator Macdonald. Senator MILNE—Speaking of pork-barrel! Senator BERNARDI—I wonder whether Mr Eddington’s concerns are justified. Senator Conroy—That is a question in which you are asking an opinion of Mr Deegan. That is outside the bounds of these estimates hearings. If you have— Senator IAN MACDONALD—Senator Bernardi is asking you, Minister. Senator Conroy—You have transferred it to me. I will take that on notice. You were asking me for an opinion, you are now asking me about a fact, so I will take it on notice and see how the minister would like to respond to you. Senator McGAURAN—You would not have made those comments in isolation. It would have been talked about in your office. Senator Conroy—It was actually an interview in a newspaper article, which I am not quite sure pertains to Senate estimates. But if there is any information that the Minister’s Office or that the Minister would like to respond to I will, as I said, take it on notice, Senator McGauran, and pass it on to the Committee.</p>
IA 09	24/02/09	38	Macdonald	<p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—What we could get Mr Deegan to do is to just ask Mr Eddington on notice what he meant by his comment that the brutal fact is that some of these projects presented to us were close to pork-barrel initiatives. Could you perhaps take on notice to Mr Eddington to let us know what he was meaning by that? I think you have got the reference. Senator Conroy—We will take it on notice and if there is any information that the Minister would like to share with the Committee on that we will get back to you.</p>
IA 10	24/02/09	39	Milne	<p>Senator MILNE—Given what Mr Deegan said about a lot of work being done on Australia’s public transport, when can we expect a publicly-available document which the community could comment on or which gives some sort of progress report on how we are going in having a people-moving strategy for the country that pertains to public transport? Mr Tongue—Senator, in the terms you are describing, that is probably a question for the Minister. As Mr Deegan has outlined, we are actively engaged with the states in a whole range of areas. In terms of public availability, announcement strategies and all of those sorts of things, those are questions— Senator MILNE—To follow up, Minister, and to take on notice for your colleague—given that it has been indicated here that there is work going on in relation to developing a public transport strategy for the country, whether it is called ‘moving people’ or whatever it is called—could you get me some feedback about when we can expect a draft of that strategy or a public comment strategy, or something which will give a sense of the coordination of public transport planning and guidance to Infrastructure</p>

				<p>Australia? Senator Conroy—I am happy to take that on notice. Senator MILNE—Thank you.</p>
NBII 84	24/02/09	41	Macdonald	<p>[Boom Gates for Rail Crossings Program – Queensland] Senator Conroy—Just while we are doing that, I have some information on the boom gates in Queensland that you were asking about. States will be held responsible to ensure they do not shift money away from their current level-crossing programs. The government has made it clear we are providing funding for active safety measures such as boom gates, flashing lights et cetera. States will still be required to continue their boom gate programs on level crossings as projected, and their current funding will be expanded upon by the federal government’s funding. Our funding will not be used instead of state funding, and this will allow them to do additional work they otherwise could not afford on passive measures such as clearing of grass, trees, additional signs et cetera. Advice has gone to the states in relation to all of those. Senator IAN MACDONALD—That is a communication from the Department that you are reading from? Senator Conroy—I am not going to reveal to you who provides me with the information. That is some information I have been provided with. Senator IAN MACDONALD—And I thank you for it. Of course, it is authoritative if you have given it to me. That is good. Thank you, Minister. That is useful. Senator Conroy—No worries. I interrupted there just because I thought you would be interested. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Following up, could I just ask, on notice, for someone to get back to me—I appreciate this would be on notice—about just which projects the Queensland Government was committed for and which, therefore, federal money might be available for. Senator Conroy—I am happy to take that on notice.</p>
NBII 86	24/02/09	41	Macdonald	<p>[Upgrading of Einasleigh River Bridge] Senator IAN MACDONALD—.....The road from, effectively, Cairns to Burketown and Normanton but more specifically around Georgetown has been badly damaged by floods. They have been cut off for three or four weeks. There is a debate going on about whether the existing bridge over the Einasleigh River should be repaired—the approaches that have been washed away—or whether there should be a whole new bridge built over the top of it. Has anyone made approaches to you about that or is that more likely to come through a disaster relief program? Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice.</p>
NBII 08	24/02/09	41-42	Macdonald	<p>[Rail Projects between Townsville and Mount Isa] Senator MILNE—Can I— Senator IAN MACDONALD—No, hang on—Mr Williams was just going to tell me about the railway line. Mr Williams—Can you repeat the question, Senator? Senator IAN MACDONALD—From Townsville to Mount Isa, are there any proposals or any submissions for upgrading, strengthening or duplicating anything? Mr Williams—There is no specific funding allocated by the Australian Government to such a proposal. My understanding is that a private company entitled Australian Transport and Energy Corridor, ATEC, is a potential proponent of such a railway and may have put proposals up to Infrastructure Australia, but that is as much as— Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is that from Townsville to Mount Isa or from Melbourne to Mount</p>

				<p>Isa?</p> <p>Mr Williams—From Townsville to Mount Isa, I think, yes.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Really? Can you just check that for me?</p> <p>Mr Williams—Yes, I will.</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—Can I just also mention again that, in the report to COAG that Infrastructure Australia made available in December, one of the 94 projects is the Mount Isa rail corridor upgrade, which is from Mount Isa to Townsville.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. Is that one of the 28 priority projects?</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—It is one of the 94 projects.</p>
IA 04	24/02/09	43	Milne	<p>[Intermodal Hubs for Rail Freight]</p> <p>Senator MILNE—Okay. Does that also apply to the very fast train? Does that concern the rail corporation or you?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—The very fast train in the context of Infrastructure Australia’s—</p> <p>Senator MILNE—In the context of: are you doing work on it? I have seen that it is in the list of 90 or so projects. Is any work being done on it, apart from that particular proposal? Is there anything being advanced?</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—No. It is one of the 94 projects, as you pointed out, for Infrastructure Australia, and they are working on those proposals.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—In terms of transport strategy, should I also them about the north-south rail freight corridor, in particular the intermodal approach to planning, which is one of the big issues they have, apart from upgrading the tracks and so on?</p> <p>Mr Williams—It depends on what the question is. It could be a potential question to me or to David Marchant in the next section.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—What they are saying is that it is not just about upgrading the tracks to get the freight onto the rail but also about getting better intermodal planning. Can you tell me whether any work is going on to supplement the submission in relation to a north-south rail corridor?</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—Again, in terms of the Infrastructure Australia list, there are a number of intermodal hubs that are part of the consideration by Infrastructure Australia that clearly relate to freight as well.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—Do they relate to the rail freight up the east coast?</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—I will have to take that on notice for Michael Deagan.</p> <p>Senator MILNE—That is fine.</p>
NBII 09	24/02/09	46	Macdonald	<p>[Opening Statement Made by David Marchant]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is there any prospect of ARTC eventually taking over the line north of Brisbane, as it has done in the rest of Australia?</p> <p>Mr Marchant—We have basically concentrated on doing our charter, which used to connect the Australian capital cities and major ports on the standard gauge interstate network. We have been concentrating on getting those connections put together and on facilitating improvements in their performance. Nobody has approached us to look at narrow gauge in the north of Queensland.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—But you are involved from Perth to Melbourne to Brisbane—so everywhere around the coast except north of Brisbane and north of Perth. No-one has ever approached you. Has it ever been raised?</p> <p>Mr Marchant—No, it has not.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Have you ever done any investigations about whether it would fit within your remit?</p>

				<p>Mr Marchant—Absolutely not.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Perhaps it needs the Queensland Government to approach you to have a look at it.</p> <p>Mr Marchant—We would need to look at it on a commercial basis. The policies are made by government. We are a company operating on a commercial framework.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Could you make that statement available to the Committee?</p> <p>Mr Marchant—Sure.</p>
AAA 01	24/02/09	50-51	Macdonald	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. I want to ask about the Fort Street High School, or Senator Heffernan might like to take that up. Is that your area?</p> <p>Mr Doherty—Yes.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—I was going to ask you about something else, but it has completely gone from my mind. I will think about it over the lunch break. Is it correct that the school built some buildings without the proper insulation requirements for airport noise? Are you familiar with that issue? I understand Senator Williams raised it at the last estimates, and you gave some answers.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I think Maureen Ellis would have been involved in that. I am not conscious that the school has failed to meet any requirements. As I understand it, this is a very old school and I expect the construction was done before there were any—</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—No, particular buildings were recently built and under local planning they seem to have got round the need to make provision for the fact that they are under the flight path, which is what this is all about.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I do not know the details, I am sorry, of the construction that has taken place at the school. I am aware there is a commitment to assist with insulation work there. But, if there is a specific question about the work that has been done, I am happy to take it on notice.</p>
OTS 01	24/02/09	54-55	Macdonald	<p>[Front of House – Individual Airport Requirements]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—On notice, could you sensitively explain the difference between stopping for two minutes to drop off someone and stopping for one minute to pick up someone, whose jurisdiction it is, and against whom would constituents be offending if they ignored these rules.</p> <p>Mr Tongue—Certainly.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Thank you.</p>
AAA 02	24/02/09	57-58	Williams/Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—I am very saddened, though, that you pinched that \$2 billion out of the sovereign fund for the bush communications. Were building F and building G built since 2002?</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I am not familiar with the terms ‘building F’ and ‘building G’. The advice that I was given was the two buildings concerned were called the Cohen and the Rowe building. They may be the same.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—Yes, fair enough. But, given the noise contour, were these buildings appropriately insulated in the beginning. They were not, apparently.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I do not know the ins and outs of the New South Wales planning system as it applied. All we have is the word of the consultants, who indicated that their expectation was that they would have been.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—Could you take on notice whether they complied with the building regulations given the noise contour at the time and whether they were actually eligible for insulation by</p>

				<p>the New South Wales Government given their input into the building approval process.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I am not trying to be unhelpful. We would take on notice a question if we had the information available. But I do not think we will have that information.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—Just in the event of—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—The Parliamentary Library might be able to do your research for you. The Department is indicating it does not have the information.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—But he does not know.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—If we have it I am sure we will be able to provide it.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—If we have any information about why that was done we can provide that, Senator, of course.</p>
AAA 03	24/02/09	58	Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—What is the definition of a public building under your program?</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I do not know off the cuff. I understand it has been used for schools and hospitals, but I can take that on notice and provide you the definition.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—Do the noise regulations apply to state government buildings?</p> <p>Mr Doherty—The New South Wales planning noise regulations?</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—Yes.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I do not know.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—My information is that state government buildings do not have to comply with the regulations. A state government is responsible for insulating their own buildings for noise under your noise insulation program?</p> <p>Mr Doherty—I will have to check the details of the guidelines for the program.</p> <p>Senator HEFFERNAN—When you find that out, you might answer the question: why did the Commonwealth spend money doing state government buildings when the states should have done them themselves? The next questions can be on notice, Minister. Has there been any further insulation work carried out on buildings and by any other state governments? If so, how much was spent in each case.</p> <p>Mr Doherty—That would be a potential in Adelaide and I will need to check that.</p>
AA 06	24/02/09	60-61	Macdonald	<p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Mr Russell, again, I assume—and correct me if I am wrong—the Minister is well briefed, either from you or from his own sources, on the impact any industrial action might have on the economy, Australian jobs, emergency services—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I am not sure Mr Russell is in a position to give an assessment of what—</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—I will ask you then, Minister. I assume the Minister, Mr Albanese, has been briefed, either by Airservices or someone else, on the impact any industrial action could have on the economy, jobs, international and regional airlines—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I am sure Mr Albanese is very conscious of the importance of the aviation industry to the broader economy.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—My question was a little deeper than that: not only the aviation industry, but a cessation of operations of the Australian industry, the impact it could have on Australia in these difficult financial times.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—Perhaps you misheard me. I said the impact of it on the broader Australian economy, agreeing with your question.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. So he is aware of—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I am sure he is well across his duties and understandings in this area.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Do you, Minister or Mr Russell, have any contingency planning and actions of what the Government might put in place if—</p>

				<p>Senator Conroy—First, that is a question about government policy and I will take it on notice.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—I am encouraged by Mr Russell’s original response that this is all now hypothetical, but it did seem fairly serious a while back. I was just wondering what contingency plans the government might have had in place, and so you will take that on notice for me. Thank you.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—Pleased to take it on notice.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. I do not want you to disclose any Cabinet material, but this is an issue that is wider than either the relevant Transport Minister or the Workplace Relations Minister, which would be a matter for Cabinet. Could I ask if the Government, through Cabinet, has contingency plans if things go wrong?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I am happy to take that on notice and give you any information the Minister considers relevant.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—I was asking you, really, in your role as a Cabinet Minister.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—Right. I am not in a position I can discuss cabinet considerations</p>
AA 01	24/02/09	60-61	McGauran	<p>Senator McGAURAN—None of us want to inflame an issue where, heaven forbid, this union has been running amok for years and now, suddenly, we are all very sensitive about getting them to the table. The point that you have reached now is because the minister, to his credit, got tough on the union and you, Mr Russell, also got tough on the union. So sensitivity does not work with this union. Take it from me, I get all their emails. I know your negotiations are at a very sensitive point, but tell me: is the union’s 63 per cent ambit claim in regard to a pay rise still on the table?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—You are asking Mr Russell to discuss the ongoing negotiations. I think you could well take a leaf out of Senator MacDonald’s sensitive and appropriate questions. We will take that on notice.</p>
AA 02	24/02/09	61-62	McGauran	<p>Senator McGAURAN—You said in the last estimates that this sort of wildcat sick leave tactic has been used, and you have accepted it as a tactic used—a very dangerous one. You said it was used by a small number of controllers. Now, is that the union’s view too to you? Are they saying, ‘Hey, we don’t know who these people are and we have no control on these wildcat sick leave strikes’?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—You are now asking the officer to give you an opinion.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—He gave the same opinion on page 75 of <i>Hansard</i> last time.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We are now in a situation where we are close, hopefully, to resolving the issue. I think Mr Russell would be wise to take it on notice, given that we are potentially close to a resolution. I know, Senator McGauran, you want to help resolve that situation.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—So how close? Are we weeks away?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I think Mr Russell used the words ‘crucial in the next few days?’</p> <p>Mr Russell—Chairman, I am hopeful that the next few days will be decisive in terms of these negotiations. I am very happy to take these questions on notice, but I make the point again that these negotiations are at a delicate stage and I just do not want to say something that may jeopardise them, with great respect.</p>
AA 07	24/02/09	63	McGauran	<p>Senator McGAURAN—Okay. The contingency plan which my colleague raised would still be in play because the agreement has not been finalised yet—there may be many a slip between cup and lip, I think the saying is. Having been in government, we know there is a contingency plan, and this committee has a right to ask and know what it would be. What is the contingency plan?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—As I said, we will take that on notice and any information that is available that Mr</p>

				<p>Albanese is willing to give you we will get for you.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—But that is a question that ought to be answered, not a question of opinion.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I did not say it was an opinion. I said I would get you an answer. We have taken it on notice.</p>
AA 03	24/02/09	64-65	O'Brien	<p>Senator O'BRIEN—Mr Russell, I think it was in the last budget estimates you told this committee: At this stage we anticipate achieving the full staffing complement by the end of August with new controllers flowing to the system over the coming months. This is just the beginning of our increased recruitment activities with a further 80 to 100 ATCs to be recruited per year over the next five years.</p> <p>How did we go and how are we going?</p> <p>Mr Russell—We have made some very good progress in this area. Our staffing issue at the moment is okay. The way we deploy our people can be improved, however. It is a combination of bringing additional staff into the organisation, as I indicated at that previous hearing, over the next couple of years and reorganising the way we deploy them. If I could just provide you with a little update, our current requirement for operational air traffic controllers is 893 positions. We currently have 945 air traffic controllers. During 2008 we had 49 resignations, 14 of whom left to go overseas and 25 in fact rejoined us, most of whom are expats from overseas.</p> <p>We have no difficulty attracting what we would call ab initio trainees. Recently we put a small advertisement on our website for 30 positions for experienced controllers. We had 208 applications; 162 of them were from overseas, and many of those are air traffic controllers of experience wanting to come back to Australia. So there is not an issue there, we think, in terms of the immediate staffing issues. We know very well that if we sat on our hands, so to speak, we would have a problem because the average age of our air traffic controllers is 42. Twenty per cent of them are older than 50. So we do need to continue to train them, and that has been part of our ongoing program.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—Mr Russell, going back to what you told us, did you in fact get to your full staffing complement at the end of August last year?</p> <p>Mr Russell—We have the right number of air traffic controllers for our requirements against our establishment, Senator.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—I am asking about last August, and the prediction you made.</p> <p>Mr Russell—Yes, we were there, but I do make the point there is still a deployment issue that we need to continue to work on.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—I am not sure what that means. Can you explain it?</p> <p>Mr Russell—It goes to the question of the way we are organised on a sector basis. There are some 32 sectors across the country, and we have people endorsed specifically to some of those sectors, so you do not have quite the flexibility. That is part of the issue that we are working on with this broader reform in this air traffic group.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—Which sectors are we—if I can put it this way—under-equipped for?</p> <p>Mr Russell—I would take that question on notice, if you do not mind, Senator, and provide you an answer.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—All right. I appreciate that.....</p>
AA 04	24/02/09	65	O'Brien	<p>Senator O'BRIEN—.....I appreciate that. Given that I was asking questions early last year about problems at Launceston Airport, can you bring us up to date with the provision of air traffic control services at Launceston Airport?</p> <p>Mr Russell—I will ask my colleague, Jason Harfield, who is the GM, Air Traffic Control, to answer</p>

				<p>that question, Senator.</p> <p>Mr Harfield—With Launceston, we have brought up the staffing establishment to six, which includes the manager. On location, we have another recruitment exercise that was completed late last year, and we expect to have another trainee down there in the next 12 months. We have just recently also changed the roster down in Launceston from being a two-person roster of 10-hour shifts each, to have three people on under normal circumstances throughout the day to provide a level of redundancy for any sick leave, also to allow some extension to the rostered hours, if required.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—Has that overcome the problems that were being experienced?</p> <p>Mr Harfield—We had a number of interruptions during January—four, compared to 25 for the previous 12 months. Those four in January appear to be a multitude of circumstances just after the New Year, where we had some illness in Launceston, and the people that would need to help to fill the shifts were unavailable due to the holiday period and were away at the time.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—So people were on leave?</p> <p>Mr Harfield—They were not on leave; they were on days off but unavailable. However, we were able to limit the time the tower was shut to much smaller periods than what we previously had because we had a better roster in place that provided a level of redundancy.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—Did that have any impact on aircraft arrivals or departures?</p> <p>Mr Harfield—Yes it did; they were in the normal out-of-hours mode during that time.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—How many aircraft did it affect?</p> <p>Mr Harfield—I will have to take it on notice, Senator.</p>
AA 05	24/02/09	65	Macdonald	<p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Mr Russell, perhaps as a question on notice—hopefully, the issue is resolved shortly—could you tell us the outcome of the negotiations over the next couple of days, weeks? What I am doing is putting this on notice so that before 17 March someone can give us a report on where we are at by 17 March and, hopefully, things will be hunky-dory by then.</p> <p>Mr Russell—I will be pleased to, Senator.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Could you also particularly make sure in the report that you make reference to any arrangement that has been made about the issues which my colleagues were asking you about—that is the question of what seems, on the face of it, to be unconstrained sick leave. Take that particular issue on notice, but that will hopefully be after it is all over.</p> <p>Mr Russell—Yes, okay.</p>
CASA 01	24/02/09	73-74	Macdonald	<p>[Mobile Telephones in Aircraft]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is it you or someone else—and this came up in another estimates committee—on the use of mobile telephones in aircraft. Is that a safety issue?</p> <p>Ms Macauley—It is not a safety issue per se. Any regulation of its use is not a matter for the ATSB. But we may have investigations that we conduct where the use of mobile phones may be reviewed or examined as to whether they played a factor through either a distraction or some sort of electromagnetic interference. But its regulation is a matter for the Civil Aviation Safety Authority.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—I have missed the boat here and perhaps Mr Tongue might take it on notice from me to CASA, but it is a regulatory issue, is it, and the Australian Air Regulations now say they must be turned off. Is that correct?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—I would have to take some advice from CASA.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. Could you put that on notice for me, please? Is it regulated by</p>

				the government or is it just an airline thing and what is the scientific background for the issue? I think that is all I had, Mr Chairman.
OTS 02	24/02/09	75	Williams	<p>[Maritime Security Identification Card - MSIC]</p> <p>Mr Hanna—In September 2007, AusCheck was created within the Attorney-General’s Department and they are the agency that does the processing now, and makes the determination of whether someone has an adverse criminal record. It is possible that someone would be convicted of a drug-related offence and not sentenced to imprisonment. That in itself would not constitute a maritime security relevant offence and therefore would not disqualify someone from holding a maritime security identification card.</p> <p>Senator WILLIAMS—From my notes here, I understand that a figure from late last year indicated that around 10 per cent of those people approved for MSICs had a criminal history. Is this figure accurate?</p> <p>Mr Hanna—It is the case that a number of individuals in society, in general, have convictions on their criminal history. These also relate to traffic offences and very minor violent offences. So the figures that are quoted for people that have criminal offences also include these minor convictions. The case of individuals with offences is obviously much higher than those that have maritime security relevant offences.</p> <p>Senator WILLIAMS—So those figures are around 10 per cent. Do you have a more recent figure available on that? I understand the figures from late last year indicated that around 10 percent of those people approved for MSICs had a criminal history. Are there any more recent figures available on that or do you want to take that on notice?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—Could we take that on notice and get the results to you, please?</p> <p>Senator WILLIAMS—No problem at all. Can you give any indication as to what the majority of those allowable offences relate to?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—Again, Senator, we would take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator WILLIAMS—Yes. Since the introduction of the MSIC program, can you advise us how many people each financial year have returned a negative security assessment as conducted by ASIO? Do you want to take that on notice as well?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—Yes, and I’ll have to talk to ASIO about that one.</p>
BITRE 01	24/02/09	80	Macdonald	<p>[Inclusion of Calliope in the Northern Australia Statistical Compendium]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is it appropriate for me to ask you—it depends on how far along you are—what do you class as Northern Australia?</p> <p>Mr Potterton—I might ask my colleague, Dr Dolman.</p> <p>Dr Dolman—Essentially we have adopted a definition of above the Tropic of Capricorn. However to make that practical we have actually looked at local government areas that are around that boundary and statistical local areas around that boundary to make it possible to collect the data.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—That is interesting. Mr Gray sometimes uses catchments in the north, which is quite a different thing, but I am pleased to hear you using that. Local authorities that are sort of on the border of the north like Calliope, which is now the greater Gladstone council, would that be included? If you have any flexibility can I urge you to include it. It makes the statistics look a bit better.</p> <p>Dr Dolman—I can take that on notice. My expectation is that it will be included if it is very close to that boundary. There are a number that have dropped down below the Tropic.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD— Yes, and it is really part of the Central Queensland conglomerate, you</p>

				would call it. When your material comes out, is it immediately publicly-released, or does it go to the instructing minister first and then is put out publicly when he gives the okay? Mr Potterton —Yes, we certainly brief our Minister and then it is released by agreement with the minister and his office.
ISTP 01	24/02/09	84	Colbeck	[BITRE TFES Parameter Review] Senator COLBECK —It is disappointing that that did not occur. I know that you have made a decision not to change the parameters, but there was a lot of discussion about the density parameters. When the documentation came out, it indicated that Circular Head Dolomite had indicated that they would be happy to see a discount rate of 30 per cent for the high-density rate. They are quite concerned about that, because none of their submissions—and we have been through them fairly comprehensively—show that. Can you enlighten me as to how that might have appeared through the process? Mr Sutton —Senator, the government’s decision, as I say, was to leave all the parameters unchanged. We are working through some administrative reforms related to the program that will not impact on the overall expenditure under the program. All the underlying parameters, including the approach to the high-density issues, were left unchanged. I think that reflected the complexities of the program and the linkages between the various elements. Yes, there was no adjustment to the high-density factors, but that is in the context of the overall assistance levels being unchanged. All Tasmanian businesses benefit from those assistance levels being left unchanged. The impact on individual businesses which had particular issues—and I recognise that dolomite and the heavy density factor was one of those—I think needed to be looked at in the context of the overall government decision. Senator COLBECK —The Government might see it in that light, but they certainly do not, because it limits their capacity to compete on the mainland with similar products, which is effectively the base reason for the scheme in the first place. Mr Sutton —Yes, Senator. Senator COLBECK —And the fact that the documentation that came out indicated they would be happy with the 30 per cent discount rate when their submissions do not even consider that at all. They were looking to see the discount rate removed. Mr Sutton —Senator, can I ask the document to which you are referring? Senator COLBECK —I have an email from them, and it refers to the Productivity Commission work that was done as well, but it came out in the final work. The BITRE TFES parameter review, page 38, is the reference that I have been given. It is under the paragraph ‘What discount should apply to high-density freight’. I have a copy of their submission. Mr Sutton —Senator, I might have to take that question on notice and look into it in more detail.
LGRD 01	24/02/09	88	Payne	[Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program] Senator PAYNE —And I differentiate them by referring to one just as the Regional and Local Infrastructure Program and one as the Regional and Local Infrastructure Program, Strategic Projects. Is that correct? Mr Tongue —That is right, yes. Senator PAYNE —Thank you for making that so easy for us. Mr Pahlow —Senator, the date for completion of the \$250 million program is 30 September 2009. Senator PAYNE —So that is different from the one which we were just talking about before? Mr Pahlow —The strategic projects one, yes. Senator PAYNE —In regard to the first program, the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program and its compliance requirements, as I understand it applications were to be compliant if

			<p>project details were provided to the Department before 30 January. Is that correct?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Yes.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Can you advise the Committee of the number of local councils that were able to provide project details in that time?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Five hundred and sixty-five councils and shires were able to submit their projects and, additionally, the ACT government.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—So all 565 councils in Australia have been able to take up the funding offer?</p> <p>Ms Foster—That is correct.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—And then further, in terms of compliance, there are categories that are outlined in your guidelines. Can you tell us how many of the funding requests that were received from local councils comply adequately with those guidelines?</p> <p>Ms Foster—One hundred applications from councils comprising more projects—so councils in some cases have submitted a number of projects within the allocation given to them—but 100 councils have been approved and announced to date.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—So does that mean the other 465 remain under consideration?</p> <p>Ms Foster—They are in the process of assessment. It has been about three weeks since the closing deadline. We received a total of 3,605 projects from the 565 councils and we are working through those as quickly as we can.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Of the 100 that have been approved and announced are they projects or councils?</p> <p>Ms Foster—That is councils, so that would comprise some hundreds of projects.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Can you tell me how many?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I do not have that detail with me. We can seek that for you.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Could you take that on notice for me?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Yes.</p>
LGRD 02	24/02/09	90-91	<p>Payne</p> <p>[Staffing Resources for LGRD Division]</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—In terms of resourcing for the Department, has there been any enhancement to the Department’s resourcing to perform that compliance role, let alone, might I say, the evaluation and approval process for the 3,605 projects in this program itself?</p> <p>Mr Pahlow—We have been provided with additional resources for that purpose.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Can you identify those for the Committee?</p> <p>Mr Pahlow—For the \$250 million, we have 721,000 this financial year and 356,000 in the next financial year, and there are additional resources available under the \$550 million program which would also be used for those purposes.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—What number of staff does that—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We are running a very thorough process to ensure we can assess them and monitor them.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—I appreciate that, Minister, and that has been indicated by the officers. What sort of staffing numbers do those enhancements equate to?</p> <p>Mr Pahlow—That depends on when, Senator. At the moment, we have a lot of staff on board.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Let us go with now, while you are dealing with 3,605 projects minus the 100 councils you have already finished.</p> <p>Mr Pahlow—We have in the order of 12 staff. There would be fewer full-time equivalents because that is a very compressed period of time. During the assessment process, that could pick up to 15.</p> <p>Ms Foster—We are also making quite extensive use of contract support and are consciously</p>

				<p>reallocating resources across the broader division as we have peaks and troughs of activity in the programs.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—To get the exact correct answers, we are happy to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—I appreciate that, but that does give me a helpful perspective. Thanks, Ms Foster and Mr Pahlow. As we get down to crunch point, the 30 September expenditure point—between the interim progress report and the final progress report—do you think it will be necessary to provide further additional staffing resources to meet those deadlines?</p> <p>Mr Pahlow—We would provide the staffing resources as required, Senator.</p>
LGRD 03	24/02/09	91-92	Payne	<p>[Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program]</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—.....On the \$550 million project, as I understand it, an application from a council had to be made by 23 December last year, was it, to be compliant?</p> <p>Ms Foster—That is correct, Senator.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—And can you indicate to us how many councils have taken up that offer?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Senator, you may be aware that the Government announced its decision to re-open the process of the \$550 million program after the additional \$500 million was allocated.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—But at the time of the further announcement, can you tell me how many had taken it up?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Yes. There were 344 applications.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Is that 344 councils?</p> <p>Ms Foster—No, 344 applications. Each council was allowed only one application.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—So it really is 344 councils.</p> <p>Ms Foster—Yes, Senator.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—344 projects.</p> <p>Mr Anglely—It is almost 344 councils. A few were invited to make joint applications. You could put in your own separate one, but you were also able to put in for joint projects as well.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Do you know how many that would be, Mr Anglely?</p> <p>Mr Anglely—No. We can take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Thank you very much</p>
LGRD 04	24/02/09	92	Payne	<p>[Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program]</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—.....Can you then tell me, in terms of the applications which have already been made, whether any assessment has commenced on those?</p> <p>Ms Foster—We did commence looking at the project, Senator, but that assessment has been put on hold pending us reaching the second deadline, the new deadline, of 6 March.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—If you were a council which had an application already in under the previous arrangements, what are the rules in relation to reviewing that application or revising it? Can you take it out and start again, or what do you have to do?</p> <p>Ms Foster—We have offered councils three options. We have said, ‘You must do one of the following: advise us that you wish to retain your initial application; resubmit a changed application; or, if you did not submit an initial application, you may now submit one.’</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—So, given the tight timeframe that was attached to that, had any applications that had been received by the Department been rejected as either not being compliant with the guidelines or having being received after the deadline before the extension was announced?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I do not have that detail, sorry, Senator. I will have to take that on notice.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Thank you. I would appreciate that. Given the new deadline is Friday, 6 March and</p>

				you have done some assessment, when do you expect that you will be able to provide the ranked list of applications, which, I think, goes to the Australian Council of Local Government, does it, for comment after that?
LGRD 05	24/02/09	92-93	Payne	<p>[Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program]</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—In terms of this program, the \$550 million program, is the staffing allocation and the budgetary allocation reflected in the numbers Mr Pahlow gave me before?</p> <p>Ms Foster—No. There is an additional allocation for the \$550 million program. We have \$1.8 million this financial year and \$0.92 million in 2009-10.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Do you expect that that will need to be increased now that you have extended the program and will be inevitably receiving additional applications?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I think we will need to wait and see how many applications we get and what complexity there is, but my intention initially is to work within the resources I have been given.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—An admirable intention, Ms Foster. But, given the significant extension to the funding and the extension to the deadline, which is still 10 days away, what is the pace of applications like? Are you expecting to receive a very significant number?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I do not know what the extension of time will mean for the councils.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—The announcement was made on 13 February; we are 10 days after that now, as it is 24 February. What sort of volume of inquiries or flow of applications have you received in those 10 days?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I think we will have to take that on notice. We have a hotline, which was established for councils to call. I do not have details of how many calls we have received relating to this specific program.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Or whether it is running hot or otherwise. If you follow that up for me, that would be helpful. Reflecting on that, are you telling me that it is too soon to indicate how it is going—that you think you will need to come to the close period and then reassess? When you said you had 344 councils, I think, at the previous deadline, was that within the ballpark you were expecting? Was it low?</p>
LGRD 06	24/02/09	94	Payne	<p>[Staffing Resources for LGRD Division]</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—We have 344 projects or councils in the first iteration of this before the extension. You talk about this almost on an individual project management basis. How many staff do you have doing that? That is a fairly extraordinary volume of work that you are expecting to be dealt with.</p> <p>Ms Foster—That is right, though I would make the point that with those 344 applications, of course, there is a cap of \$550 million if these projects are larger.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—I understand.</p> <p>Ms Foster—So we might expect that there will be fewer than that number of projects that actually become part of this program. I do not have the exact staff numbers. I will take that on notice but, again, as we are running these programs, we will have periods of heightened activity on the various programs, which will allow us to move our staff across them.</p> <p>Senator PAYNE—Ms Foster, I ask you to take one other matter on notice. If there is any more clarity that you can provide around the dates going forward when you expect to be able to move things along in terms of presentation of a final list to the minister, the consultation—I think you called it—with the Australian Council of Local Government and so on, I would be grateful if the committee received those.</p> <p>Ms Foster—Certainly, and we should be in a better position to do that as we get to the close of applications.</p>

AMSA 01	24/02/09	96	Johnston	<p>[Aircraft Availability] Senator JOHNSTON—You are aware that Coastwatch has a very detailed structured system of availability of aircraft. Mr Peachey—Yes, Senator, we are part of that. In fact, one of the statistics I did mention was Coastwatch reliance on our aircraft as well. I cannot underestimate the need for that integrated program to work effectively, and we do work very closely with Coastwatch to ensure that it happens. Senator JOHNSTON—But you do understand what I am looking for? I am looking for a figure that tells us how often we needed or wanted our Dornier aircraft and how often we could not have one because of some reason. The reason may well be service or maintenance—whatever reason—and we get a charter or we get someone else to do it. But also there will be reasons that are not planned, that are extraordinary and that are things that we should know about. Indeed, I think I would be failing in my responsibilities if I did not ask you: is there a system of analysis of availability; what are those figures; and what monitoring is there so that we can get a sense of the reliable availability of the aircraft against the demand? Mr Peachey—Senator, as I said or indicated, I do not have a figure of when we have asked and it has not been available. We can no doubt go back and see if we can get that figure, but— Senator JOHNSTON—I would very much be obliged. The date for questions on notice is 17 April, so by 17 April I am happy for you to tell me what you can about the system. Mr Peachey—I am happy to do that, but, before we do, I just want to stress that this is not an operation that goes unmonitored or unchecked. As I said earlier, I personally get a report every day of where the planes are and whether they are available or not. As you quite rightly said, if one was not available for some reason—these are machines, after all; sometimes my car does not work—we do have access to other aircraft to assist the program. Senator JOHNSTON—But I am looking for a figure that gives me comfort and confidence that there is a high level of availability at the times required. That is the essence of our business here. Mr Peachey—Okay. Senator JOHNSTON—And if we do not record that, I think we should. Mr Peachey—Okay. Senator Conroy—He said he would take it on notice, didn't he? Senator JOHNSTON—Yes. I am just making it clear, Minister, as to what we are taking on notice.</p>
AMSA 02	24/02/09	97	Johnston	<p>[Aircraft Radar and Incidents] Senator JOHNSTON—I hope he has. The radar was a problem. How are we going with that? Mr Peachey—The radar was a problem, Senator. As I understand it now, the radar has been fixed and the aircraft are operational with their new radars installed. Mr Young—Could I add that the radar was certified by the certifying authority late last year and is still being rolled out for a couple of the aircraft. That will be completed this quarter. Senator JOHNSTON—Which of our cities does not have the radar? The search radar on five Dornier 328 turboprop aircraft were temporarily replaced by weather radar. We have two of the five still waiting to be fitted or repaired, or whatever the circumstances were. Which ones are they—do you know? Mr Young—I do not know which ones they are, Senator. Senator JOHNSTON—Okay. I also understand that we have had quite a considerable number of mid-air mechanical incidents, including four engine failures. I am sure this is not new to you. I am simply raising this to give you an opportunity to tell me that that situation has not been beyond what the media</p>

				<p>have suggested. I am looking at April last year with respect to the performance. Have we had any other incidents since that report in the <i>Australian</i> with respect to mid-air incidents, including four engine failures? Have we had a successful resolution of that problem or have there been others?</p> <p>Mr Young—Senator, I am not aware of any incidents of that type.</p> <p>Senator JOHNSTON—Could I be as casual about this and as convenient to you as I possibly can, if there are incidents could you tell me within the timeframe for the questions on notice. If I do not hear from you, I will take it you have done the work and there are none.</p> <p>Mr Young—Certainly, Senator.</p>
AMSA 03	24/02/09	100	O'Brien	<p>[National Search and Rescue Manual]</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—What I am asking is: does AusSAR accept that there, perhaps, needs to be some training of officers to attune them to the possibility that they need to take over in circumstances where there is not a direct request but the circumstances are unfolding to them which indicate that perhaps there should be.</p> <p>Mr Young—Yes, Senator, and we have reviewed our training processes and, in fact, working with the National Search and Rescue Council, reviewed the manual to ensure that it is clear and it provides good, clear guidance for both ends of such a conversation.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—You are reviewing it or you have?</p> <p>Mr Young—Have reviewed it, Senator.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—Okay. Could you supply to the Committee, on notice, those passages that have been changed or added to the procedures manual, and in any other form, which are relevant to this passage of the coroner's finding?</p> <p>Mr Young—Certainly, Senator.</p> <p>Senator O'BRIEN—Thank you.</p>
LGRD 07	24/02/09	101	Macdonald	<p>[ALGA Steering Committee]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Mr Chair, Please stop me if Senator Payne covered some of these things while I was absent. I am interested in the Major Cities Unit.</p> <p>Ms Foster—The Major Cities Unit is a component of Infrastructure Australia, Michael Deegan's outfit.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. I am really very late on that, aren't I, having sat through Infrastructure Australia. There is an Australian Council of Local Governments Steering Committee. Can you tell me about that?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Yes. Let me just go to the press release. It was a steering committee set up after the inaugural Australian Council of Local Governments meeting last year and it has a number of members, a number of lord mayors, the President of ALGA, a number of councillors from around the country and the National President of the Local Government Managers Australia.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Where would I find the list? Perhaps it is easy enough for you to give me the list of people on that steering committee?</p> <p>Ms Foster—The list has been published. It went out as a media release.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Can you get it for me as a question on notice?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Certainly.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Were they appointed on the recommendation of the Department?</p>
LGRD 08	24/02/09	101-102	Macdonald	<p>[ALGA Steering Committee]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Can you briefly run through them—read them out to me and perhaps tell me where they come from?</p>

				<p>Ms Foster—There is Councillor Geoff Lake from Monash in Victoria; Campbell Newman from Queensland; Councillor Robert Doyle from Melbourne; Clover Moore from New South Wales; Paul Bell from Queensland; Genia McCaffery from New South Wales; Ronald Lami Lami from the Northern Territory; Bruce Miller from New South Wales; Joy Baluch from South Australia; Michael Gaffney from Tasmania; Lisa Scaffidi from Western Australia; Kerry Moir from Northern Territory; Troy Pickard from Western Australia; Mary-Lou Corcoran from South Australia; Ray Pincombe, who, as I said, is the National President of Local Government Managers Australia and is from South Australia; Barry Sammels from WA; Jenny Dowell from New South Wales; Linton Reynolds from WA; Pam Macleod from Victoria; Graham Sansom from New South Wales; Lisa Price from Victoria; Paul Slape, who is the National Secretary of the Australian Services Union; Allan Sutherland from Queensland; Val Schier from Queensland; Ron Hoenig from New South Wales; and Lynne Craigie from WA.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Were they appointed on the recommendation of the Department?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I do not know that. Can I take that on notice?</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—If they had been appointed on the recommendation of the department, you would have done it, I assume.</p> <p>Ms Foster—I have been looking after this area for the whole of a week.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Then you would not have done it. All right. You had better find that out for me. What is the steering committee actually going to do?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We did have a little bit of a discussion with Senator Payne, but I am sure we can—</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—When you are finding out how these people were appointed, can you find out also the rationale for their appointment—whether it was geographic across the nation or based on their particular expertise.</p> <p>Ms Foster—If we have that information.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Someone must know why they were appointed.</p> <p>Mr Tongue—Broadly, they reflect interests across local government—for example, capital cities, state and local government associations and Indigenous councils.</p>
LGRD 09	24/02/09	106	McGauran	<p>[Dinosaur Museum and Barcaldine Tree of Knowledge Projects]</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—Anyway we had better not get bogged down. Due to time constraints, I will not pursue that.</p> <p>As Senators Macdonald and Heffernan know, the ACCs have just been hung out to dry. There is still no action on that front. One more point—and I have the <i>Hansard</i> here in case you think it is farcical, because I want to be able to quote you, Senator Conroy—you said in the last Committee meeting that the Labor Party’s stump of knowledge was on holidays in Brisbane. It went to Brisbane for some resuscitation and, no doubt, some varnishing and polishing up. Where is the stump? Is the stump back in its rightful place?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We are willing to plant you there in the interim.</p> <p>CHAIR—Sorry, Senator McGauran, but, as much as this Committee does everything it can to work together, we do have an arrangement—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We have serious questions to pursue, Senator McGauran.</p> <p>CHAIR—Senators Macdonald and Heffernan do have some pertinent questions for the Office of</p>

				<p>Northern Australia.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—This is a \$6 million project. I know it is farcical. Indeed, it is farcical. It is a farcical \$6 million waste of money, and I will not pursue it more than another minute.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I am afraid the officers at the table do not have that information readily to hand. We will happily take that on notice and let you know if it has returned from its holiday.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—Could you also take on notice whether any work has started on the project and has any consideration been given to combining the two projects of the Dinosaur Museum and the Tree of Knowledge because they are within close range of each other.</p> <p>Yes, I admit, Mr Chairman, this is a farcical issue which I raise, but it is farcical to the degree that \$6 million is going to be spent on this dead stump.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—Thank you, Senator McGauran. We will come back to you on that.</p>
LGRD 10	24/02/09	106	Macdonald	<p>[Dysart Sports Centre Project]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—If I could ask some quick questions following on from Senator McGauran’s comments. I refer to the Dysart Sports Centre, which I asked about at a previous estimates. I was told it was a Better Regions election commitment, which I already knew. What I actually asked, and have not yet received an answer to, is: isn’t this a project which was submitted under the Regional Solutions Program but was rejected by the Department at the time and was subsequently processed because it was an election commitment? Could I put that on notice?</p> <p>Ms Foster—Certainly.</p>
LGRD 11	24/02/09	106	McGauran	<p>[Regional Projects and Grants Publication]</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—There used to be a great publication, when we were in government, from your Department: it was just a bound book of not just the grants but all the projects. It was a regional publication.</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We still produce it.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—You still produce that?</p> <p>Ms Foster—I am afraid I cannot identify it from that.</p> <p>Senator McGAURAN—Every Department came into it. It was regional projects and—</p> <p>Senator Conroy—We will take that on notice, Senator McGauran, and seek that information for you.</p>
ONA 01	24/02/09	111	Macdonald	<p>[East Kimberley Development Package]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—... Mr Rudd announced—I think it was—\$150 million for the Ord stage 2 just before Christmas.</p> <p>Ms Foster—\$195 million.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Where is that coming from?</p> <p>Ms Foster—That is new money. That was part of the nation-building No. 1 statement.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—This is the December \$10 billion spending package?</p> <p>Ms Foster—That is right.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—And \$190 million came out of that?</p> <p>Ms Foster—\$195 million.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—That will be budgeted for in this upcoming budget, will it? Has it been appropriated already or has it been handed to anyone?</p> <p>Ms O’Connell—We will have to check that regarding appropriation—for the appropriation.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay.</p>

ONA 02	24/02/09	112	Macdonald	<p>[East Kimberley Development Package] Senator IAN MACDONALD—I know the Northern Territory Government has been disinterested and uninterested—both—in the extension of the Ord scheme across the border, although someone told me when I was in the Territory last week that there has been a slight change of heart. Are you aware of the Northern Territory Government’s approach to the extension of the Ord scheme across the border, which is where it is supposed to go? Mr Tongue—I would have to take that on notice. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Nobody here is aware of their involvement? Mr Tongue—I am certainly aware that, as part of our consultations, there will be discussions with the Northern Territory Government, but I cannot go further than that. I am happy to take it on notice. Senator IAN MACDONALD—All right.....</p>
ONA 03	24/02/09	114	Macdonald	<p>[Budget for the Office of Northern Australia] Senator IAN MACDONALD—Perhaps we should make this a permanent question. At every estimates I will ask the question: what is the configuration of both the Darwin and the Townsville offices in numbers of people and that sort of thing? Has it changed since last estimates? Ms Foster—Not significantly. We have six in Townsville and two in Darwin. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Are the six in Townsville the total departmental office or are they just the Northern Australia element of it? Ms Foster—That is the departmental office. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Are any dedicated, or do they support both areas of the department? Ms Foster—They support both. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Perchance the Secretary makes the decision on the internal budget within the next three weeks, could you on notice let us know what the budget is, if it happens to have been assessed by then. Ms Foster—Certainly. Senator IAN MACDONALD—Would you expect that it might be— Senator Conroy—I am sure that is in the hands of the Minister. Senator IAN MACDONALD—No, it is the Department Secretary, I think. Doesn’t he look after the internal budget? Mr Tongue—It is a question for the Secretary, but we will endeavour to get you an answer.</p>
ONA 04	24/02/09	114-115	Macdonald	<p>[Budget for the Office of Northern Australia] Senator IAN MACDONALD—Because of the quite substantial additional work you will be doing across the whole range of the Department as a result of the \$42 billion package—and, I guess, other Departments, but I will not ask you about them—will you be expecting that your departmental budget will increase? Mr Tongue—Certainly we have received, for those elements associated with the package, additional resources, but, like all Departments, we have ons and we have offs. We will wait and see the outcome of the May Budget process as well. I think my answer would have to be that there will be some ons-and-offs and we will wait and see the outcome of the May Budget. Senator IAN MACDONALD—But to date you have not been allocated an additional amount for departmental expenses to cover you? Mr Tongue—For those elements of the package, we have been given some— Senator IAN MACDONALD—Can you tell me what that is—on notice, if you do not have it with you.</p>

				<p>Mr Tongue—Can I take it on notice, because some of it is in the final stages of negotiation.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. It would be fairly substantial, wouldn't it?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—Because we act through states and through local government, the allocations depend a bit on the design of the program, but we believe it is sufficient to manage the responsibilities we have been given.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—What is your current departmental budget, in round figures?</p> <p>Mr Tongue—In the order of \$200 million.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Would I be right in guessing that you would be expecting something like \$20 million or \$30 million additional administration expenses?</p> <p>Senator Conroy—I think that is asking for an opinion.</p> <p>Mr Tongue—I am happy to provide that on notice.</p>
ONA 05	24/02/09	115	Macdonald	<p>[Members of Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce]</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—All right. I think my time has just about expired. I did ask this question before, but could you remind me what Dr Stuart Blanch's background is. I am going through the new members.</p> <p>Mr Angley—We did provide that as a question on notice.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay.</p> <p>Mr Angley—I do have that material here.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—You have got it? Just quickly tell me Mr Richard Ahmat's background.</p> <p>Mr Angley—In the question on notice—and I am not sure of the number now, but we provided it after the October one—Richard Ahmat is currently Chair of the Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance and a non-executive director of the Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—And Dr Stuart Blanch?</p> <p>Mr Angley—Dr Stuart Blanch is Manager of Northern Landscapes at World Wildlife Fund Australia and a non-executive director of Land and Water Australia.</p> <p>.....</p> <p>And Wali Wunungmurra?</p> <p>Mr Angley—I apologise: I have not got his biography with me. I can take it on notice.</p> <p>Senator IAN MACDONALD—Okay. So we have the ACF and the WWF both there. That should make for an interesting meeting. As I say, that is about my time. Thanks for that. We look forward to getting those answers.</p> <p>Mr Angley—Thank you.</p>

Written Questions on Notice Additional Estimates 2008-2009

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
Tuesday 24 February 2009

QON No.	Date Asked	Hansard Reference/Written	Senator	Question
<p>CORP 09 Consolidated departmental response under CORP 10 above.</p> <p>Individual agency responses below.</p> <p>AMSA 16 CASA 02 AA 08 ARTC 01 IA 06</p>	N/A	Written	McGauran	<p>[Reviews]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many Reviews are currently being undertaken in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency? 2. When will each of these reviews be concluded? 3. Which Reviews have been completed since Supplementary Budget Estimates 2008? 4. When will the Government be responding to the respective reviews that have been completed? 5. What is the total number of Reviews both completed and ongoing in the portfolio/agency or affecting the portfolio agency since November 2007? 6. What is the estimated cost of these Reviews? 7. What further reviews are planned for 2009?
<p>CORP 10 Consolidated departmental response under CORP 10 above.</p> <p>Individual agency responses below.</p> <p>AMSA 17 CASA 03 AA 09 ARTC 02 IA 07</p>	N/A	Written	McGauran	<p>[Consultancies]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many consultancies have been undertaken or are underway since November 2007? 2. Please identify the name of the consultant, the subject matter of the consultancy, the duration and cost of the consultancy, and the method of procurement (ie. open tender, direct source, etc). 3. Please also include total value for all consultancies. 4. Do you stand by Government Tenders website (www.tenders.gov.au) and what changes or corrections have been made to – 5. it since 18 February 2009? Are you up to date with reporting requirements? 6. How many consultancies are planned / budgeted for this calendar year? 7. Have these been published in your Annual Procurement Plan (APP) on the AusTender website and if not why not? 8. In each case please identify the subject matter, duration, cost and method of procurement as above, and the name of the consultant if known.
CORP 11	N/A	Written	Humphries	<p>[Number of SES Employees]</p> <p>How many SES positions were there in this Department as at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 November 2007

				• 26 February 2009
NBII 10	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] What date will the \$131 million to build the \$164 million Brighton Bypass and upgrade of the East Derwent Highway be delivered?
NBII 11	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the East Derwent Highway project commence and the project finished?
NBII 12	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] What date will the \$56 million to build the \$79 million new Brighton Transport Hub be delivered?
NBII 13	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the Brighton Transport Hub project be commenced and when will it be finished?
NBII 14	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] What date will the \$24 million for rail capacity improvements at Rhyndaston on the main north-south rail line be delivered?
NBII 15	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the rail capacity improvements at Rhyndaston on the main north-south rail line the project finished?
NBII 16	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] What date will the \$30 million to upgrade the Derwent Valley rail line from Boyer to Karanja be commenced and the project finished?
NBII 17	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the Derwent Valley rail line from Boyer to Karanja be commenced and the project finished?
NBII 18	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When date will the \$11 million towards a \$14 million repair of the Bridgewater Bridge be delivered?
NBII 19	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the repair of the Bridgewater Bridge commence and the project finished?
NBII 20	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] What date will the \$5 million towards a \$6.2 million investment to start planning the Pontville-Bagdad Bypass and new Bridgewater Bridge be delivered?
NBII 21	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will construction start on the Pontville-Bagdad Bypass and new Bridgewater Bridge and when will they be completed?
NBII 22	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the \$15 million towards the \$33.5 million Kingston Bypass under the Strategic Regional Program (previously announced 8 July 2007) be delivered?

NBII 23	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] Will the Federal government increase its Kingston Bypass contribution from \$15 million?
NBII 24	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] What date will construction of the Kingston Bypass commence and when will it be completed?
NBII 25	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads - Southern Tasmania] When will the Federal government have delivered its full \$272 million to southern Tasmanian roads?
NBII 26	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$4.5 million towards a \$5.6 million upgrade of the Midland Highway be delivered?
NBII 27	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] When will work commence on the upgrade of the Midland Highway and when will it be completed?
NBII 28	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$34 million towards a \$42.5 million investment in North East Freight Roads to cater for higher mass limits (HML) – includes Tebrakunna Bridge, Branxholm to Tebrakunna Road, Camden Road, the Tasman Highway and Prossers Forest Road, and Bridport Main Road between Bell Bay and Scottsdale be delivered?
NBII 29	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] When will the North East Freight Roads to cater for higher mass limits (HML) – includes Tebrakunna Bridge, Branxholm to Tebrakunna Road, Camden Road, the Tasman Highway and Prossers Forest Road, and Bridport Main Road between Bell Bay and Scottsdale commence and the project completed?
NBII 30	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$5.2 million towards a \$6.5 million improvement of the Bell Bay Intermodal be delivered?
NBII 31	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] When will the improvement of the Bell Bay Intermodal commence and when will it be completed?
NBII 32	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$31.6 million for Main North-South Line rail capacity improvements be delivered?
NBII 33	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] When will the Main North-South Line rail capacity improvements be commenced and when will they be delivered?
NBII 34	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$30 million to upgrade the Wiltshire Rail Line be delivered?

NBII 35	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] When will the upgrade the Wiltshire Rail Line be commenced and when will it be completed?
NBII 36	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$11.7 million to upgrade West Coast Rail spurs to Hellyer Mine and from Melba Flats to Zeehan be delivered?
NBII 37	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the upgraded West Coast Rail spurs to Hellyer Mine and from Melba Flats to Zeehan commence and when will it be completed?
ISTP 02	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] Will the government commit to the ongoing funding for the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme and the Tasmanian Wheat Freight Scheme?
ISTP 03	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What are the forward forecasts for the funding of the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme and the Tasmanian Wheat Freight Scheme?
ISTP 04	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$2.8 million over the forward estimates to extend the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme to cover shipping movements between mainland Tasmania and King and Flinders Islands be delivered?
ISTP 05	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] What date will the \$15.7 million over the forward estimates to increase the Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalisation Scheme (previously announced 9 September 2007) be delivered?
ISTP 06	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Northern Tasmania] Will the increase the Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalisation Scheme be continued beyond the forward estimates?
NBII 38	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] What date will the \$2 million towards a \$4 million upgrade of Formby Road at Devonport be delivered?
NBII 39	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] When will construction commence on the upgrade of Formby Road at Devonport and when will be completed?
NBII 40	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] What date will the \$1 million towards a \$4 million upgrade of Port Sorell Road be delivered?
NBII 41	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] When will the upgrade of Port Sorell Road be commenced and when will it be completed?
NBII 42	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] What date will the \$3.1 million towards a \$6.2 million upgrade of the Illawarra Link Road be delivered?

NBII 43	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] When will the upgrade of the Illawarra Link Road commence and when will it be delivered?
LGRD 25	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program – North] What date will the \$500,000 for the Oakleigh Park pedestrian overpass in Burnie (previously announced 6 September 2007) be delivered?
LGRD 26	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program (North)] When will the Oakleigh Park pedestrian overpass in Burnie be commenced and when will it be completed?
NBII 44	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program - North] What date will the \$350,000 for traffic lights or a roundabout at the Westbury Road/Mt. Leslie Road intersection in Launceston (previously announced 6 September 2007) be delivered?
NBII 45	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program -North] When will the traffic lights or a roundabout at the Westbury Road/Mt. Leslie Road intersection in Launceston be commenced and when will it be completed?
NBII 46	N/A	Written	Bushby	[Roads – Through the Strategic Regional Program (North)] What date will all of the \$445.45 million the Labor Party promised for Tasmanian transport infrastructure be delivered by the Federal Government?
ISTP 07	N/A	Written	Williams	[Rebuilding Australia’s Coastal Shipping Industry] I refer to the report Rebuilding Australia’s Coastal Shipping Industry: Inquiry into Coastal Shipping Policy and Regulation tabled in October 2008 by the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Local Government. As you will be aware this report made several recommendations regarding competitiveness of the Australian Industry, training of maritime employees and the need to review some existing legislation. <i>“The Standing Committee in Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government tabled Rebuilding Australia’s coastal shipping industry: inquiry into coastal shipping policy and regulation in October. The report was commissioned by the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, on 12 March 2008 to inquire into and report on coastal shipping policy. Public hearings were held in Brisbane, Canberra, Perth, Adelaide, Launceston, Melbourne and Sydney in which 78 witnesses appeared before the Committee. The Report makes a series of recommendations in accordance with the terms of reference on ways to enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian Coastal shipping sector”</i> I note the Minister indicated that the Government would consider the recommendations in detail and respond to each of them during 2009 given that Australia’s international trade is dependant on shipping. 1. Has the Government considered the recommendations of that report to date? 2. If so, what recommendations is the Government focusing on? If not, what is the timeframe

				<p>for the Government to consider the report in detail?</p> <p>3. The committee recommended that the 2000 review of the Navigation Act 1912 be completed and amendments made to Part V1 of the Act. Has any work on the review recommenced to date?</p> <p>4. If yes, what is the progress of this review? If not, what is the anticipated commencement of the review?</p> <p>5. If there is no anticipated commencement date, why not?</p> <p>6. The report advocates the establishment of a Reform Implementation Group which would be instrumental in bringing about the industry change and implementing the recommendations of the report adopted by the Government. Has such a group been established to date?</p> <p>7. If yes, who has been appointed to the Reform Implementation Group? Who is chairing the group?</p> <p>8. If not, when is it likely a Reform Implementation Group will be put together?</p>
AMSA 04	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Distress Beacons] I refer to the changes recently initiated to emergency positioning indicating radio beacons – the replacement of rescue beacons. As of February 1st 2009 analogue 121.5 MHZ beacons can no longer be detected by satellite. Simply a switch is being made from analogue to digital.</p> <p>1. Is this correct? <i>“From 1 February 2009, 121.5 MHz distress beacons are no longer be detected by the Cospas-Sarsat satellite system. AMSA has advised boat users not to go beyond 2 nautical miles from shore without a 406MHz distress beacon or they may not be able to locate you if you find yourself in a distress situation”</i></p>
AMSA 05	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Distress Beacons] I understand that the replacement beacons must be 406.MHz and these should be registered with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. Can you provide figures as to how many replacements have been registered to date?</p>
AMSA 06	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Distress Beacons] Can you estimate how many beacons in Australia still need to be replaced?</p>
AMSA 07	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Distress Beacons] Reports indicate that it is almost impossible to purchase one of the replacement digital beacons in the country because suppliers have underestimated demand. Is AMSA aware there is a six to eight week wait for the new beacons?</p>
AMSA 08	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Distress Beacons] Is AMSA aware that the new beacons are being retailed at 4 times the cost of the old 115MHz beacons?</p>
AMSA 09	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Distress Beacons] I note that the original announcement of the switch off was made in 2000 – what, if any,</p>

				measures were taken to ensure there would be adequate supply?
AMSA 10	N/A	Written	Williams	[Distress Beacons] Are there any interim measures in place for the professional fishermen, farmers, bushwalkers, charters and recreational fishermen who are now unable to obtain the new technology and are therefore without potentially life saving equipment?
AMSA 11	N/A	Written	Williams	[Distress Beacons] The distress beacons are compulsory on all vessels around 2 nautical miles from shore (slight differences between states). Are there any arrangements in place to cope with the inadvertent breaches?
AMSA 12	N/A	Written	Williams	[Distress Beacons] What means were taken to communicate the February 1 st switch off date to those parties affected, particularly professional fisherman associations and amateur fishermen?
AMSA 13	N/A	Written	Williams	[Distress Beacons] What did the advertising and communications campaign involve?
AMSA 14	N/A	Written	Williams	[Distress Beacons] When did the advertising campaign commence?
AMSA 15	N/A	Written	Williams	[Distress Beacons] How much was spent on ensuring that all industry participants were aware of the switch over?
ISTP 08	N/A	Written	Williams	[Road Crash Injury Statistics] Given that road crashes are a serious issue in Australia, can you please advise that current figures for the number of serious injuries caused by road crashes and explain why the Australian Transport Safety Board has ceased to report this important information?
NTS 01	N/A	Written	Williams	[Urban Mobility] Australia is the only OECD country that does not have a national moving people strategy. When is the Government going to do something about this?
NBII 47	N/A	Written	Williams	[Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail Link] What is the Government's current position on this important rail link and why is the CEO of the ARTC saying it is no longer a priority?
NBII 48	N/A	Written	Williams	[Model National Rail Safety Legislation] Model National Rail Safety legislation was approved by ATC to be implemented by end 2008, most jurisdictions having missed the earlier target of 1 July 2007. Only Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales have so far implemented this very important legislation. This has taken far too long. When is the legislation going to be implemented and what is the Government doing to hasten this?
NTS 02	N/A	Written	Williams	[National Rail Safety Regulator and Investigator Proposals] COAG has approved the development of a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) by the National Transport Commission (NTC) for establishment of a National Rail Safety Regulator and a

				<p>National Rail Safety Investigator, to replace existing Regulator and Investigatory organisations in all States and Northern Territory.</p> <p>The Rail Industry is strongly supportive of the establishment of both a National Rail Safety Regulator and a National Rail Safety Investigator as very important micro-economic reforms, to replace all existing regulatory and investigatory arrangements. This reform will significantly enhance safety by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of rail safety regulation and investigation in every jurisdiction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the Government's position on these critical reforms and if it does not support them, why not? 2. Further, when is COAG going to approve this vital micro-economic reform to the Rail Industry?
BITRE 02	N/A	Written	Williams	<p>[Economic Cost of Ambient Transport Emissions and Transport Investment Appraisal]</p> <p>The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Report (INJCAT 113) estimates that 1420 people die from transport emissions each year (year 2000), mostly in urban areas. This means that more people die in our cities from transport emissions than road crashes. Therefore can you please explain why this trauma, and the consequential economic cost is not accounted for in transport assessments, particularly road projects.</p>
NBII 49	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway]</p> <p>I refer to the Cooroy to Curra section of the Bruce Highway. This project involves a four-lane duplicated road on a 64 kilometre stretch of the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Curra bypassing Gympie. It would replace a manifestly inadequate two-lane road that caters for about 16,000 vehicles per day. This road has been the scene of 52 fatalities since 2000. The estimated cost of this project has been two to three billion, although the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland, in its October 2008 submission to Infrastructure Australia, estimated this project to cost \$4 billion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I note that Infrastructure Australia in its 5 December 2008 report to the Council of Australian Governments lists the cost of the Cooroy to Curra upgrade as \$6.3 billion. Can the Government explain this extra-ordinary blow-out in cost? 2. I also note that the Queensland Government in its press release of 5 September 2008 stated that the most difficult section of the upgrade, the 11 km stretch of road around the eastern buffer area of the proposed Traveston Crossing dam, would cost \$500 million. How can the cost of the balance be over \$5.5 billion, or 100 million per kilometre in what is open country?
NBII 50	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway]</p> <p>In Infrastructure Australia's report to the Council of Australian Government, there is a table of projects (pages 68 to71) that will, according to page 67 of the report, <i>be subjected to further analysis</i>. I note that the Cooroy to Curra upgrade is on this list.</p>

				1. Has the Cooroy to Curra project been subjected to this further analysis?
IA 05	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[List of 28 Projects] I note that Mr Rod Eddington wrote a letter to the Minister with this report by Infrastructure Australia. This letter was mysteriously removed from the Minister’s website only a couple of hours later. This letter notes on page three that there are another two inner lists aside from the 94 projects listed in the report by Infrastructure Australia. The relevant paragraph from this letter reads: <i>Within this list of projects, the evaluation to date, which is subject to further consideration by the Infrastructure Australia Council, has identified two classes of projects that may be suitable for funding from the Building Australia Fund. There are 28 projects in these two classes.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What projects are in this mysterious list of 28? 2. The letter also notes that out of this list of 28 projects, there is a first class list and a second group of ‘potential projects’. Does this mean most of the 94 projects listed in the report by Infrastructure Australia have already been discarded? 3. Why did the Government release a list of 94 projects if only 28 projects are being seriously considered by Infrastructure Australia for funding? 4. Is the Cooroy to Curra upgrade on the secret list of 28 projects?
NBII 51	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway] I refer to the section of the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Curra that could be affected by the construction of the proposed Traveston Dam. The Queensland Minister of Main Roads, Warren Pitt, was reported recently saying that the Federal Government has now accepted the eastern route for the Bruce Highway between Federal and Traveston Road – that is, to build the Bruce Highway around the dam’s potential inundation area. Is this correct?</p>
NBII 52	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway] The final version of the Federal Government’s <i>Bruce Highway (Cooroy to Curra) Strategic Planning Study</i> was released to the public in November 2008. That report acknowledged that the favoured community option was to four-lane the highway close to the existing Bruce Highway. Given that Queensland Premier Anna Bligh has shelved the Traveston Crossing dam for many years, why has the Queensland and Federal Government ignored two years of community consultation and community wishes in approving the eastern route?</p>
NBII 53	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway] Why has the Government chosen a route that is both longer and more expensive?</p>

NBII 54	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] Has the Federal Minister for Environment, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon Peter Garrett been consulted about this decision?
NBII 55	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] I note that the Queensland Main Roads Minister Warren Pitt was quoted by the media last week that the Federal Government had now “fortuitously” accepted the route around the dam footprint as the final route. Does this mean that the Federal Government thinks that the longer eastern route is the best option?
NBII 56	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] What advice did the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government receive from his Department in approving the unpopular eastern route?
NBII 57	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] Does this decision to go ahead with the unpopular eastern route around the potential area of flooding mean that the Traveston Crossing Dam has already received de-facto Federal Government approval?
NBII 58	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] What is the extra cost of building the longer four-lane eastern route of the Bruce Highway around the area of potential inundation?
NBII 59	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] What is the cost of simply proceeding with the route preferred by the community- that is the route that closely follows the existing Bruce Highway?
NBII 60	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] 1. Does this ‘fortuitous’ decision mean that the Federal Government will pay for the longer four-lane eastern route of the Bruce Highway around the area affected by the Traveston Crossing dam after the Queensland State Government had announced it would build and fund the road? 2. What financial deal has been made? 3. When will its details be released?
NBII 61	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] So what is the correct cost to upgrade the Cooroy to Curra section of the Bruce Highway to a four-lane duplicated road that includes the Gympie Bypass?
NBII 62	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	[Bruce Highway] I refer to the answer to the Question on notice asked by Senator Nash in this Committee during the May 2008 Budget Estimates. This question noted that Labor only promised \$200 million during the last election to upgrade the Cooroy to Curra section of the Bruce Highway, compared to the \$700 million promised by the Coalition to do the same. The answer provided – Question II22- states in part:

				<p><i>The works programme and finding arrangements for the project will be agreed with the Queensland Government during 2008-09 as part of the development of the Australian Government's land transport investment program for 2009-10 to 2013-14.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are negotiations with the Queensland Government regarding this project proceeding? 2. Have negotiations started? 3. What funding agreements regarding the upgrade of the Bruce Highway have been established between the Commonwealth and the Queensland Government?
NBII 63	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway] In terms of the Cooroy to Curra section of the Bruce Highway, what is the expected completion date of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the four-laning around the expected site of the Traveston Crossing dam; 2. the four laning of the existing section of the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Curra; 3. the new corridor of the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Curra.
NBII 64	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway] In November last year, the speed limit along the 65 km stretch of the Bruce Highway between Curra and Cooroy was lowered to 90 kmh. When this decision was announced by the Queensland Main Roads Minister, the implication was that this speed limit reduction was to be temporary.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long will there be a 90kmh speed limit on this long section of the national highway? 2. In view of the fact that there have been three fatal accidents since the 90 kmh limit was imposed, does the Government consider the lower speed limit a success?
NBII 65	N/A	Written	Williams/ Heffernan	<p>[Bruce Highway] Minister Albanese and the Queensland State Minister announced early last year that electronic variable message signs worth \$2.8 million were to be installed on the Bruce Highway between Cooroy and Curra. This system will warn about wet road conditions, traffic congestion, crash sites and other potential driving hazards. This intelligent signage was promised to be installed before Christmas last year. Well, it is now early 2009. When will this signage, on what is one of the most dangerous stretches of highway in Australia, be installed?</p>
NBII 66	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway Commitment] Does the Government stand by its election commitment to complete a dual carriageway on the Pacific Highway between Sydney to Brisbane by 2016?</p>
NBII 67	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway Commitment] The Government has allocated \$2.5 billion under Auslink 2 for the duplication of the Pacific Highway.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the Government aware that according to the National Roads and Motorists Association in its January 2009 budget submission to the Australian Government, that it estimates the cost

				of the Pacific Highway duplication to be \$6.67 billion? 2. Where will the remaining four billion plus dollars come from?
NBII 68	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Pacific Highway Commitment] Given the financial wreck that is NSW under its incompetent Labor Government, what confidence does the Government have that NSW will be able to provide its share of the funds to upgrade the Pacific Highway by 2016?
NBII 69	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Pacific Highway Commitment] The Government is no doubt aware that the NSW Government delivered its mini-budget in November last year. In that budget, the bankrupt NSW Labor Government slashed its contribution to Auslink 2. The NSW Government's contribution was to be \$860 million but now it has been slashed to \$500 million. 1. Is that correct? 2. Is that correct that the NSW Government's contribution to the Pacific Highway upgrade has been cut by \$360 million? 3. Will the Australian Government make up the difference? 4. Where does that leave the Government in meeting its election promise of completing the duplication of the Pacific Highway by 2016?
NBII 70	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Pacific Highway – Banora Point Upgrade] I consider now an important project to upgrade the Pacific Highway at Sexton's Hill, Banora Point. <i>This project is a 2.5 kilometres long, six lane motorway standard link between Chindera Bypass at the northern end of Barney's Point Bridge and the southern end of the Tweed Heads Bypass. The key feature of this project is the controversial plan to include a viaduct approximately 330 metres long across the deep valley south of Sextons Hill, and a land bridge approximately 100 metres wide to provide connection over the new road between east and west Banora Point at Wilsons Park.</i> <i>At present, the Pacific Highway at Sextons Hill, Banora Point is an urban arterial road. It has a high crash rate and through traffic conflicts with local traffic. By providing a 2.5 kilometre realignment outside the urban area, the upgrade will improve travel times on the Pacific Highway and reduce the number and severity of road accidents.</i> I note the commitment by the Government in its so called Nation Building stimulus package in December last year to invest \$210 million to fund this project. Just to be clear about this money, the relevant paragraph on page 59 of the December 2008 Nation Building paper reads: <i>The Australian Government has committed \$210 million to upgrade the works at Banora Point, with \$2 million being accelerated in 2008-09. Additional funding to complete the</i>

				<p><i>project is currently being discussed with NSW.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. So does that mean that between now and 30 June this year the Government is providing the sum of just \$2 million for this much needed project? 2. So the balance of this amount, \$208 million is to be provided in the time frame of Auslink 2, ie from 2009-10 to 2013-14. Is that correct? 3. How much is the project estimated to cost? 4. How much additional funding is to be provided by NSW?
NBII 71	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway – Banora Point Upgrade] Is it correct that the Government in its mini-budget axed its counterpart funding to the Pacific Highway projects, including Banora Point?</p>
NBII 72	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway – Banora Point Upgrade] How are the discussions with the NSW Government proceeding to secure their side of the funds for this project?</p>
NBII 73	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway – Banora Point Upgrade] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is the Government aware that a 2007 NRMA audit of the Pacific Highway identified Banora Point as one of the most dangerous sections of the highway – the site of 127 crashes, two fatalities and 61 injuries between 2003 and 2007? 2. Given its appalling safety record, will the Commonwealth pick up the whole tab? </p>
NBII 74	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway – Banora Point Upgrade] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In view of the funding delays and since no tangible works have yet been done on the Banora Point upgrade, will the Government re-consider the preferred community option of a tunnel being built under Sexton’s Hill rather than the visually intrusive viaduct? 2. When will the project be completed? </p>
NBII 75	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Pacific Highway] What is the status of the Auslink agreements with the NSW Government, given its decision to slash its contribution to this program?</p>
ISTP 09	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I would like to ask a few questions regarding the establishment of a national scheme for setting minimum safe rates covering both employees and owner-drivers in the heavy vehicle industry. I understand that, according to a joint media release issued by Ministers Albanese, Gillard and Emerson, on 25 July 2008, the National Transport Commission was to investigate methods of payment for heavy vehicle drivers and options to implement a payment system that encourages safe work practices. Is that correct? 2. I further understand that the National Transport Commission completed this report to the Australian Transport Council by October 2008. Is that correct? </p>
ISTP 10	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] I refer to a Joint Communiqué from Australian Transport Council the dated 7 November 2008, which reads in part:</p>

				<p><i>Ministers agreed that there is a case for investigating a whole of government regulatory approach to address this issue. The Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government agreed to progress this issue within the Government and provide reports at future ATC meetings.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What progress has been made in implementing this decision of the Australian Transport Council? 2. In terms of investigating the “whole of government regulatory approach”, what other agencies are involved in such an investigation? 3. When will it be complete?
ISTP 11	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] Will the Government report back to the Australian Transport Council on its investigation by May 2009, as proposed by the National Transport Commission on page 46 of its report?</p>
ISTP 12	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] I notice that the National Transport Commission in its October 2008 report to the Australian Transport Council flagged four options in implementing a so-called Safe Rates payment system. One option is to leave the existing system in place and simply allow the recently passed heavy driver reforms to generate better safety performance in the heavy vehicle industry. Another other option is to rely on State-based regulation to deal with current payment arrangements.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is that correct? 2. On which State-based regulation will this system be modelled?
ISTP 13	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] According to page 39 of the National Transport Commission’s report to the Australian Transport Council, South Australia, Tasmania, ACT, Queensland, the Northern Territory and Tasmania do not have owner-driver regulations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What sort of regulations would these jurisdictions have to develop? 2. Under this scenario, what would be the status of owner-drivers? 3. Would this involve some kind of mandated system of freight rates that are imposed on State-registered vehicles? 4. What body would enforce these rates?How would payment rates be calculated?
ISTP 14	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] The third option flagged by the National Transport Commission is to establish a body under Federal legislation that will establish and maintain enforceable safe payments for employees and owner-drivers. Is this correct?</p>
ISTP 15	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] The final option is to empower the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, or its</p>

				<p>successor, to establish and maintain the payment system for owner-drivers and employees. This, I further understand, would override existing State-based regulatory regimes and would essentially place the payment system under Federal law.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is this correct? 2. The Transport Workers Union favours this option. Is this correct?
ISTP 16	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] I understand the National Transport Commission favours option three – i.e. to establish some kind of Federal tribunal that will set a minimum level of payment rates. Is this correct?</p>
ISTP 17	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the Government’s favoured option? 2. Does the Government prefer the Transport Workers Union approach? </p>
ISTP 18	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How, in practice, does option three and four differ, given that they both propose a Federal authority be given the power to determine payment rates arrangements upon the heavy vehicle industry? 2. How will such an arrangement impact upon State-registered heavy vehicles? 3. What will be the status of owner-drivers under the options three and four? 4. What are the implications upon existing Federal legislation, such as the <i>Fair Work Bill 2008</i> or the <i>Independent Contractors Act 2006</i>, posed by options three and four? </p>
ISTP 19	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The heavy freight sector is extra-ordinarily diverse, with a variable array of freight tasks involving a range of transport types. Given this reality, how would payment rates be calculated? 2. Who would calculate them? 3. How would industry be involved? </p>
ISTP 20	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] Regarding option three and the establishment of a payment body, what would be its membership? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What would be its powers? 2. Will industry pay for it? 3. What consideration has been given to the legislation that will establish it? 4. Under what portfolio would this legislation sit? </p>
ISTP 21	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] Has the Government done any calculations regarding the cost of a safe rates system upon the heavy vehicle industry?</p>
ISTP 22	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Safe Rates] What will be the cost of option three?</p>

ISTP 23	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Safe Rates] What are the implications upon the competitiveness of the heavy vehicle industry of a safe rates system?
ISTP 24	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Safe Rates] What is the basis by which the National Transport Commission has concluded that the current system of pay determination in the heavy vehicle sector is causing unsafe driving practices?
ISTP 25	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Safe Rates] Is it correct that the recently passed heavy vehicle reforms are designed to stamp out unsafe driving practices?
ISTP 26	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Safe Rates] Why cannot the Government give time to see the result of the recent heavy vehicle fatigue reforms and see how they unfold?
NBII 76	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. The Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program is a \$70 million four year fund that will provide for the trials of technologies that will electronically monitor a truck driver's work hours and vehicle speed – in effect a trial of 'black boxes' or electronic logs for truckies. Is that correct? 2. It will also support the construction of additional heavy vehicle rest stops and parking areas along our highways and assist in road capacity improvements (including bridges) to allow access to high productivity vehicles to more of the road network. Is that correct?
NBII 77	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] I understand that in November 2005 the National Transport Commission conducted a study of the state of Australia's road-side rest facilities and at that time issued its National Guidelines for the Provision of Rest Area Facilities. This reports sets out where rest areas should be built in order to comply with various road agency guidelines and cater for the needs of heavy vehicle drivers. According to those guidelines, there should be: A major rest area every 100 kilometres, with sufficient parking for at least 20 trucks; A minor rest area every 50 kilometres, with parking for up to 10 trucks; A truck parking bay every 30 kilometres, with enough space for four or five trucks so their drivers can do safety checks. Further, an independent government research agency, Austroads, recently audited Australia's major highways against those guidelines. The report, released in March 2008, showed that none of the audited routes met the national guidelines and 60 per cent of the audited routes had substantial deficiencies. There were particular problems in Queensland and the Northern Territory. The list of highways with the worst deficiencies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>the New England, Mitchell, Great Western, Barrier and Princes highways in New</i>

				<p><i>South Wales;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the Calder, Princes, and Sturt highways in Victoria;</i> • <i>the Bruce, Cunningham, New England and Gore highways in Queensland;</i> • <i>the Barrier, Dukes, Eyre and Sturt highways in South Australia;</i> • <i>the Great Eastern, Coolgardie –Esperance and Eyre highways in Western Australia;</i> • <i>the Bass Highway in Tasmania; and</i> • <i>the Stuart Highway in the Northern Territory.</i> <p>So to clarify, our national highway system is basically non-compliant with the National Transport Commission’s own guidelines in the provision of rest areas? Is that correct?</p>
NBII 78	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] I understand that according to the Australian Trucking Association in their submission to this Committee’s inquiry into the <i>Interstate Road Transport Charge Amendment Bill (No.2) 2008</i> and associated legislation held in November last year, there needs to be another 900 rest areas on the 22,500 kilometres of the AusLink National Network to bring it into line with the national rest area guidelines. Even if we accept that 900 rest areas is a generous number, how many rest areas would be required to bring Australia’s highway system into compliance with the national rest area guidelines?</p>
NBII 79	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. How much of the Government’s \$70 million four year Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program will be spent on the other components of the Program, that is, the improvements to road capacity and the trial of “black box” technologies? 2. So how much, of the \$70 million will be spent on heavy vehicle rest areas?</p>
NBII 80	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] Will the money from this Program go to State and Territory road authorities only?</p>
NBII 81	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] What arrangements will the Commonwealth make to ensure that the States and Territories actually spend the money on heavy vehicle rest areas?</p>
NBII 82	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. What is the average cost of rest areas? 2. Do you accept the figure of \$545,000? This, I understand, is the number used by the Queensland Government under its own rest area program – a number quoted by the Australian Trucking Association in its submission to the inquiry I mentioned earlier. 3. So if that is true, in an ideal world, the \$70 million could provide less than 130 rest areas. But of course it will be much less, since the \$70 million must fund other commitments too. So how many rest areas will be built under the year Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program?</p>

				4. What are the assumptions behind that number?
NBII 83	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. What is the stage of the Program? 2. Have rest areas been built yet? 3. Where?
ISTP 48	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] Has the need for rest areas on our highway system increased given the recent passage of the heavy vehicle fatigue reforms?
NBII 85	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] Are there enough rest areas for truckies to be compliant with the mandated rest area times?
ISTP 49	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] What are truckies meant to do if the law requires them to stop, but there are no rest areas available?
NBII 87	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] When will there be enough heavy vehicle rest areas on our national highways?
ISTP 50	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. What stage are you up to with the “black box” trials? 2. Have field trials started yet?
NBII 89	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] What roads will be improved in terms of capacity? Which bridges?
NBII 90	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. What is the state and territory breakdown of the construction of the rest areas and the improvement to roads? 2. What criteria will be used by the Department to make these decisions?
NBII 88	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program] 1. Have any submissions regarding rest areas or road improvements been received? 2. From whom?
ISTP 27	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector] 1. I refer to the recent Regulatory Impact Statement entitled <i>A National Framework for Regulation, Registration and Licensing of Heavy Vehicles</i> put out by the Minister’s department. This document, released late last year, arises from yet another declaration by COAG, made the previous May, that we want a national transport system with uniform laws. The various ways in which this could be achieved are canvassed in this Statement which is to be considered by the Australian Transport Council sometime in 2009. Is that correct? 2. When will the Australian Transport Council consider it? December 2009 or early 2009? 3. When will the Council of Australian Governments consider this issue?

ISTP 28	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does this Government stand by the decision of the Council of Australian Governments, issued in its communiqué on 10 February 2006, to <i>harmonise and reform rail and road regulation within five years...?</i> 2. Five years is 2011. It is now 2009. That is two years away. Will that decision be achieved?
ISTP 29	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it correct that Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia have provided a six months transition arrangement, so that drivers have time to shift their operations to the new daily standard of 12 hours driving in total? 2. Do you have any details on these transition arrangements? 3. Is it correct that Victoria has not implemented any transition arrangements?
ISTP 30	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>I understand that under section 47 of the <i>National Transport Commission Model Legislation – Heavy Vehicle Driver Fatigue Regulations</i>, that a driver working standard hours must take a short break after 5 ¼ hours of work. I understand that a driver may make a defence against a breach of these provisions if that driver cannot find a suitable place of rest on a highway and the driver finds a rest stop after 45 minutes after that time.</p> <p>Is it correct that in Victoria and New South Wales this is not a defence?</p>
ISTP 31	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>Is it correct that drivers of vehicle over 12 tonnes in Victoria and South Australia who work within 100 kilometres of their base do not have to fill out a work diary, but for New South Wales, heavy truck drivers must fill out a diary even for local work?</p>
ISTP 32	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>Are you aware that the States have established different treatment of employers should their drivers be breached of the requirements of the heavy vehicle driver fatigue laws?</p>
ISTP 33	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>In New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia, an employer may provide a ‘reasonable steps defence’ to a court if such a breach occurs. That is, if the employer can satisfy a court that he or she has taken reasonable steps to ensure that their drivers do not break the laws, they have a defence. In Victoria, no such defence exists. Is that correct?</p>
ISTP 34	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>What other State-based inconsistencies exist in the heavy vehicle fatigue management laws?</p>
ISTP 35	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it true that in New South Wales, rigid, semi-trailers and B-doubles may be loaded to a

				<p>width of 2.83 metres only, but in Victoria, these trucks can be loaded to three metres?</p> <p>2. Where does this leave a truckie in Victoria who loads up his truck with, for example – hay - as wide as legally possible, and then drives to New South Wales?</p> <p>3. What are the other inconsistencies exist between the States and Territories with regard to the height of loads?</p>
ISTP 36	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>The Regulatory Impact Statement on page 20 quotes a study commissioned by the National Transport Commission that was published in May 2006. The relevant quote, drawing from this study makes interesting reading. It states:</p> <p><i>A formal review commissioned by the National Transport Commission of the mass and loading, oversize and over-mass and restricted access regulations published in May 2006 for example, found that ten years after their development, approximately half the mass and loading provisions and only a third of the over-size and over-mass provisions have been implemented in a completely consistent matter.</i></p> <p>Can you explain to this Committee what those regulatory anomalies are?</p>
ISTP 37	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>According to its website, the purpose of the National Transport Commission when it was established in 2003 is to</p> <p><i>...develop, monitor and maintain uniform or nationally consistent regulatory and operational reforms relating to road transport, rail transport and intermodal transport.</i></p> <p>What will the Government do to better equip the National Transport Commission to meet its charter?</p>
ISTP 38	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>What power does the National Transport Commission have in dealing with individual jurisdictions that diverge from national reforms?</p>
ISTP 39	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>Is it true that the National Transport Commission can only try and persuade State jurisdictions not to stray from national policy reforms?</p>
ISTP 40	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <p>The former Coalition Government was successful in driving a number of national reforms in key areas such as energy, water and business regulation through a system of national competition payments. This approach provided a carrot and stick approach to the States to implement vital nationally consistent laws to lift Australia’s productivity and competitiveness.</p>

				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What approach will the Government take to ensure the States meet their responsibility in building a nationally consistent body of transport regulations? 2. Will the Government consider a system akin to national competition payments to encourage regulatory consistency? 3. Will the Government simply rely on persuasion? 4. Is that enough?
ISTP 41	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mr Wilson, in his statements to this Committee during the Supplementary Budget Estimates on Tuesday 21 October last year stated that according to the Productivity Commission, the cost of these regulatory inconsistencies was \$2.6 billion per year. What was the basis of these figures? 2. Is that \$2.6 billion in lost productivity? 3. Did it measure time lost by businesses in having to adjust their practices to conform to contradictory state regulations?
ISTP 42	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Regulatory Impact Statement flags four options to build a national system of heavy vehicle regulation. The first is the status-quo, which is plainly unacceptable, the second is a non-statutory body to foster consistency in the administration of current model laws, the third is passing national uniform legislation in a host jurisdiction which others will copy and the fourth option is to establish a single national, statutory regulator. Is this a correct summary? 2. How would option two prevent jurisdictions continuing to vary future model laws? 3. How would option two prevent the States from applying model laws differently?
ISTP 43	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it correct that not every State recognises as roadworthy a vehicle inspected in another State, even though the same Roadworthiness Guidelines are used? 2. What are the details of this anomaly? 3. Which jurisdictions do not recognise the validity of a vehicle inspection conducted by another jurisdiction?
ISTP 44	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would option three prevent different administrative practices causing jurisdictional distortions? 2. How would it stop problems with other jurisdictions passing variations through their own legislative processes?
ISTP 45	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Option four, according to the Regulatory Impact Statement involves the establishment of a National Heavy Vehicle Regulator that will apply and administer all relevant heavy vehicle law by one body. Is this correct?

				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Would such a body have law making powers? 3. Would it involve the consolidation of heavy vehicle regulation into a new national body of heavy vehicle laws? 4. What would be the role of State and Territory parliaments with regard to this heavy vehicle regulator? 5. Would it involve the reference of transport powers by the States to the Commonwealth? 6. Is the Commonwealth seriously contemplating such a course? 7. Are the States?
ISTP 46	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector] Are you confident that decisions arising from the consideration of this Regulatory Impact Statement will deal with the bizarre contradictions between the States regarding heavy vehicle heights and width regulations?</p>
ISTP 47	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Regulatory Inconsistencies in the Heavy Vehicle Sector] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When will the Government make a decision about these options? 2. Which option do you think is most desirable? </p>
CORP 12 Input from PM&C	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[2020 Summit – Federal/State Regulations] The 2020 Summit cited as a matter of concern contradictory Federal and State regulations. In fact, on page 41 of the Final Summit Report, the Federalism sub-group recommended the establishment of a nationally-consistent set of regulations. Similarly, the sub-groups looking at the role of government recommended, on page 43 of the Report, clause 2.8 suggested the need for <i>Harmonisation of federal and state regulation to reduce duplication and reduce costs of doing business.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When will the Government provide a response to this recommendation of the Final Summit Report, along with all the other recommendations, given that has not met its pledge to provide a response in the New Year?
OTS 03	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening] I refer to the Aviation Security Screening Review. I understand this is a review of the screening system we have in our airports. It is looking at things like national inconsistencies, passenger experience of screening, retention and training of security personal, technological changes and challenges. Is this correct?</p>
OTS 04	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I note that the Minister, in June 2008, announced the formation of an External Advisory Group to assist this review. Is this when the review started? 2. When did it start? </p>
OTS 05	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many submissions have been received? </p>
OTS 06	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Minister’s media release of 4 June 2008 stated that the review will be finished in </p>

				<p>December last year. Has it been finished?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Has the report been drafted? Has the Minister considered its recommendations?
OTS 07	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening] I note that the United States proposes to introduce 100 per cent screening of cargo transported on passenger planes by 2010. Is this correct?</p>
OTS 08	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Is it correct that 80 percent of Australian domestic air cargo is carried on passenger aircraft? How much cargo is that, in terms of tonnes, items of weight? Do you have any idea? How much is screened? How much air cargo carried by Australian domestic aircraft is not screened?
OTS 09	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does the Government propose to implement the same policy as the US regarding air cargo security screening by 2010? How much would such a policy cost? Has the Department done any costing should such a policy occur? Who will pay for it?
OTS 10	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What sort of regulatory anomalies and national inconsistencies has the Screening Review uncovered in Australia's approach to security screening? Are their jurisdictional inconsistencies that cause inefficiencies in Australia's screening processes? What are they? Are their different approaches to security screening adopted by our major capital city airports?
OTS 11	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening] How many security staff is employed in screening operations in Australia?</p>
OTS 12	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The current economic crisis aside, if the long-term growth in passenger numbers do average four percent a year to 2025, as stated in the Government's National Aviation Policy Green Paper, will there be a shortfall in security screening personal? What is being done to meet the recruitment and training challenges in aviation security personal, so that Australia will have sufficient numbers of aviation security staff to meet this increase in projected demand?
OTS 13	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Screening]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The aviation Green Paper flags that, like the Coalition, the Government is considering a central screening authority to run screening operations in Australia's airports. What are

				<p>the views on such an approach by stakeholders in the aviation sector?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What would be its cost? Would it be funded by further levies on industry?
OTS 14	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I understand that the Government has completed an Aviation Security Identification Card Review. When did this Review commence? When did it finish? When will the Minister respond to this Review? Will it be publicly available?
OTS 15	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Aviation Security Identification Card is required for employed personal to obtain unsupervised access to Australian airports. Is this correct? What sort of issues regarding the Card did the Review consider?
OTS 16	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card]</p> <p>The aviation Green Paper on page 92 states:</p> <p><i>A comprehensive review of the ASIC scheme was recently completed. This review highlighted significant vulnerabilities in the robustness and timeliness of background and proof of identity checks, name-based criminal history checks, and the management of visitors in the secure zones of Australian airports.</i></p> <p>Can you please explain in detail what these significant vulnerabilities are?</p>
OTS 17	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card]</p> <p>The aviation Green Paper on page 84 notes that 100,000 individuals require unsupervised access to secure areas of Australian airports. So does this mean that currently there are 100,000 personal with an Australian Security Identification Card?</p>
OTS 18	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How many applications for an ASIC are received each year? How many are rejected? On what basis are they rejected? Of those rejected - how many were on the basis of a criminal history?
OTS 19	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card]</p> <p>AusCheck, a unit of the Attorney General's Department, is now responsible for coordinating the background checks of ASIC applications. The background check involves scrutiny by authorities such as the Australian Federal Police, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation and possibly the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. Is this correct?</p>
OTS 20	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Review of Aviation Security Identification Car]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is the backlog of applications for an ASIC? What is the average length of time to obtain an ASIC? Is this what the Green Paper meant by "... vulnerabilities in the robustness and timeliness in background and proof of identity checks ..."?

OTS 21	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card] What steps are being taken to meet the projected increase in demand for ASICs?
OTS 22	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Review of Aviation Security Identification Card] What are the issues surrounding the management of visitors in the secure zones of Australian airports?
OTS 23	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Air Security Officer Program (Sky Marshals)] Air Security Officers, colloquially known as ‘sky marshals’ have been providing a security presence on selected Australian domestic flights since 2001 and two years later, according to page 34 of the Australian Federal Police July 2008 edition of their quarterly magazine, “Platypus”, on selected international flights. They are armed and are essentially there to deal with hijackings. Is that correct?
OTS 24	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Air Security Officer Program (Sky Marshals)] The 2008 -09 Budget the Government allocated \$8.4 million to continue funding for the Air Security Officer program. Is this a reduction?
OTS 25	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Air Security Officer Program (Sky Marshals)] In spite of this funding, and in spite of the <i>Aviation Legislation Amendment (2008 Measures No.1) Bill 2008</i> that was passed last year to clarify the powers of sky marshals to lawfully discharge firearms, there have been persistent reports that the Government is cutting this essential security initiative. Is the Government committed to preserving the Air Security Officers program?
OTS 26	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[Air Security Officer Program (Sky Marshals)] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the Government accept comments reported in the media by Human Services Minister Senator Joe Ludwig early last year (Herald Sun 15/02/08) that the number of sky marshals was to be cut by one-third? 2. Does the Government agree with his comments? 3. What cuts has the Government made to the Air Security Officer program? 4. On what basis has this decision been made? 5. Is it based on a security assessment or purely as a budgetary measure?
AAA 04	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[En Route Subsidy Scheme] Is it correct that the Government has decided to axe the En route Charges Rebate Scheme from June 2012?
AAA 05	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[En Route Subsidy Scheme] Can you confirm that from 1 July 2008, the Scheme will only apply to existing routes and service frequencies?
AAA 06	N/A	Written	Heffernan	[En Route Subsidy Scheme] From 1 July 2008, will the Scheme be available to an operator resuming a service suspended for a time due to factors like the pilot shortage?

AAA 07	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[En Route Subsidy Scheme] From 1 July 2008, will the Scheme be available to a new operator taking up a service withdrawn by another that was previously in receipt of the Scheme?</p>
AAA 08	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[En Route Subsidy Scheme] What studies have been conducted by the Government to assess the impact upon regional air services of the decision to cut the Scheme?</p>
AAA 09	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[En Route Subsidy Scheme]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I note the decision by Regional Express to terminate all the smaller routes that were serviced by its wholly owned subsidiary Air Link Pty Ltd. From 20 December last year, Air Link is no longer operating the routes serviced by its 9 seat and 5 seat piston engine aircraft. The routes affected by this decision are those linking Dubbo to Burke, Cobar, Coonamble, Lightning Ridge and Walgett as well as the Mudgee to Sydney run. <p>Is the Government aware that according to the media release put out by Regional Express on 10 November last year, this decision was in part prompted by the Government's decision to terminate the Scheme?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What does the Government propose to do for those people from regional Australia who have lost this service?
AAA 10	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[En Route Subsidy Scheme]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I also note that a regional airline in Queensland – MacAir – has just been placed into receivership. This means that 32 regional towns in Queensland, including isolated communities such as Thargomindah, Bedourie, Birdsville and Winton are likely to lose an air service. It also means that the jobs of MacAir's 200 staff are in jeopardy. Is now the time to terminate the En route Charges Rebate Scheme? 2. What does the Government intend to do to assist airlines such as MacAir to continue to operate essential flight services to regional Australia?
AAA 11	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Sydney Airport]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Government's National Aviation Green Paper states on page 17 that <i>Sydney Airport is approaching capacity</i>. When will Sydney Airport approach capacity? 2. Given that Badgerys Creek is not going to be used as the site for a second airport, what is the Government's plan for the land? 3. Will the Commonwealth sell it? 4. Have any discussions to that end occurred? 5. What sites are being considered for the second airport? 6. What are the options? 7. What are their respective merits?
AAA 12	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In response to a question from Senator Williams regarding the installation of noise

				<p>insulation near airports during the previous round of Senate Estimates, John Doherty stated that:</p> <p><i>We have completed work on those buildings which have been identified as eligible under the program. There may be some fine residual work in areas, such as if the noise pattern moves or if there is some warranty work, but generally the vast bulk of that work has now been completed.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Has the noise patterns moved at all since the last round of Senate Estimates? 3. How often are noise contours adjusted? 4. If noise contours were to be adjusted, would this mean further work would be commissioned? 5. If noise contours were to be adjusted, what would be the cost of additional insulation work? 6. Has any “warranty work” been carried out? 7. How much has been spent on warranty work? 8. Has there been any other noise insulation work carried out? 9. Is this new work or the maintenance of work that was previously carried out?
AAA 13	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many new insulation projects have been started? 2. Where are these new projects located? 3. Why were these new projects given the go ahead? 4. How much has been spent on these new projects?
AAA 14	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In the previous round of Senate Estimates, Senator Heffernan asked about the details of the \$14.5 million project to insulate Fort Street High School in the Minister for Transport’s electorate. The response from Maureen Ellis was that actual details were not available until 2009 <i>because they would prejudice any future tender process.</i> <p>Now that it is 2009, are the details of this project available?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Given that “the vast bulk of work has now been completed” and that “all of the eligible buildings under the Sydney program have in fact been insulated” how would releasing the details of this project prejudice future tenders? 3. Have any further tenders been put out?
AAA 15	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <p>What are the policy implications of insulating Fort Street High School exclusively within its noise contour?</p>

AAA 16	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Fort Street High School – Noise Insulation]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Would the Fort Street project have been approved on its own merits if it were not singled out as an election commitment? 2. Was this purely a political decision or did it have merit on its own?
AAA 17 Transferred from FaHCSIA	N/A	Written	Bernardi	<p>[Aviation Access Working Group]</p> <p>How many members are in the Working Group? Who are these members? What selection method was used to choose the members? When/where was the Working Group’s first meeting? A review of the Accessible Public Transport Standards was discussed at the meeting. What else was discussed? Are the meeting’s minutes publicly-available? Do members receive remuneration of any kind? Apart from looking at the National Aviation Policy Statement and Green Paper, what other activities will the Group be undertaking? Will the Group conduct regular meetings? When are these scheduled for? When is the Group’s next meeting? Does the Group have a timeframe in which to achieve its objectives?</p>
LGRD 12	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[The Department’s Regional Office Network]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the status of the department’s regional office network? 2. Specifically, how many regional offices were there in November 2007 and how many are there now? 3. How many offices have been closed and what are their locations?
LGRD 13	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[The Department’s Regional Office Network]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many staff were employed in each office in November 2007 and how many are employed now? 2. How much has the department paid out in redundancy payments? 3. Has any person who was made redundant been re-employed or engaged as a consultant or contractor?
LGRD 14	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[The Department’s Regional Office Network]</p> <p>What savings were forecast by the closure of those offices and staff redundancies and what savings were actually achieved?</p>
LGRD 15	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[The Department’s Regional Office Network]</p> <p>What is the role of the remaining regional offices and what territory does each cover?</p>
LGRD 16	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I refer to Hon Gary Gray’s press release dated 3 December last year outlining a proposal to merge the Federal Government’s Area Consultative Committees/Regional Development Australia (ACC/RDA) network with State Government Regional Development Boards.

				<p>What progress is being made and which States have agreed to the proposal?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Will any ACC/RDA office close as a consequence of the plan? 3. Will any ACC/RDA network staff be made redundant?
LGRD 17	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network] How will the Government ensure that State funding levels are maintained so the Commonwealth isn't left to subsidise the States' regional development activities?</p>
LGRD 18	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the members of the new amalgamated boards be paid? 2. If so, how much? </p>
LGRD 19	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network] What has been the role of Area Consultative Committees (ACCs) which have been re-badged as the local network of Regional Development Australia (RDA) offices since the Regional Partnerships program was cancelled?</p>
LGRD 20	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What Federal Government funding programs have been available to the ACC/RDA network to assist them in their core function of facilitating regional and community development? 2. Have they been able to make formal funding recommendations to Ministers on other federal Government programs since the Regional Partnerships program was cancelled? 3. If so, is there a project list citing the project, the ACC/RDA recommendation, a project description or summary, the department and program from where the funding was sought, the amount sought and the total project value? 4. How many of ACC/RDA recommendations were accepted and how many were rejected? 5. In what electorates are the projects? </p>
LGRD 21	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network] How has the ACC/RDA network been able to achieve the portfolio's objective (from the Department's website) of <i>assisting regions to realise their potential and manage their own futures?</i></p>
LGRD 22	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The www.acc.gov.au website states that the RDA network has 3 initial tasks. These tasks are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. advise on the role and functions of RDA and improving the engagement of regional communities, regional development organisations and local governments with the Australian Government (by 31 August 2008); b. advise on principles and priorities for the new Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program (by 31 October 2008); and c. advise on priorities for the types of local community infrastructure that could encourage economic development (by 31 October 2008). </p>

				<p>What advice did the ACC/RDA network provide in relation to these three tasks?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What advice was accepted by the Government and what was rejected? 3. What were the reasons for the Government not supporting each of the recommendations made by the ACC it rejected?
LGRD 23	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[ACC/RDA Network]</p> <p>How many staff were employed by ACCs nationally as of November 2007 and how many staff are now employed by the ACC / RDA network, and from which specific office locations have jobs been lost?</p>
LGRD 24	N/A	Written	Heffernan	<p>[Tree of Knowledge Project]</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I refer to Labor's election commitment to provide \$2.6 million to fund the Tree of Knowledge project at Barcaldine in Western Queensland. 2. How much of the \$2.6 million has been paid? 3. What did it pay for? 4. How much is outstanding and why is it outstanding? 5. When does the government expect to pay the remaining amount? 6. Will any project funds be used to acquire any land or buildings to complete any stage of the project? 7. If so who owns the land or buildings and what is their value? 8. Have any land or buildings already been transferred? 9. If so who owned them, what was their value, how were they valued and how much were they paid for them?